

Srinagar  
Saturday  
June 20 | 2026  
04 Muharram 1448 AH  
Issue No: 147  
Volume: 16  
Pages: 08  
Price: Rs 02/-

16TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION  
**HEADLINES TODAY**  
Voice To The Voiceless

**LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS**  
ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL PRINTING NEEDS  
NEWSPAPER | BOOKS | FLYERS | LOGO | FLEX | MAGAZINES  
VISITING CARDS | BROCHURES | 3D BOARDS | COVER PAGES  
WEDDING CARDS | CALLIGRAPHY | WALL PAINTINGS  
9999038812  
9419008414  
Radio Colony, Gund Hassibhat, Lawaipora Srinagar-190017

## PM-VBRY Is About Empowering First-Time Employees And Connecting Youth With Industry: PM Modi

Rs 2,400 Crore Incentives Released Nationwide; Over 1,500 Employees And 304 Employers Benefit In Jammu & Kashmir

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY) is aimed at empowering first-time employees and creating a strong link between young job seekers and industry, as he released incentives worth around Rs 2,400 crore to more



than 15 lakh beneficiaries across the country. Addressing a national programme held at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi, the Prime Minister said the initiative goes beyond conventional employment support and seeks to strengthen the aspirations

Turn on Page 2

## Home Ministry Working With Supreme Court To Cut Case Backlog, Ensure Timely Justice: Amit Shah

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, JUNE 19:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the Ministry of Home Affairs is actively working with the Supreme Court to develop a new system aimed at reducing the backlog of cases in the Supreme Court and High Courts, describing timely justice as a key priority of the government.

Addressing the All India Fingerprint Conference-2026 organised by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Shah said the government is determined to remove delays in the criminal justice system and ensure that citizens receive justice without unnecessary waiting.

"The Union Home Ministry is actively engaged with the Supreme Court for creating a new system to address delays in the High Courts and the Supreme Court," Shah said, while highlighting ongoing efforts to reform the justice delivery mechanism.

The Home Minister noted that the government had undertaken a comprehensive review of the



country's criminal laws and addressed most of the legal shortcomings identified in the previous framework through the introduction of three new criminal laws. He said these reforms are designed to make investigations, prosecutions and court proceedings more efficient and

Turn on Page 2

### We Will Ensure Better Coordination And Further Strengthen The Security System

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**JAMMU, JUNE 19:** Railway Protection Force (RPF) Director General Sonali Mishra on Friday reviewed security arrangements at railway stations in Kathua and directed officials to enhance coordination among all agencies to ensure the safe movement of pilgrims during the upcoming Amarnath Yatra.

During her visit to Kathua railway station, Mishra assessed the level of preparedness for the annual pilgrimage, which is scheduled to begin on July 3 and continue until August 28. The pilgrimage will be conducted through the traditional route in Anantnag and the shorter route in Ganderbal.

Addressing reporters after the review meeting, the RPF chief said security measures are being further reinforced and that all concerned agencies are working in close coordination to ensure a secure environment for pilgrims.

"A review was undertaken and arrangements are being strengthened. Work is being carried out in coordination with all agencies, while advanced technical equipment is also being deployed. We will ensure better

Turn on Page 2

## Modi Showcases India's Cultural Heritage Through Gifts To Slovak Leaders

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**BRATISLAVA/NEW DELHI, JUNE 19:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi used the power of cultural diplomacy to highlight India's rich heritage and centuries-old traditions during his visit to Slovakia, presenting a carefully curated selection of

traditional crafts, classical medical texts and regional delicacies to the country's top leadership.

The gifts, drawn from different parts of India, reflected the nation's artistic excellence, intellectual legacy and cultural diversity, while also underscoring the growing warmth in relations between India and Slovakia.

For Slovak President Peter Pellegrini, Modi presented handcrafted ornamental cufflinks inspired by a traditional art form from Rajasthan, an elegant silk tie and pocket square produced through a historic weaving tradition of Maharashtra, and a handcrafted brass antelope set created using one of India's oldest metal-casting

Turn on Page 2

## GOVT STANDS FIRMLY WITH FIRE AFFECTED FAMILIES: JAVED RANA

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SURANKOTE, JUNE 19:** Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today visited Buffliaz area of Surankote and interacted with the shopkeepers whose establishments were gutted in a devastating fire incident that occurred a few days ago.

Expressing solidarity with the affected families, the Minister assured them

of all possible assistance from the government for their rehabilitation and restoration of livelihoods.

"Our Government stands firmly with the affected families and will ensure all possible support to help them rebuild their lives and resume their livelihoods at the earliest," Rana stated.

It is pertinent to mention that at least 13 shops were gutted in a massive fire incident that broke out at the Main

Turn on Page 2

## Maintain High-Level Operational Readiness, Remain Alert for All Challenges: IGP Birdi

Kashmir Police strengthens security framework and inter-agency coordination

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:** Ahead of the annual Amarnath pilgrimage, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, V.K. Birdi, on Friday directed security personnel to maintain a high level of operational readiness and remain vigilant to effectively address all security and logistical challenges during



the pilgrimage period.

Chairing a high-level review meeting in Srinagar, Birdi assessed preparedness measures and coordination arrangements along the pilgrimage routes. Senior police officers, including range deputy inspectors general, sector officers, zonal officers and other officials associated with pilgrimage duties, attended the meeting.

Emphasising the importance of professionalism, discipline and vigilance, the IGP instructed officers to ensure the effective implementation of the

Turn on Page 2

## Classes Suspended In 60 Kashmir Schools Ahead Of NEET Re-Exam

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JUN 19:** Authorities in Kashmir have suspended classes on Saturday in 60 schools designated as centres for the NEET examination scheduled on June 21, officials said.

The 60 schools span six districts of the valley. Of the 60 schools, 21 are in Srinagar and Anantnag districts each, five each in Baramulla and Kupwara, and four each in Budgam and Pulwama.

In an order issued on Friday, the Directorate of School Education, Kashmir, said, "In view of the upcoming NEET examination scheduled on June 21 (Sunday), the classwork in schools designated as centres for NEET

Turn on Page 2

## CS Reviews ₹3,000 Cr Reconstruction Projects

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting of all the concerned to assess the progress achieved in identification, approval and execution of infrastructure restoration and reconstruction projects being undertaken under the Disaster Component of the Special Assistance to States for Capital Invest-



ment (SASCI) and the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA)-based Recovery and Reconstruction package sanctioned by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in the aftermath of the devastating floods and landslides of 2025.

The meeting besides the ACS, Finance and ACS, PWD was attended by Principal Secretary, DMRR&R; Commissioner Secretary,

Turn on Page 2

## Education Key to Social, Economic Progress: Sakeena Itoo

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JUNE 19:** Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo distributed regularisation orders among 261 Contingency Paid Workers (CPWs) of education department and also virtually laid foundation stone of various educational infrastructure projects across multiple schools of Jammu division at Abhinav Theatre here today.



Shiksha, Bhawani Rakhwal; Director School Education

Jammu, Dr. Naseem Javid Choudhary; Joint Director SCERT, senior officers of school education department, CEO Jammu, Principals, Lecturers, educationists and officers of district administration were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister reiterated the Government's commitment to providing quality education, strengthening school infrastructure, and ensuring the welfare of employees associated with the

Turn on Page 2

## Foxglove Blooms Turn Bharderwah Valley Into New Eco-Tourism Attraction In J&K

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BHADERWAH/JAMMU, JUNE 19:** The vast stretches of bell-shaped white, pink and purple foxglove flowers have drawn several eco-tourism lovers and flower enthusiasts to the Bharderwah valley to see the European species flourishing naturally in the Himalayan landscape.

This has led to locals and tourism stakeholders calling for the promotion of the region as a unique floral destination.

The flowering plant, digitalis purpurea, commonly known as foxglove and native to Europe and parts of the Mediterranean region, has covered large patches of high-altitude meadows and slopes

Turn on Page 2

پیشاپہ  
Preserve Your Ideas  
We Bring Them to Life  
**LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS**  
ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL PRINTING NEEDS  
We Publish in  
Arabic | Urdu | Hindi | Persian | Kashmiri  
Contact us:  
9697071471 | 9999038812  
lubaabpublications01@gmail.com

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

**PM-VBRY Is.....**

of young people entering the workforce while encouraging industries to generate new jobs.

He observed that Indian youth are gaining increasing recognition across the world for their talent, skills and potential, and reiterated the government's commitment to creating opportunities that enable young people to convert their abilities into success.

As part of the nationwide programme, events were simultaneously organised at 200 locations across the country, including several venues in Jammu and Kashmir where benefits were distributed to employees and employers under the scheme.

Official figures showed that in Jammu and Kashmir, 1,522 employees received incentives amounting to Rs 74 lakh, while around Rs 25.42 crore was transferred directly into the bank accounts of 304 employers under the employment-linked incentive programme.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who addressed the regional event through virtual mode, described the occasion as a milestone in Jammu and Kashmir's employment journey and said the initiative reflected the government's commitment to expanding social security and formal employment opportunities.

He said the programme was not merely about the distribution of financial benefits but represented the aspirations and opportunities being created for the region's youth. According to the Lieutenant Governor, sustained efforts by the Union Government have strengthened employment generation and social security measures, with PM-VBRY emerging as a significant step in that direction.

Highlighting changes in the labour sector, Sinha said workers in Jammu and Kashmir were brought under a wider social security framework after the implementation of the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act in the Union Territory in 2019, enabling thousands of workers to access benefits available elsewhere in the country.

He said the scheme supports both employees and employers by providing financial assistance to first-time workers while incentivising establishments that create additional employment. Such measures, he added, are expected to encourage industrial growth and expand job opportunities.

According to official data, more than 3,300 establishments in Jammu and Kashmir have registered under the scheme so far. These establishments have facilitated the entry of over 22,500 young people into formal employment, while more than 31,000 jobs have qualified for incentives.

The Lieutenant Governor urged more businesses to enrol under the programme and commended employers participating in the initiative for contributing to employment generation and economic growth.

PM-VBRY is a flagship employment-linked incentive scheme of the Government of India designed to promote formal employment and encourage workforce expansion. Eligible first-time employees receive financial assistance equivalent to one month's wages, up to Rs 15,000, while employers are provided incentives for creating additional jobs. The manufacturing sector is entitled to extended support to encourage sustained employment generation.

The programme in Jammu and Kashmir was held at multiple locations, including Jammu, Srinagar, Budgam and Samba, and witnessed participation from elected representatives, industry leaders, employers, beneficiaries and senior government officials. Employment letters were also distributed to newly recruited workers during the events.

Officials said the initiative is expected to further strengthen formal employment, widen social security coverage and support economic growth by encouraging greater participation of both workers and employers in the organised sector.

**Home Ministry.....**

citizen-centric. Stressing the importance of scientific investigations, Shah urged police officers and forensic experts to ensure that evidence collected from crime scenes is accurate and protected from contamination. Reliable evidence, he said, is crucial for securing swift and correct convictions.

He also called for the wider adoption of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning to analyse crime data, identify patterns and assist law enforcement agencies in preventing and solving crimes more effectively.

Highlighting the role of the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS), Shah said the platform has proven valuable in solving complex criminal cases but remains underutilised.

He urged investigators to strengthen the database by regularly adding fingerprints collected from crime scenes, making it a more effective tool for criminal identification and prosecution.

The Home Minister further advocated the establishment of a dedicated mechanism within the NCRB to study crime trends, repeat offenders and interstate and international criminal networks, enabling agencies to respond more effectively to emerging challenges.

Emphasising accountability at every stage of the justice process, Shah asked investigating agencies to file chargesheets on time, maintain close coordination with prosecutors and actively pursue cases in courts to ensure quicker outcomes.

He said India is witnessing a significant transformation in its criminal justice system, moving towards a framework where technology, scientific evidence and institutional coordination play a central role in delivering justice and safeguarding the rights guaranteed to citizens under the Constitution.

Calling for extensive training of investigators and prosecutors, Shah said the effective use of modern forensic tools and digital technologies would be critical in building a faster, more transparent and more reliable justice system across the country.

**We Will Ensure.....**

coordination and further strengthen the security system," she said.

The review meeting was attended by senior officials from the Railways, Railway Protection Force, police and other security agencies. Discussions focused on preparedness, surveillance capabilities, crowd management and the integration of technology into the security framework.

Mishra highlighted the growing role of advanced surveillance systems and modern security equipment in safeguarding critical infrastructure and managing large pilgrim movements. She stressed that all aspects of the security plan would be implemented effectively through coordinated action among the participating agencies.

The annual pilgrimage, one of the country's largest religious gatherings, attracts thousands of devotees from across India and is protected through a multi-layered security arrangement involving the police, paramilitary forces, RPF and other security organisations.

With less than two weeks remaining before the commencement of the pilgrimage, authorities have intensified preparations across the region, focusing on security, logistics and coordination to ensure the smooth and safe conduct of the event.

**Modi Showcases.....**

techniques. The gifts showcased the skills of Indian artisans and the enduring value of traditional craftsmanship that continues to thrive across the country.

A handwoven silk carpet from Kashmir was presented to Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico. Known internationally for its intricate designs and painstaking craftsmanship, the carpet represents one of India's most celebrated artistic traditions. Such carpets often require months and sometimes years of work by skilled artisans, making them prized examples of fine craftsmanship.

The Prime Minister also gifted traditional sweet delicacies along with two ancient Indian medical treatises to Richard Rasi, Speaker of Slovakia's National Council. The texts, regarded among the most influential works in the history of traditional medicine, reflect India's longstanding contributions to healthcare, surgery and holistic well-being.

Officials said the selection of gifts was intended to provide a glimpse into India's civilisational heritage, highlighting achievements in art, craftsmanship, knowledge and culture that have been preserved and passed down through generations.

The exchange of gifts formed an important cultural component of Modi's visit, reinforcing people-to-people connections and demonstrating how shared appreciation for heritage can complement diplomatic engagement between nations.

The visit marked another step in expanding India's engagement with European partners, with cultural outreach emerging as a key feature of the Prime Minister's international diplomacy.

**Govt stands.....**

Chowk market in the Buffliaz area of Surankote, earlier this month.

The affected shopkeepers apprised the Minister of the extensive losses suffered due to the fire. They sought adequate compensation and financial assistance for reconstruction of their shops damaged in the fire incident. They urged the government to provide immediate relief so that the affected families, whose livelihoods largely depended upon these establishments, could resume their economic

activities at the earliest.

The Minister also listened to the grievances of the residents who projected several developmental demands, including relocation of the Block Development Office (BDO), Buffliaz, to a more centrally located and accessible site.

They also raised the demand for construction of a Guest House to cater to the needs of the visitors and travellers, given Buffliaz's strategic importance as a vital link connecting the Jammu and Kashmir divisions.

Rana patiently listened to the grievances and demands raised by the affected shopkeepers and local residents. He assured that the process for providing compensation would be expedited at the administrative level in accordance with the assessment reports submitted by the concerned departments.

As an immediate relief measure, the Minister directed the Forest Department to provide timber and tin sheets to the affected shopkeepers on priority, to facilitate reconstruction of their damaged shops and enable them to restore their livelihoods at the earliest.

**Maintain High.....**

established security framework. He said all personnel must remain fully prepared to respond to evolving situations and perform their duties with efficiency and commitment.

Birdi directed zonal officers to conduct regular briefings for personnel deployed in the field so that every member of the force remains fully aware of operational responsibilities and the prevailing security environment. He stressed the need for constant supervision and clear communication at every level of deployment.

The police chief also called for close coordination with other security and civil agencies to facilitate timely information sharing, joint response mechanisms and seamless operational cooperation throughout the pilgrimage.

Highlighting the significance of public service, Birdi instructed officers to extend all possible assistance to pilgrims and ensure their safety, convenience and well-being. He urged personnel to maintain a people-centric approach while carrying out their responsibilities.

Reiterating the importance of strict adherence to Standard Operating Procedures, the IGP asked all ranks to uphold the highest standards of conduct and remain alert throughout the pilgrimage period.

The meeting concluded with a detailed review of contingency plans and coordination mechanisms aimed at ensuring a peaceful, secure and incident-free pilgrimage.

The 57-day Amarnath pilgrimage is scheduled to commence on July 3 and conclude on August 28. Pilgrims will travel through the traditional Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the shorter Baltal route in Ganderbal district.

**Classes Suspended.....**

Examination shall remain suspended on June 20 (Saturday)."

The order warned that any deviation from the directions will result in strict legal action against the defaulting institution.

The NEET-UG re-examination is scheduled for June 21.

The National Testing Agency cancelled the NEET-UG 2026 examination held on May 3 amid allegations of a paper leak. The Centre subsequently entrusted the CBI with a comprehensive inquiry into the alleged irregularities.

**CS Reviews.....**

YS&S; MD, JKPDC; DG, A&T; DG, Resources; DG, Budget and other concerned officers from the relevant Departments.

While reviewing the implementation progress, the Chief Secretary stressed the need for timely completion of all restoration works and directed the departments to significantly expedite execution so that expenditure under SASCI is fully incurred within the prescribed timelines. He emphasized that all departments must adhere to the sunset provisions of the scheme and ensure completion of works within the stipulated period.

The Chief Secretary directed the departments to immediately finalize and submit all pending permanent restoration projects proposed under the PDNA framework. He also asked the departments to submit additional restoration proposals amounting to approximately Rs 232 Cr to the Finance Department for further consideration.

To ensure transparency and prevent duplication of expenditure, the Chief Secretary instructed all departments to furnish certificates confirming that the projects proposed under SASCI and PDNA are not being funded through any other scheme or source. He made it clear that no financial claims shall be processed without such certification.

The Chief Secretary further directed the Public Works Department, Power Development Department and Housing & Urban Development Department to expedite submission of additional infrastructure projects for consideration under the SASCI Disaster Component for 2026-27.

During the meeting, the ACS Finance Department, Shailendra Kumar presented a comprehensive overview of the financial assistance received, departmental allocations, project portfolios and implementation status under both the funding frameworks aimed at rebuilding damaged public infrastructure and enhancing resilience against future disasters.

The ACS divulged that J&K has been allocated an additional assistance of Rs 1,431 Cr under the Disaster Component of SASCI, specifically meant for restoration and reconstruction of infrastructure damaged during natural calamities as well as for undertaking mitigation measures to reduce future disaster risks.

Based on the recommendations of the high level committee constituted here, it was revealed that the highest allocation of Rs 860 Cr was earmarked for the Public Works Department, followed by Rs 315 Cr for the Jal Shakti Department, Rs 173 Cr for the Power Development Department, Rs 51 crore for the Agriculture Production Department and Rs 32 Cr for the Youth Services and Sports Department.

The meeting was further informed that the Sub-Committee of the National Executive Committee (SC-NEC) of the Ministry of Home Affairs has approved Rs 1,579.09 Cr for Recovery and Reconstruction activities based on the PDNA report prepared after the floods and landslides of 2025. Out of the approved assistance, the Central share amounts to Rs 1,421.12 Cr, while the UT share is Rs 157.91 crore.

It was informed that the approved assistance spans multiple sectors including housing, education, health, public infrastructure, roads, drinking water supply, sanitation, power, irrigation, agriculture, tourism, horticulture and environmental restoration. The largest share of assistance has been earmarked for infrastructure sectors, particularly roads, buildings, power systems and water supply networks, which suffered extensive damage during the disasters.

Reviewing the departmental proposals, the Chief Secretary was informed that following reconciliation with the PDNA framework and elimination of overlapping works, project proposals amounting to nearly Rs 1,196 Cr have been finalized under SASCI, while work plans worth more than Rs 1,025 Cr have already been uploaded on the BEAMS platform. The Finance Department has released over Rs 429 Cr to various departments for execution of approved works. Reiterating the Government's commitment towards resilient reconstruction and disaster preparedness, the Chief Secretary emphasized that the restoration initiatives should not only rebuild damaged assets but also strengthen public infrastructure to withstand future disasters, thereby safeguarding lives, livelihoods and essential services across Jammu and Kashmir.

**Education.....**

education sector. She emphasized that education remains the cornerstone of social and economic development of society adding that various initiatives are being undertaken to transform the educational landscape of Jammu & Kashmir.

While congratulating the regularized CPWs, the Minister appreciated their contribution towards the functioning of the education department. She add that regularization of CPWs has been a long pending demand and the present Government has fulfilled its commitment under the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to provide social security and dignity to these workers who have been serving the department for years.

The Minister, on the occasion, also called for zero tolerance towards teacher attachments from far-flung areas to cities. She asked the Director School Education and CEO Jammu for immediate repatriation of all such teachers to their original place of postings in villages. "The shortage of teachers is manufactured because teachers avoid far-flung postings. Need of the hour is to send them back so that children in villages do not

suffer," she asserted.

The Minister also said that a transparent transfer policy for School Education Department is under process, on the lines of the policy already framed for Higher Education department.

The Minister, on the occasion, also virtually laid the foundation stone for various infrastructure development works of School Education Department in Jammu Division like Elementary Hostel at Government Middle School Hiranagar, upgradation and modernization of Government Higher Secondary School Nagrota Gujroo, and construction of additional classrooms at Government Higher Secondary School Pallan. These initiatives are expected to significantly enhance educational facilities and create a more conducive learning environment for students in these areas.

She also released several educational publications prepared by SCERT Jammu & Kashmir, aimed at enriching teaching-learning processes and supporting the implementation of contemporary educational reforms.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Director School Education Jammu, Dr. Naseem Javed Choudhary gave a detailed overview of CPWs regularization process and ongoing academic initiatives. He also highlighted that department is undergoing a phase of developments for strengthening of education sector across Jammu and Kashmir.

**Foxglove Blooms.....**

across Baderwah, officials said. "The flowers are currently in full bloom in areas including Jaie Valley, Guldanda, Thanthera, Hanga, Padri, Bhal Padri, Khanni Top and Bach Dhar, as well as along the upper reaches of the Baderwah-Pathankot and Baderwah-Chamba interstate highways," they said.

Akshay Paul, a tourist from Maharashtra, said he was "taken aback" after seeing foxglove on both sides of the road along the nearly 35-kilometre stretch from Basti to Chattergalla. "Until now, I believed these flowers only grew in Europe. This experience has become the highlight of our trip and will remain a cherished memory," he said.

Kavita, a flower enthusiast from Nagpur, said she specifically travelled to Baderwah after learning about the flowers online.

"I came here especially to see foxglove after discovering that Baderwah is among the few places in India where these flowers grow in such abundance. Their beauty and vast spread make this destination a must-visit for flower lovers," she said.

Another visitor, Simriti Sharma, described the experience as "a fairy tale" and said if projected properly, this could become the next major attraction of Jammu and Kashmir's tourism industry. Geographic Reference

Adventure tourism operators have urged authorities to capitalise on the natural phenomenon and market Baderwah as a seasonal flower tourism destination.

Vikas Sharma, an adventure tour organiser from Baderwah, said visitors to Jaie Valley and other meadow destinations are increasingly drawn to the blooms.

"Many tourists are fascinated by the foxglove flowers and some even extend their stay to explore the flowering landscapes. However, little has been done so far to promote this natural asset," he said.

Sharma said that while significant resources are spent on cultivating seasonal flower attractions elsewhere, Baderwah possesses naturally occurring stretches of foxglove blooms covering miles of landscape for nearly three months every year -- from April until the end of June.

"If properly promoted, foxglove can emerge as the next major tourism attraction in Jammu and Kashmir, offering a unique experience for visitors," he added.

Chief Executive Officer of the Baderwah Development Authority (BDA), Sanjeev Sharma, said studies suggest that seeds of foxglove may have been introduced to the valley by European travellers during the early 19th century.

"That could be one of the reasons why these flowers grow in such large numbers here today, adding to the beauty of the bowl-shaped valley," Sharma said.

He said the administration intends to leverage the floral attraction to draw more visitors and plans to organise a Foxglove Festival by the end of this month. (Agencies)



## Ministers conduct on-the-spot inspection of irrigation facilities across Ganderbal

Reiterate "welfare of farmers remains central to government's development agenda"

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL, JUNE 19:** Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, along with Minister for Agriculture Production Department and Rural Development Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today conducted an extensive on-the-spot inspection of various areas of Ganderbal district to assess the availability of irrigation water and review the functioning of irrigation facilities across the district.

The objective of the visit was to ensure adequate water supply to the agricultural lands and addressing the concerns of farmers, particularly in tail-end areas. The areas covered during the inspection included Warpora, Waqura, Nowbugh, Tulmullah, Waskura, Safapora, Shuhama, Buserbugh and several other localities across the district.

During the inspection, the Ministers interacted with the farmers and local residents to obtain firsthand feedback regarding irrigation facilities and water availability. Accompanied by the Chief Engineer and other senior officers of the Jal Shakti and other allied departments, they reviewed the ground situation and directed the



concerned officials to immediately address all bottlenecks affecting the smooth supply of irrigation water.

Interacting with the farmers, Javed Rana emphasized that agriculture remains the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir's economy and the primary source of livelihood for a vast section of the population. "Agriculture is the mainstay of the people across the Kashmir Valley and the welfare of our farmers remains of utmost importance for the government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. Safeguarding farmers' interests and ensuring the timely availability of irrigation water are among our foremost priorities and are committed to extend every possible support to the farming community," Rana assured.

The Minister instructed the officers to remain in the field, intensify monitoring and ensure prompt resolution of all irrigation-related issues. He emphasized that any complaint regarding water scarcity or irrigation facilities should be brought directly to his office for immediate redressal.

Rana stressed the need to optimize water-use efficiency through improved irrigation management, enhanced monitoring of irrigation infrastructure and timely maintenance of canals and water channels. He added that while Jammu and Kashmir has immense agricultural potential, realizing higher productivity requires a coordinated approach involving efficient water management, better infrastructure and responsive governance. He called upon the

concerned officers to remain proactive in addressing the field-level issues.

Javid Ahmad Dar, during his interaction with the farmers, observed that water is the most critical resource for agriculture and that its efficient management is essential for sustaining farm productivity and ensuring long-term agricultural growth. He assured the farming community that the government is closely monitoring the situation and that all necessary measures will be taken to ensure uninterrupted irrigation facilities and address genuine grievances without delay.

The Ministers reiterated that the welfare of farmers remains central to the government's development agenda and affirmed that all possible steps would be taken to strengthen irrigation infra-

structure, improve water-use efficiency and support sustainable agricultural growth across the Valley.

Later, the Ministers also held a review meeting with the officers of the Jal Shakti, Forest department, Agriculture Production Department and other allied departments at the DFO Office, Ganderbal.

During the meeting, they took stock of the ongoing works and schemes being implemented by the departments in the district and directed the officers to ensure timely completion of all pending projects. They emphasized the need for better coordination between the departments for effective implementation of developmental works and instructed the officers to address field-level issues on priority.

Addressing the meeting, Javed Rana stressed that the officers must maintain regular contact with the public and ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach the intended beneficiaries without delay.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on a range of issues of public importance, with particular focus on developmental priorities, governance-related matters and concerns affecting the people of Ganderbal district.

### Multi-Departmental Outreach Activities conducted under Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan in Budgam

#### HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JUNE 19:** As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), various departments across District Budgam today organized a series of awareness, outreach, and preventive activities aimed at sensitizing the public, particularly youth and students, about the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of building a drug-free society.

The Forest Department, Raithan Range, organized a plantation drive, pledge-taking ceremony, and awareness programme under the banner of NMBA at Government Boys Middle School, Jawalpora and Government Girls Primary School Bugroo. Students and staff actively participated in the programme, during which the significance of environmental conservation and a drug-free lifestyle was highlighted. Participants also took a pledge to support the vision of a drug-free society. Meanwhile, the Excise Department, Budgam, conducted an awareness and survey programme at Village Gopalpora, Tehsil Narbal, under the NMBA campaign. During the programme, awareness regarding the dangers of drug abuse was disseminated among the local population through the distribution and display of posters at prominent locations. The Excise team also carried out a survey of agricultural fields, farms, and orchards to detect any illicit cultivation of narcotic crops. Wild cannabis growth was observed along certain roadside stretches and riverbanks.

As part of the awareness campaign, a message highlighting the adverse effects of drug abuse and relevant provisions of the NDPS Act was delivered to the congregation during the Friday sermon at Jamia Masjid Gopalpora. Additionally, checking of roadside eateries was conducted along the Narbal Magam Road to curb the transportation and spread of illicit narcotic substances. Further, the Soil Conservation Department, Budgam, organized an awareness programme at the Sports Stadium Budgam, where students from different educational institutions participated enthusiastically. The participants were sensitized about the social, health, and economic consequences of substance abuse and were encouraged to act as ambassadors of a drug-free society.

The District Administration Budgam remains committed to the objectives of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan and continues to undertake coordinated efforts involving various departments, educational institutions, religious leaders, and community stakeholders to eliminate the menace of drug abuse and promote a healthy, responsible, and drug-free society.

### Shopian emerges leading force in Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan

#### HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, JUNE 19:** Fight against substance abuse is not merely a law enforcement challenge—it is a social mission that demands collective action, sustained awareness and community participation.

It is with this vision that the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, launched the ambitious Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan on 11 April 2026, calling upon every section of society to join hands in building a healthier and drug-free future.

Responding with remarkable commitment and enthusiasm, District Shopian has emerged as one of the leading districts across the Union Territory in implementing the campaign, transforming the anti-drug initiative into a mass public movement that has touched lives across villages, schools, institutions and communities.

The district-level campaign was formally launched from Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Shopian, on 11 April 2026. Since then, the District Administration, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, has maintained an intensive and sustained outreach effort, ensuring that the campaign reaches every household, educational institution and public space.

Since the launch of the campaign, more than 80,000 awareness and outreach activities have been conducted across the district, engaging an estimated 36 lakh participants. These figures reflect not only administrative efforts but also the growing public ownership of the campaign's message.

From schools and colleges to Panchayats and community institutions, awareness programmes, seminars, rallies, sports events, cultural activities, youth engagements and village-level interactions have been organized to spread awareness about the harmful consequences of drug abuse and the importance of prevention.

A defining moment of the campaign came on 23 June 2026 when the Lieutenant Governor, J&K, participated in a grand anti-drug Padayatra in Shopian. The event witnessed overwhelming public participation, with nearly 20,000 people from all walks of life joining the march. Students, youth volunteers, civil society members, government officials, religious leaders and community representatives walked together in a powerful display of collective resolve against the menace of drugs.

The massive turnout transformed the Padayatra into a landmark event, sending a strong message that society stands united in its commitment to safeguarding future generations from substance abuse.

The success of the campaign in Shopian has been driven by a whole-of-government approach. Departments including School Education, Health, Revenue, Rural Development, Social Welfare, Youth Services & Sports, Excise, Police, Drug Control Organisation and other stakeholder departments have worked in close coordination to ensure effective implementation of the campaign.

## SKUAST-K Holds Apple Leaf Blotch Miner Awareness Programme at Tujjar Sharief

Experts Advocate Scientific Management of Apple Leaf Blotch Miner

#### DR. AB QAYOOM

**BARAMULLA, JUN 19:** In an effort to strengthen scientific pest management practices among orchardists, an awareness programme on the management of Apple Leaf Blotch Miner was organised at Tujjar Sharief in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. The programme was sponsored by SKUAST-K and held at the Community Hall in the village, drawing the participation of a large number of apple growers from the area. Dean Faculty of Agriculture, Prof. Shakeel Ahmad Mir, attended the event as the chief guest, while Prof. Mohammad Jamal Ahmad, Head of the Division of Entomology, was the guest of honour. District Horticulture Officer Jagjeet Singh, scientists, research scholars and officials from the Department of Horticulture were also present. During the programme, experts from the Division of Entomology, Faculty of Agriculture, SKUAST-Kashmir, educated farmers about the identification, importance and effective management of the Apple Leaf Blotch Miner, a pest that poses a serious threat to apple production. The experts highlighted the importance of integrated pest management practices, including the use of pheromone traps, safe and judi-



icious application of insecticides, proper timing of spray schedules and post-harvest management techniques to reduce the risks associated with excessive pesticide use. Practical demonstrations on the installation and use of pheromone traps were also conducted to provide farmers with hands-on experience in pest monitoring and control. The participating farmers appreciated the initiative and urged the university to organise more such awareness programmes to enhance their

knowledge and improve orchard productivity. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Mohammad Jamal Ahmad thanked the farmers for their active participation and assured them of continued scientific support and guidance for effective management of apple pests in the future. The programme underscored SKUAST-K's commitment to promoting sustainable horticulture and strengthening the connection between scientific research and farming communities across Kashmir.

## J&K Govt makes architects organization Nodal Body for public projects; levies 1% consultancy fee, mandates NOC for private firms

#### HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:** In a significant move aimed at streamlining the public infrastructure development and strengthening the local institutional framework, the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD), Government of Jammu and Kashmir, has issued a landmark directive standardizing the operations and project engagement of the Jammu and Kashmir Architects Organization.

The order issued in this

regard comes in continuation of Government Order No. 58-JK(HUD) of 2026 and follows a decisive resolution passed by the Council of Ministers.

Following a decisive restructuring and re-organization framework approved by the government, the department has made the utilization of the organization's specialized services mandatory for public sector initiatives, ensuring robust architectural oversight across the Union Territory.

The order comes in continuation of recent structural reforms and follows a formal resolution passed to optimize the execution of state-funded and government-backed infrastructure projects.

As per the key highlights of the directive, all government departments, public sector undertakings and executing agencies are now required to utilize the architectural, design and master-planning expertise of the Jammu and Kashmir Architects Organization for public projects.

The J&K Architects Organization has been designated as the Nodal Technical Body for providing the architectural consultancy, comprehensive design and technical vetting services. In instances where the engagement of private architectural firms is deemed absolutely necessary, obtaining a prior No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the J&K Architects Organization is strictly mandatory.

To regularize and sustain the technical services, an official, uniform consultancy

fee of 1% will be levied on the total project cost for all works where architectural and consultancy services are rendered by the organization.

This comprehensive directive is expected to optimize the state resource allocation, ensure strict adherence to standardized regional and sustainable architectural guidelines. It will also foster institutional efficiency across all upcoming public works and urban development initiatives in Jammu & Kashmir.

### Director Skill Development reviews functioning of ITI, GPC Bandipora

#### HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, JUNE 19:** Director, Skill Development Department, Dr. Owais Ahmad, today visited Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Bandipora and Government Polytechnic College (GPC) Bandipora to review their functioning and assess the quality of skill development and technical education being imparted to students.

During the visit, Dr. Owais inspected the available infrastructure, training facilities, machinery and equipment in both institutions. He also interacted with faculty members and students to gain firsthand feedback regarding the academic and training environment.

The Director reviewed the employability prospects of students passing out from these institutions and discussed measures to enhance their employment opportunities. He stressed the importance of industry-oriented training programmes and underscored the need to align skill development initiatives with emerging market demands.

Highlighting the rapid technological changes taking place globally, Dr. Owais emphasized the inclusion of new-age courses such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Electric Vehicle (EV) technologies in the curriculum. He said efforts are underway to revamp and modernize skill development institutions under the upcoming Mission Skill initiative to ensure that students are equipped with contemporary skills and industry-relevant knowledge.

# CS reviews arrangements for Annual Mela Kheer Bhawani at Tulmulla

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL, JUNE 19:** Chief Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Atal Dulloo today visited the Mata Kheer Bhawani Temple at Tulmulla and reviewed the arrangements being put in place for the smooth conduct of the annual Mela Kheer Bhawani.

Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department and Health & Medical Education Department, M. Raju; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg; Vice Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir, Prof. A. Ravindra Nath; Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore; Director Urban Local Bodies Kashmir; Director Health Services Kashmir; Senior Superintendent of Police Ganderbal, besides senior officers from civil and police administration, Central University of Kashmir, Dharmarth Trust and line departments were present on the occasion.

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, briefed the Chief Secretary about the arrangements being put in place for the annual mela. He informed that comprehensive measures have been undertaken to ensure comfortable accommodation for devotees, including lodging facilities within the temple premises including Yatri Niwas and at the Central University of Kashmir campus, besides



at other local educational institutions and in tents.

He also apprised the visiting dignitary of the provision of langar facilities, drinking water supply, uninterrupted power, sanitation, medical assistance, parking management and traffic regulation. He informed that special focus has been laid on cleanliness of the shrine premises, illumination of approach roads, establishment of help desks, public address systems and facilitation measures for elderly and differently-abled devotees.

During the visit, the Chief Sec-

retary inspected various facilities within the shrine complex and took stock of the preparedness of different departments. He reviewed arrangements related to sanitation, drinking water supply, power availability, lighting, public conveniences, medical aid, security, traffic management and other essential services being provided for devotees.

The Chief Secretary also inspected the Medical Aid Centre established at the shrine and directed the Health Department to ensure adequate availability of doctors, paramedical staff,

medicines, ambulances and emergency response facilities during the mela period.

Earlier, the Chief Secretary also visited the Main Campus of the Central University of Kashmir (CUK), Tulmulla, where accommodation facilities have been arranged for visiting devotees.

He inspected the tentage area, Science Block, Administrative Block and other designated areas identified for lodging of pilgrims and reviewed the arrangements being made for their comfortable stay.

During the inspection, he reviewed the availability of

accommodation facilities, tents, bedding, sanitation arrangements, drinking water supply, power backup, lighting and toilet facilities. He also inspected the sites earmarked for langar services and directed the concerned agencies to ensure proper hygiene, cleanliness and adequate facilities for devotees.

The Chief Secretary further reviewed the parking plan and movement of vehicles within and around the campus. He emphasized the need for proper traffic regulation, designated parking spaces, clear signage and hassle-free movement of devotees to avoid congestion during peak hours.

Interacting with officers on the occasion, the Chief Secretary stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among all departments to ensure that devotees are provided a safe, comfortable and dignified experience. He directed the concerned officers to complete all remaining works within the stipulated timeframe and maintain round-the-clock monitoring of arrangements.

Describing Mela Kheer Bhawani as a significant religious occasion and an enduring symbol of Kashmir's rich composite culture, the Chief Secretary called upon all stakeholders to work with dedication and a spirit of public service to ensure the successful and peaceful conduct of the annual mela.

## DC Anantnag reviews 12th International Yoga Day preparations

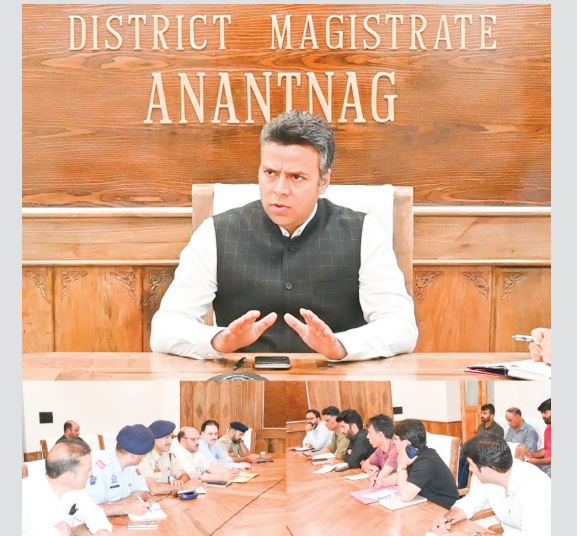
■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, JUNE 19:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat chaired a comprehensive meeting today at DC office, to review the preparations for forthcoming 12th International Yoga Day, scheduled to be celebrated across the district on June 21.

The meeting was attended by ACR, Principal SHMM GDC Anantnag, CMO, CEO, DAO, DySP HQ, DySP DAR, DEPO, Exen R&B, Inspector Traffic, representatives from MCA, YSS & KPDCI and other concerned officials.

At the outset, the District Ayush Officer (DAO) briefed the chair about the schedule and arrangements for the important event. He informed that the mega function, in sync with the national level event, will be organised at district headquarter while three major events; one each at Pahalgam, Kokernag and Verinag have also been planned.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that International Yoga Day is not merely a one-day event but a reminder to adopt healthier habits and lifestyles. He took a comprehensive review of the arrangements



being put in place for the district as well as sub-district level events and assigned department-wise responsibilities to ensure smooth and successful conduct of the programme. He stressed that all necessary arrangements be put in place in a hassle free and meticulous way so the event is made iconic and meaningful.

Emphasizing that yoga is a simple yet effective tool for achieving physical fitness, mental wellness and inner harmony, the DC called for making the event inclusive and vibrant by involving all stakeholders. He said that the purpose of the function is to promote Yoga as a routine activity so that its health, psychological and other benefits are availed by people.

Dr. Bilal directed the concerned departments to encourage participation of students, youth, officials, sports persons, civil society members and the general public. He tasked the AYUSH and Youth Services & Sports departments to facilitate participants by arranging yoga mats, uniforms and other necessary equipment. He further instructed the Police Officers to put in place a comprehensive security plan and an effective traffic management strategy, in coordination with Traffic Police and MVD to ensure safe and hassle-free movement of participants.

The meeting also reviewed arrangements related to drinking water, sanitation, medical aid, ambulance services, power supply and overall venue management. The Health Department was directed to ensure the availability of medical teams, first-aid facilities and ambulances at all designated venues.

Concluding the meeting, the DC underscored the need for close coordination among all departments to make the celebration a grand success and transform it into a district-wide movement for overall health and wellness of the community.

## DC Kulgam chairs DLRC/DCC meeting

Reviews performance of Banks, Line Departments

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM, JUNE 19:** A meeting of the District Level Review Committee/District Consultative Committee (DLRC/DCC) for Q5 FY 2025-26 was held today under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, here at Mini Secretariat Kulgam to review the performance of banks and sponsoring departments under various Government initiatives and flagship schemes for the financial year 2025-26.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Viqar Ahmad Giri; DLO RBI, Vishal Gupta, Lead District Manager (Banks), Iftikhar Ahmad Padder; Director RSETI, Mohd Ayoub, Other District Officers and representatives of banks and financial institutions operating in Kulgam.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner, who is also Chairman of the DLRC/DCC, conducted a detailed sector-wise review of banks' performance in implementing various Government schemes. He also assessed achievements under Priority and Non-Priority Sector lending in line with the Annual Credit Plan.

Addressing on the occasion, the DC urged banks and sponsoring agencies to focus on achieving Priority Sector Lending targets and emphasized improving ease of access to banking facilities for consumers.

The DC stressed effective implementation of self-employment schemes including Mission YUVA, Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, and other livelihood-oriented initiatives.

He also emphasized strengthening financial inclusion through proper handholding of beneficiaries to enhance credit outreach.

He further directed banks to sensitize their staff to deal with customers compassionately and ensure timely redressal of public grievances.

The DC emphasized close coordination between banks and sponsoring agencies for seamless implementation of self-employment schemes, enabling beneficiaries to establish income-generating units effectively.

During the meeting, it was informed that YOY Deposits of the District have increased from Rs 2826.01 Crore to Rs 3149.62 Crore witnessing 11.09% increase, Advances have grown from Rs 2347.24 Crore to Rs 2651.01 Crore witnessing 12.94% growth. Further as far as District Credit Plan is concerned against a target of Rs 2051.94 Crore for FY 2025-26, the achievement as on 31-03-2026 is Rs 2330.93 Crore which is 88% of the fixed target.

Further, The Pre-PLP meeting for FY 2027-28 was convened in DLRC, during which the AGM (District Development Manager), NABARD, Junaid Ahmad Hakim delivered a detailed presentation highlighting the district's credit potential, sectoral trends, and development priorities. Following extensive deliberations among the stakeholders, it was resolved to adopt a credit projection of Rs. 2,200 crore for FY 2027-28.

## DC ANANTNAG VISITS MATA RAGNIYA BHAGWATI TEMPLE LOGRIPORA

Takes stock of arrangements for Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, JUNE 19:** Ahead of the upcoming Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela scheduled on June 22, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat today visited the revered Mata Ragniya Bhagwati Temple, Logripora Aishmuqam and took first hand stock of arrangements that have been put in place by various line departments for smooth conduct of the pilgrimage.

The DC was accompanied by ADC, ACR, SDM Pahalgam, CMO, Tehsildar, BDO, BMO, officials of R&B, KPDCI & Jal Shakti, EO MC Ashmuqam, and other concerned officials.

Reviewing the arrangements, the DC instructed that all essential facilities including water supply, electricity, accommodation and bedding be provided to the devotees in a smooth and hassle free manner. He inquired from the concerned officers about deployment of fire tenders, installation of Shamiyana, availability of LPG for langars and blankets for devotees besides the status of special RTC bus service for ferrying the pilgrims. He further called for extending the necessary logistical support to the devo-



tees and pilgrims visiting the place for their ease, convenience and pleasant experience.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner met with the community representatives, assuring them of full administrative support so they perform the religious activities in a traditional and comfortable way. He also interacted with the devotees, stressing for preserving the religious and cultural significance of the place.

Dr. Bilal emphasized the impor-

tance of close coordination between line departments and community members to facilitate organisation of religious and other associated activities. He further asked the departments to ensure proper functioning of their deployed units for smooth execution of the assigned tasks.

The community representatives and the devotees appreciated the district administration for extending full cooperation and assistance during the auspicious days.

## Director Skill Development, DC Bandipora review implementation of Vibrant Village Programme-II in district

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, JUNE 19:** Director, Skill Development Department and Prabhari Officer for Vibrant Village Programme-II (VVP-II) for Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmad, along with Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Friday reviewed the implementation and progress of the programme in Neeru and Purana Tulail (Jurniyal) villages of Tulail Block during a meeting held at the Mini Secretariat Bandipora.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner presented a detailed overview of the implementation of VVP-II in the identified villages, highlighting ongoing interventions, developmental priorities and infrastructure requirements. Officers from various departments presented village-specific action plans and updates relating to key sectors. Dr. Owais Ahmad stressed the



need for effective inter-departmental coordination, timely submission of proposals and expeditious execution of developmental works. He emphasized that all infrastructure gaps should be identified and addressed in a mission mode to ensure holistic and sustainable development of the border villages under VVP-II.

It was informed that under VVP-II, 28 villages across the border blocks of Bagtore and Tulail have been identified, with Kanzalwan Nayle, Kilshay, Neeru and Purana Tulail selected as key strategic villages under the programme. The meeting reviewed progress under various thematic areas including road connectivity, telecom services, electrification, livelihood generation, education, healthcare and other essential infrastructure.

Discussions focused on strengthening mobile and internet connectivity in remote border areas, improving on-grid electri-

fication, establishment of solar parks and addressing critical infrastructure gaps in the identified villages. The meeting also reviewed departmental proposals aimed at ensuring saturation of services and improving the quality of life of residents in these far-flung border areas.

The Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of practical, sustainable and community-oriented planning under the programme and stressed the need for convergence among departments to maximize the impact of developmental interventions while improving essential services in remote border areas.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Zaffar Husson Shawl, Chief Planning Officer Bandipora, Programme Officer ICDS Bandipora, ACD Bandipora, ACP Bandipora, CMO Bandipora, BDOs and other district and sectoral officers.

# JKAACL showcases Duggar folk traditions at Ramkot cultural programme

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KATHUA, JUNE 19:** The Sub-Office of Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) Kathua today organised a cultural programme at Higher Secondary School Ramkot as part of the Historic Annual Chowgan Mela celebrations to promote and preserve the folk traditions and cultural heritage of the Duggar region. Member of Legislative Assembly Billawar Satish Sharma attended as Chief Guest. The programme drew enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, local residents and cultural enthusiasts.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Guest appreciated JKAACL's efforts in promoting the diverse cultural traditions of Jammu and



Kashmir, describing folk art forms and traditional music as a vital link between generations and the cultural roots of the region. He lauded

the Academy for taking cultural programmes to rural areas and educational institutions. Renowned singer Bishan Dass,

known for his song "Zindagi Sohni Hai," enthralled the audience with his melodious renditions. The programme also featured a presenta-

tion of the traditional folk art form Geetru by folk artist Chatto Ram and his troupe. A significant tradition of the Duggar region, Geetru combines narrative singing, dance movements and theatrical expressions, with the lead performer supported by chorus singers and accompanied by Dholak and Chimta. Special Officer Cultural Activities Sub-Office JKAACL Kathua Sanjeev Gupta reiterated the Academy's commitment to preserving and promoting the cultural legacy of Jammu and Kashmir. He stated that under the guidance of Secretary JKAACL Harvinder Kour, the Academy has been organising cultural initiatives across the Union Territory to provide a platform to artists and strengthen connections with traditional art forms.

## CIPMC Srinagar organizes "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" programme at Sopore

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA, JUNE 19:** CIPMC Srinagar organized "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" at District Agriculture Office, Sopore, Baramulla in collaboration with State Agriculture Department officials and farmers of Baramulla District.

The programme was attended around 50 people to make it a huge campaign. Dr. Muzaffar Talib, SMS



(SDL) and Dr. Masooda Bano, SMS (SDL), who were also designated as Nodal Officers of National Pest Surveillance System of the district, chaired the programme.

Abir Shankhari, Assistant Plant Protection Officer, demonstrated various tools and techniques of IPM, and also discussed about "Safe & Quality Use of Pesticides". He also gave a detailed training to farmers and state department officials, about NPSS and how to use the application.

Kawal Nain Singh, Scientific Assistant, gave a brief lecture about "100% Seed Treatment". Similarly, Dr. Muzaffar Talib, gave a valuable lecture about Soil Testing and Natural Farming.

Dr. Masooda Bano shared valuable points about precautions of pesticide spraying and prevention of sell/buying spurious pesticides.

## Secretary RDD reviews progress of UT Capex works, stresses timely completion of DDC, BDC infrastructure projects

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:** Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) & Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, today chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the progress of works being executed under the UT Capex 2026-27 programme and reviewed various infrastructure projects related to District Development Councils (DDCs), Block Development Councils (BDCs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

The meeting was attended by Director Rural



Development Kashmir, Riyaz Ahmad Wani; Director Rural Development Jammu, Shahnaz Akhtar; Director Finance, Umar Khan; Joint Director Planning, Kamal Kumar Sharma; Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs), Executive Engineers and other senior officers of the Department.

During the meeting, the Secretary conducted a detailed district-wise review of ongoing and newly sanctioned projects and emphasized the need for timely completion of works and efficient utilization of funds. He directed the officers to ensure immediate billing of all completed works and asserted that delays at any stage of project execution would not be tolerated.

The Secretary further instructed the officers to expeditiously resolve issues related to land availability and approach roads. He said that wherever land is unavailable at the identified site, alternative suitable land should be earmarked without delay.

Aijaz Asad underscored that both Directors of Rural Development should closely monitor the billing of released funds on a daily basis and ensure that all completed works are billed within one week.

Reviewing ongoing projects, he directed the concerned officers to clear all liabilities and maintain the momentum of implementation. He also called for expediting the execution of newly approved works and instructed that estimates and other procedural formalities be completed at the earliest to facilitate timely commencement of projects.

The Secretary also reviewed the progress of works being executed under the Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) and stressed the importance of their early completion.

Further, he directed the preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for the construction of four Panchayat Bhawans in Jammu and Kashmir, including two each in the Jammu and Kashmir divisions.

Referring to the Viksit Village Initiative, he informed that financial approval has already been received and instructed officers to finalize and freeze the village wise DPRs within one week so that works could be initiated in right earnest.

Highlighting the achievements under the UT Capex programme, the Secretary was informed that the Department has undertaken 2,718 Community Development works across the Union Territory during 2026-27, including 1,530 ongoing works and 1,188 newly approved works. Besides, the Department is implementing 58 institutional infrastructure projects comprising District Development Council (DDC) office buildings, Block Development Council (BDC) office buildings and PRI residential accommodation across Jammu and Kashmir.

He reiterated that the timely completion of these projects is essential for strengthening grassroots institutions and enhancing rural infrastructure across the Union Territory.

## Koshur Foundation and MMAA Organise Jointly Interactive Session with Theatre Artists in Sgr

GULFAM BARJI

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:**

Koshur Foundation, in collaboration with Manzoor Mir's Academy of Arts (MMAA) Pattan Kashmir organised an interactive session with theatre artists at the Cultural Academy Lal Mandi Srinagar. The event featured distinguished guests from Rajasthan, Shri Ramesh Borana former Chairman of the Rajasthan Sangeet Natak Akademy and Ms. Benaka Jaismalo former Chairperson of the Rajasthan Sangeet Natak Akademy. The programme was presided over by Manzoor Ahmad Mir, Director of Koshur Foundation and President of MMAA. The session brought together theatre artists, writers, directors, cultural activists and



Bhand Pather performers to discuss the current state of theatre in Kashmir, preservation of traditional art forms and opportunities for cultural collaboration. Speakers emphasized the

importance of institutional support, cultural exchange, and inter-state cooperation in strengthening theatre and the performing arts. Participants also expressed their commitment to promoting

Kashmir's rich theatrical heritage. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks and a renewed commitment to strengthening cultural ties between Kashmir and Rajasthan.

## Safai Karamcharis meet Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani at Raabita

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:** A delegation of Safai Karamcharis of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) met Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani at Chief Minister's Raabita Office regarding their demands for regularization of Casual Safai Karamcharis working in different ULBs.

The Union apprised Advisor of its various demands, including regularisation of Casual Safai Karamcharis who have been working for several years in different ULBs. The Advisor informed the delegation about the steps being taken by the Government and assured to address all genuine demands of the ULB employees in a time bound manner.

The issue of pending promotions in the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of Kashmir Division also came up for discussion during the meeting. It was decided that all ULBs in the Division shall furnish complete promotion cases to the concerned directorate on an urgent basis to facilitate the timely convening of the Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) and expedite the promotion process.

Following the assurance extended by the Advisor, the Safai Karamchari Union of the ULBs agreed to call off its strike and assured its full cooperation for ensuring proper sanitation arrangements during the forthcoming Shri Amarnathji Yatra.

A separate delegation of Safai Karamchari Union of Jammu Municipal Corporation also met Nasir Aslam Wani and raised their issues relating to their promotion and regularization. The Advisor stated that with the notification of Recruitment Rules for both Gazetted and Sub-ordinate Services of the JMC, decks have been cleared for promotion of the eligible employees as well as filling up of vacant posts and also assured that further modifications shall be considered in the Recruitment Rules to facilitate promotion of existing employees wherever required. He also issued directions to the Commissioner, JMC, to take consequential action for effective implementation of notified recruitment rules.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the representatives of Safai Karamchari Union thanked the Advisor, Commissioner Secretary, HUDD and Commissioner, JMC for their intervention and efforts towards resolution of their long pending issues.

The meeting was attended by the Commissioner Secretary to Government, HUDD, Commissioner, JMC, Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu and other officers of the Housing and Urban Development Department.

**Ministry of Culture**  
Government of India

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

**J&K ACADEMY OF ART, CULTURE & LANGUAGES**

**NATIONAL SCHOOL OF DRAMA**  
(An Autonomous Institution of 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 20<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

Interested aspirants may collect the application forms from NSD, TIE Centre, Srinagar, Cultural Academy Campus, Lal Mandi, Srinagar from **10<sup>th</sup> 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  
**9419059895, 9419422935**

Director  
National School of Drama

**Space devoted by Headlines Today in purely Public Interest**

HT EDITORIAL

₹175 Crore Lifeline :  
A Timely Rescue for  
Kashmir's Healthcare  
Safety Net

The decision of the Jammu and Kashmir Government to release Rs. 175 crore for the settlement of pending claims under the Ayushman Bharat-PM-JAY SEHAT Scheme has come as a much-needed relief for both healthcare providers and beneficiaries across the Union Territory. More importantly, it has averted what could have become a serious disruption in healthcare services for millions of residents who depend on the scheme for cashless treatment.

The announcement has persuaded private hospitals and dialysis centres to suspend their proposed withdrawal from the programme, a move that had threatened to create uncertainty in the healthcare sector from July 1. Had the de-panelsment gone ahead, patients requiring critical treatments such as dialysis, cancer care, cardiac procedures, intensive care and emergency services would have faced immense difficulties. In that context, the government's intervention deserves appreciation for recognizing the urgency of the situation and acting before the crisis escalated further.

The SEHAT Scheme has emerged as one of the most significant social welfare initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir. By extending health insurance coverage to virtually every resident, it has reduced the financial burden of medical treatment and improved access to quality healthcare. However, the success of any such programme depends not only on its vision but also on its execution. Timely reimbursement to empanelled hospitals is the backbone of the entire system. Without financial sustainability for service providers, even the most ambitious healthcare schemes risk losing their effectiveness.

The concerns raised by private hospitals were not without merit. Healthcare institutions function through a complex network of expenses, including salaries, medicines, medical equipment, infrastructure maintenance and patient care services. When reimbursements remain pending for months, hospitals inevitably face financial strain. The reported accumulation of liabilities exceeding Rs. 250 crore was a warning sign that could not be ignored. The possibility of major private healthcare providers exiting the scheme highlighted the need for immediate corrective measures.

The release of Rs. 175 crore, therefore, should be viewed as more than just a financial transaction. It represents a recognition that healthcare partnerships require trust and accountability from all stakeholders. The government's assurance has restored confidence, at least temporarily, and demonstrated its commitment to preserving uninterrupted healthcare access for the public.

Yet, while the immediate crisis may have been defused, the larger challenge remains unresolved. A one-time release of funds cannot substitute for a robust and predictable reimbursement mechanism. Recurrent payment delays create uncertainty, discourage participation and ultimately affect the quality of healthcare delivery. If such situations are allowed to recur, the scheme may repeatedly find itself on the brink of disruption.

The need of the hour is a long-term institutional solution. Transparent timelines for claim processing, streamlined verification procedures, digital monitoring of reimbursements and regular engagement with healthcare providers can help prevent future disputes. Building a system where hospitals receive payments within a defined timeframe would strengthen confidence and ensure the sustainability of the programme.

For now, patients across Jammu and Kashmir can breathe easier knowing that healthcare services under the SEHAT Scheme will continue without interruption. The government's intervention has bought valuable time and protected the interests of beneficiaries. The real test, however, lies ahead. What healthcare providers and the public will be watching closely is not merely the announcement of funds, but the speed of their disbursement and the government's ability to establish a durable solution that prevents such crises from recurring.

The Rs. 175 crore package has provided an essential lifeline. Turning that relief into lasting stability must now become the next priority.

Why The Bridge Is Falling Down



MOOL RAJ

A lot of the research that takes place in our universities is not related to real scientific problems; research that does not contribute to the science itself or to industry, not to the economy or not to solving real socio-economic problems.

This is an even more serious problem in India as the Higher Education Commission and universities display such rankings as evidence of their performance, whereas research has boiled down to numbers with questions of a fundamental nature, like the production of new knowledge, problem-solving, and intellectual innovation being pushed aside.

Furthermore, there should be comprehensive structural changes in the process of policymaking, such as focusing on quality and impact rather than quantity of publications; developing long-term coherent research programs; fostering genuine linkages between universities, industry, and the state; and organizing and providing an iron-clad wall to researchers and institutions to bring about a zenith in the vast field of science and technology.

Science, at its core, is the label of immortal human inquiry that seeks paths to understand the reality of self, morals, human connectivity, the existence of all living and non-living objects, and that which is beyond the limits of the far-flung universe. It is not just a set of tools and inventions; it is a way of thinking, a way of going from doubt to certainty, from dormancy to dynamism. That is why wherever there is science, there is freedom of thought, evidence-based decision-making, and a constant evolution of life. However, this consciousness has not yet become ingrained in Indian society, where knowledge is constrained behind the barriers of tradition, education is limited to rote learning, and research is under-resourced and under-prioritized. Consequently, science has become a mere curricular activity and not a driving force that discerns truths of existence.

This is no longer a general grievance but a reality in India the system of basic research is precarious. A lot of the research that takes place in our universities is not related to real scientific problems; research that does not contribute to the science itself or to industry, not to the economy or not to solving real socio-economic problems.

Industrial Revolution of the twentieth century, the advancement of 'Western science' (!) was the direct consequence of sustained and perpetual investment in fundamental research, institutional stability, and intellectual freedom. However, in India, research is limited to degree requirements, promotion, and bureaucratic exercises, rather than being a living intellectual activity.

Subsequently, a rudimentary error in our policy-making was the perception that we forcefully propel institutions to amass significant outcomes of applied research while being utterly unwilling to finance the fundamental research that intrinsically grants applied research a tangible existence. It is believed that policymakers, along with numerous researchers and educationists who ally with them, neither understand the process nor are historically aware of the magnitude that the fusion of research and policy beholds. The stark truth is that the discoveries of Isaac Newton, Marie Curie, James Clerk Maxwell, Rosalind Franklin, and many more to name were formulated owing to intoxication of pure intellectual curiosity in fundamental research, but their discoveries eventually revolutionized the industrial and scientific paradigms of the modern world.

Intellectually, there is profound emptiness. Karl Popper, in his legendary and one of the most influential 20th-century contributions, "Logic of Scientific Discovery" states that science is founded on falsifiable hypotheses, meaning that a theory is scientific only if there is a possible observation or experiment that could prove it to be incorrect, but most of our research is not clearly defined nor rigorously or critically tested. Likewise, Thomas Kuhn claimed that scientific advances happen when there are paradigm shifts, and that means a place where there is a lot of intellectual discussion, which does not typically find its place in our system. The concept of "research programs" of Imre Lakatos is also almost completely absent, because research is still individualistic and fragmented without any coherent intellectual frameworks.

In addition to these problems, there has been a disturbing trend of uncritical celebration of rankings. The listing of Stanford University's "Top 2% Scientists" and other lists are frequently touted as great accomplishments. In fact, these rankings are not officially endorsed by Stanford itself and are based on bibliometric indicators such as citations, including self-citations; h-index; and publication counts, which

are not necessarily representative of the actual impact of scientific work. Many great scientists, including Albert Einstein and Paul Dirac, have gained their importance through their revolutionary theories rather than the number of publications. In terms of today's standards, they may not even be in the top of such rankings and metrics. Many great scientists are not included in or even listed on these lists today. This is a clear indication that scientific greatness is not confined or bound by numerical values.

This is an even more serious problem in India as the Higher Education Commission and universities display such rankings as evidence of their performance, whereas research has boiled down to numbers with questions of a fundamental nature, like the production of new knowledge, problem-solving, and intellectual innovation being pushed aside.

Under these initiatives, a highly educated class of scholars was, to a large degree, underutilized. Virtually none was able to repeat the sophisticated research they had seen in other countries because the institutional environment in India was not conducive to high-quality experimental research, not because they were not competent. Many of the authorities that run higher education systems seem incapable—or unwilling—to grasp the basic structural issues of universities or to establish the practical conditions for the flourishing of research. The challenge has never been simply sending people overseas for training; it has always been creating institutions that can absorb and sustain that training. To achieve any meaningful reforms in India, it is important to realize that scientific advancement cannot be achieved through short-term policies or temporary initiatives. From the

are not necessarily representative of the actual impact of scientific work. Many great scientists, including Albert Einstein and Paul Dirac, have gained their importance through their revolutionary theories rather than the number of publications. In terms of today's standards, they may not even be in the top of such rankings and metrics. Many great scientists are not included in or even listed on these lists today. This is a clear indication that scientific greatness is not confined or bound by numerical values.

This is an even more serious problem in India as the Higher Education Commission and universities display such rankings as evidence of their performance, whereas research has boiled down to numbers with questions of a fundamental nature, like the production of new knowledge, problem-solving, and intellectual innovation being pushed aside. The citation-based system establishes a vicious circle: certain groups cite each other to make themselves more important, and originality and depth are neglected.

All this suggests that the issue is not simply one of resources or infrastructure, but one of intellectual direction. The first question to ask in the process of reforms is, "What is research?" Students and researchers need to be taught: how to ask questions that are meaningful and have impact; how to organize literature systematically, not just gather it, but to organize it in a coherent manner, usually by author index or subject index; how to critically interact with literature through sustained and continuous study; and how to develop scientific dialogue—testing questions through critical evaluation and experimentation.

Furthermore, there should be comprehensive structural changes in the process of policymaking, such as focusing on quality and impact rather than quantity of publications; developing long-term coherent research programs; fostering genuine linkages between universities, industry, and the state; and organizing and providing an iron-clad wall to researchers and institutions to bring about a zenith in the vast field of science and technology.

The truth is that rankings and investments will not take us forward until we take research seriously as an intellectual pursuit. The only way to scientific progress is through intellectual integrity, critical thinking, and the courage to ask questions.

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER

North Kashmir Awaits



M. S. NAZKI

"To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture." Few places embody this sentiment better than Kashmir. Travel has always been one of the greatest teachers, and Kashmir remains one of those rare destinations that awakens wonder, curiosity, and a longing to return. Yet, for many travelers, every departure from the Valley carries a touch of melancholy, as if leaving behind a cherished chapter of life.

Today, Kashmir's tourism story is entering a new and exciting phase. While Srinagar, Gulmarg, Sonamarg, and Pahalgam continue to attract millions, a new frontier of tourism is emerging in the breathtaking landscapes of North Kashmir. Remote valleys, border villages, cultural landmarks, and pristine meadows are opening their doors to travelers seeking authentic and unexplored experiences.

Among the most sought-after destinations is Gurez Valley, renowned for its traditional wooden houses, the majestic Habba Khatoon Peak, and its unique Dard-Shina culture. Situated beyond the Razdan Pass, Gurez offers visitors a glimpse into a world where nature and tradition coexist in harmony.

Equally captivating is Bangus Valley in Kupwara district, often described as one of Kashmir's last untouched alpine meadows. Spread across nearly 300 square kilometres and surrounded by towering mountain ranges, Bangus is a paradise for trekkers, campers, and nature lovers. Rich in

biodiversity, the valley is home to rare medicinal plants, musk deer, bears, pheasants, and several endangered species. Improved road connectivity and enhanced security have transformed Bangus into one of the most promising tourism destinations in the Himalayas.

Another gem is Keran Valley, situated along the banks of the Kishanganga River near the Line of Control. The valley offers spectacular views, rich tribal traditions, and an experience unlike any other destination in Kashmir. Nearby destinations such as Machhal, Karnah, Tangdhar, and Lolab further enrich North Kashmir's tourism landscape with their unique cultural and natural attractions.

North Kashmir is not merely about scenic beauty. It is also a repository of history and heritage. The Kalaroo Cave Complex, steeped in folklore and mystery, attracts history enthusiasts and researchers alike. Ancient sites such as Parihaspora, once the capital of Emperor Lalitaditya Muktapada, stand as reminders of Kashmir's glorious past. Religious landmarks including Bhadrakali Temple in Handwara, Datta Mandir near Uri, and Gurudwara Thara Sahib in Baramulla showcase the region's rich spiritual diversity.

The tourism revival in Jammu and Kashmir has been remarkable. Following infrastructural improvements and enhanced connectivity, tourist arrivals have reached unprecedented levels. Domestic tourist visits have surged dramatically over the past few years, reflecting growing confidence in the region's safety and hospitality. The Ministry of Tourism continues to promote Jammu and Kashmir as a priority destination, while travelers increasingly seek experiences beyond conventional tourist circuits.

A significant milestone in this journey was recently achieved with the launch of the Shumali Kashmir Tourism Portal and the North Kashmir Tourism Magazine. Developed through

the collaboration of the District Administration Kupwara and the Indian Army, these initiatives aim to showcase destinations such as Keran, Karnah, Machhal, Lolab, Gurez, Tangdhar, and Kupwara to a global audience.

The launch event also highlighted local entrepreneurship through exhibitions featuring products and enterprises from across the region. From hospitality ventures to locally manufactured products and traditional crafts, the event demonstrated how tourism can drive economic growth, create employment opportunities, empower women, and inspire youth participation.

The history of tourism in Kashmir stretches back centuries. Chinese monk Xuanzang visited the Valley in the seventh century to study Buddhist philosophy. Mughal emperors later transformed Kashmir into a royal retreat, while British travelers popularized it as a summer destination. The golden era of Bollywood further cemented Kashmir's image as "Paradise on Earth," with iconic locations such as Betaab Valley, Bobby Hut, and Sadhna Top becoming part of cinematic history.

Today, tourism in Kashmir is witnessing another renaissance. Travelers are venturing beyond familiar destinations in search of authenticity, adventure, and cultural immersion. North Kashmir offers all of these and more. Its snow-capped peaks, emerald valleys, crystal-clear rivers, ancient monuments, and warm-hearted people combine to create an unforgettable experience.

The future of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir lies not only in preserving its celebrated landmarks but also in introducing visitors to its hidden treasures. North Kashmir stands ready to welcome the world with open arms.

The mountains are calling. The valleys are waiting. North Kashmir awaits—pack your bags and discover a land where every journey becomes a story worth telling.

15TH ANNIVERSARY HEADLINES TODAY

Chief Patron Of Lubaab Publications Group:  
Syed Sad Ud Din Bukhari (Saidi),  
Printer Publisher, Owner And Editor:  
Syed Jahangir Bukhari,  
Printed At: Lubaab Publications, Radio  
Colony Gund Hassibhat Lawaipora  
Srinagar -190017,  
Gen. Manager: Sheikh Mushtaq Ahmad  
Cell No - 9697071471,  
Editorial Section: 7006846797,  
Multimedia Section: 9419008414,  
Advertisement Section: 9697071471  
RNI No: Jkeng/2011/39231  
dailyheadlinestoday@gmail.com  
headlinestoday2024@gmail.com

# Redeeming Life at Virginia



DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

I feel that 'Retirement' is not an ending but a transformation, not a full stop but a comma in the long sentence of life. It is a period when accumulated wisdom, experience, and knowledge can be recycled into new forms of contribution, creativity, and fulfillment. In this sense, retirement becomes the recycling of life itself. Human life is a continuous process of renewal. Nature teaches us this lesson every day. Trees shed leaves only to produce fresh foliage. Rivers change course yet continue their journey toward the sea. The sun sets every evening only to rise again the next morning. Nothing in nature truly retires; it simply changes its role. Human beings are no exception. After decades of professional work, family responsibilities, and social obligations, retirement offers an opportunity to redirect energy rather than abandon it.

Charles Lamb in his essay 'Superannuation' wonderfully described the life of retirement. The most craved for leisure became painful and boring for him. All his weekdays became Sundays. He was walking all alone on the streets of London having a secret peep on the roadside book stalls. When he goes to his earlier office his own colleagues who are in service do not show much attention to him. But he relishes the salaried leisure without any burden of work. For me now passing retired moments of my life in Glen Allen Virginia with frequent visits to Virginia Commonwealth University and the James Cabell Library is an unending pleasure. To play with grand daughter and to go with my daughter and son in law to watch the World Soccer Cup at New York will be a good fun indeed. But this is not so for all. Retirement is often misunderstood as the end of a productive journey. For many people, the word itself evokes images of slowing down, withdrawing from responsibilities, and waiting quietly as the years pass. Yet the reality of retirement in the twenty-first century is vastly different.

Modern society is witnessing a remarkable demographic shift. Advances in healthcare, nutrition, and technology have increased life expectancy across the world. Millions of people now live twenty or thirty years beyond traditional retirement age. This extended lifespan presents both a challenge and an opportunity. If retirement is viewed

merely as withdrawal from work, these additional decades may seem burdensome. However, if retirement is regarded as a phase of reinvention, it becomes one of the most exciting periods of human existence. The phrase "Retired But Not Tired" captures this spirit perfectly. Retirement may conclude a career, but it does not diminish curiosity, passion, imagination, or the desire to contribute. Many retirees discover talents and interests that remained dormant during their working years. A former engineer may become a painter. A teacher may become a community activist. A banker may devote time to environmental conservation. A government officer may become a writer. Retirement thus becomes a second spring, a season of unexpected flowering.

One of the most valuable resources possessed by retirees is experience. Unlike material wealth, experience grows richer when shared. A retired professional carries within them decades of practical knowledge, problem-solving skills, and life lessons. These insights can guide younger generations navigating an increasingly complex world. Mentorship programs, volunteer initiatives, educational institutions, and community organizations benefit immensely from the involvement of experienced retirees. Their wisdom acts as a bridge between the past and the future. The concept of recycling is generally associated with environmental sustainability. We recycle paper, plastic, metal, and glass to reduce waste and create new value. The same principle can be applied to human life. Retirement is the recycling of accumulated experiences into meaningful new purposes. Instead of allowing talents to remain unused, retirees can transform them into fresh contributions that enrich society. Their knowledge becomes a renewable resource rather than a discarded asset.

Many retirees find fulfillment in community service. Freed from the pressures of professional schedules, they can devote time to causes that reflect their values and passions. Some teach underprivileged children. Others support healthcare initiatives, literacy campaigns, cultural organizations, or environmental projects. Their involvement not only benefits society but also enhances their own sense of purpose and well-being. Studies consistently show that individuals engaged in volunteer activities enjoy better mental health, stronger social connections, and greater life satisfaction. Retirement also offers an opportunity for lifelong learning. Contrary to outdated assumptions, learning does not cease with age. The human brain retains remarkable adaptability throughout life. Retirees increasingly enroll in courses, attend workshops, learn new languages, study history, explore philosophy, or master digital

technologies. Education becomes a source of intellectual stimulation and personal growth. Learning keeps the mind active, expands perspectives, and fosters confidence in navigating a rapidly changing world.

Creativity often flourishes during retirement. Years of professional responsibilities may leave little time for artistic pursuits. Retirement removes many of these constraints, allowing individuals to explore writing, painting, music, photography, gardening, and other creative activities. Artistic expression provides emotional fulfillment and a sense of achievement. It transforms retirement from a period of passive leisure into one of active self-discovery.

The recycling of life is particularly evident in the stories of individuals who embark on entirely new careers after retirement. Some become entrepreneurs, launching businesses based on their expertise or personal interests. Others become consultants, authors, speakers, or researchers. Their second careers often differ dramatically from their first, reflecting passions that were previously postponed. Such examples challenge stereotypes about aging and demonstrate that innovation and ambition are not confined to youth.

Technology has further expanded opportunities for retirees. Digital platforms enable older adults to connect, learn, teach, and contribute regardless of geographical boundaries. A retired professor can offer online lectures to students across continents. A former journalist can publish articles on global platforms. A skilled craftsman can share tutorials with millions of viewers. Technology transforms retirement from a localized experience into a global engagement. Another important dimension of retirement is the opportunity to strengthen family relationships. During working years, professional commitments often limit the time available for loved ones. Retirement provides a chance to reconnect with family members, support younger generations, and create lasting memories. Grandparents play a crucial role in transmitting cultural values, family histories, and moral lessons. Their presence enriches family life and strengthens intergenerational bonds.

The emotional transition into retirement, however, is not always easy. Many individuals derive a significant portion of their identity from their professions. The end of a career can create feelings of uncertainty or loss. This challenge underscores the importance of viewing retirement not as an absence of work but as the beginning of new possibilities. Purpose remains essential at every stage of life. Those who approach retirement with curiosity and openness are more likely to experience fulfillment and hap-

piness. Physical health is another critical aspect of successful retirement. Active lifestyles contribute significantly to longevity and quality of life. Walking, yoga, swimming, gardening, and other forms of exercise help maintain strength, flexibility, and overall well-being. Physical activity also supports mental health by reducing stress and enhancing mood. Retirement provides the time needed to prioritize health, transforming it from an afterthought into a central life goal. The concept of retirement varies across cultures, yet the underlying human desire for meaning remains universal. In many traditional societies, elders are respected as custodians of wisdom and experience. Their guidance is valued in family and community decision-making. Modern societies can benefit from rediscovering this appreciation for older adults. Rather than viewing aging populations as economic burdens, communities should recognize them as reservoirs of knowledge, resilience, and social capital.

Retirement also invites reflection on the deeper questions of life. Freed from many external pressures, individuals often contemplate their values, beliefs, and legacy. Such reflection can lead to spiritual growth and inner peace. Whether through religious practice, meditation, philosophy, or personal introspection, retirees often develop a richer understanding of themselves and their place in the world. This inner journey represents another form of recycling, transforming experience into wisdom. The idea of legacy is central to the recycling of life. Every individual leaves behind something of value—knowledge, kindness, creativity, relationships, or contributions to society. Retirement offers the opportunity to shape that legacy consciously. Writing memoirs, mentoring young people, supporting charitable causes, or preserving cultural traditions are ways of ensuring that personal experiences continue to influence future generations.

Economic considerations remain important in retirement, but financial security alone does not guarantee happiness. True fulfillment arises from engagement, purpose, and connection. A retiree who remains intellectually curious, socially active, and emotionally connected often enjoys a richer life than someone with greater financial resources but little sense of direction. Retirement is ultimately about how time is used rather than how money is accumulated. The world today faces numerous challenges, including social inequality, environmental degradation, cultural fragmentation, and educational disparities. Retirees possess valuable skills that can contribute to addressing these issues. Their experience, patience, and perspective are assets that society

cannot afford to waste. Encouraging their participation in public life benefits communities while also enriching the lives of retirees themselves. The idea of not being tired embodies a powerful philosophy of vibrant life. It rejects the notion that growing older means becoming irrelevant. Instead, it celebrates resilience, adaptability, and continued growth. Retirement becomes a period of renewal in which old experiences generate new possibilities. Like recycled materials transformed into useful products, the knowledge and wisdom accumulated over a lifetime can be reshaped into meaningful contributions. Ultimately, the recycling of life is a celebration of human potential. Every stage of life has its own purpose and beauty. Childhood is a time of discovery, youth a period of ambition, adulthood an era of responsibility, and retirement a season of reflection, creativity, and contribution. Far from being a decline, retirement can represent the culmination of a lifetime's learning and the beginning of a new chapter filled with opportunities.

Life does not become less valuable with age. On the contrary, it acquires greater depth, richness, and significance. Retirement is not about stepping aside from life; it is about engaging with it in new and meaningful ways. It is the art of transforming experience into wisdom, knowledge into service, and time into purpose. Those who embrace this philosophy discover that retirement is not a sunset but a sunrise, not a conclusion but a renewal. They are retired from their jobs, perhaps, but never tired of living, learning, loving, and contributing. Through the recycling of life, they continue to inspire, create, and leave an enduring impact on the world around them. After long forty years of busy schedule as a professor and columnist cum poet, now I really have enough time for looking patiently at a sunset or a sunrise or for doing meditation on the balcony. I enjoy my walk all alone on the sidewalk of Glen Allen regular roads watching children coming back home by school bus or the American old lady on her evening stroll with her dog. The small flowers that bloom on the sidewalks of the boulevard give me the limitless joy that once gladdened the poetic heart of Wordsworth the apostle of nature on the London meadows.

**International Tagore Awardee multilingual writer Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee is former Affiliate Faculty Virginia Commonwealth University & Retd. Head Post Graduate Dept of English Dum Dum Motijheel College. Glen Allen Mobile +1(804)-564-2383 email profdratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com**

## The Narcissism Trap

When Self-Love Turns Into Self-Obsession



SURINDERPAL SINGH

In recent years, the term narcissism has become increasingly common in everyday conversations. It is often used to describe individuals who appear excessively self-centered, attention-seeking, arrogant, or lacking empathy. While a healthy level of self-esteem is essential for psychological well-being, narcissism represents an exaggerated and unhealthy focus on oneself that can harm relationships, workplaces, families, and society at large. In today's digital age, where social media and personal branding dominate public life, understanding narcissism has become more important than ever.

Narcissism is a psychological trait characterized by an inflated sense of self-importance, a constant need for admiration, and a lack of genuine empathy for others. The concept originates from the ancient Greek myth of Narcissus, a young man who became so captivated by his own reflection that he ultimately perished while gazing at it. Psychologists explain that narcissistic individu-

als often view themselves as superior, unique, or more deserving than others. They crave recognition and validation and become upset when they do not receive the admiration they believe they deserve. Beneath this outward confidence often lies fragile self-esteem and extreme sensitivity to criticism.

It is important to understand that narcissism exists on a spectrum. Most people occasionally display narcissistic tendencies during periods of success or insecurity. However, when these traits become persistent and disruptive, they can negatively affect both personal and professional life.

In severe cases, narcissism may develop into Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD), a recognized mental health condition. NPD is characterized by long-term patterns of grandiosity, an excessive need for admiration, and impaired empathy. Individuals suffering from this disorder often exaggerate their achievements, believe they are superior to others, seek constant praise, feel entitled to special treatment, and may exploit others for personal gain. They frequently struggle to understand the feelings of others and often react with anger, hostility, or humiliation when criticized. However, not everyone who displays narcissistic traits has NPD. The difference lies in the severity, persistence, and impact of these behaviors on daily functioning.

Psychologists believe narcissism develops through a combination of biological, psycho-

logical, and environmental influences. Excessive praise without realistic feedback during childhood, overprotective parenting that fosters entitlement, emotional neglect that creates a lifelong search for validation, childhood trauma, insecurity, and social environments that prioritize status, appearance, and achievement over character can all contribute to its development. In many cases, narcissism serves as a psychological defense mechanism, masking deeper feelings of inadequacy and vulnerability.

Although narcissistic individuals often appear confident and successful, their behavior can create significant challenges. One of the most damaging consequences is strained relationships. Because narcissistic individuals focus heavily on their own needs, they often struggle with empathy and emotional intimacy. Friends, partners, and family members may feel ignored, manipulated, unappreciated, or emotionally exhausted, leading to conflict, loneliness, and broken relationships. In professional settings, narcissistic individuals may initially seem ambitious and charismatic. However, their inability to accept criticism, tendency to take credit for others' work, and constant need for recognition often create workplace tension. Such behavior weakens teamwork, increases conflicts, and ultimately affects organizational productivity. Despite their outward confidence, many narcissistic individuals depend heavily on external validation. When admiration is unavailable,

they may experience anxiety, depression, anger, feelings of emptiness, and extreme sensitivity to criticism. Excessive self-confidence can also lead them to underestimate risks and overestimate their abilities, resulting in poor decisions involving finances, careers, and relationships.

Many experts argue that modern society unintentionally encourages narcissistic tendencies. Social media platforms provide endless opportunities for self-promotion and validation. Likes, comments, shares, and followers often become measures of self-worth. Individuals may become increasingly preoccupied with appearance, popularity, online image, and social status. Over time, the constant pursuit of online approval can strengthen narcissistic attitudes and behaviors. The culture of individualism has further intensified this trend. Modern societies increasingly celebrate personal success, fame, and self-promotion. While ambition is valuable, excessive emphasis on individual achievement can weaken empathy, cooperation, and community values. Similarly, the glorification of wealth, beauty, and status often sends the message that external recognition matters more than character, integrity, and compassion. Such influences can shape unrealistic expectations, particularly among young people.

Narcissism is not merely an individual problem; it can affect entire communities and social systems. Reduced empathy, increased social division, greater interpersonal conflict, toxic workplace cultures,

manipulative leadership, and declining community spirit are some of its broader consequences. A society driven primarily by self-interest struggles to build trust, cooperation, and collective progress.

The encouraging reality is that narcissistic behaviors can be managed and reduced through conscious effort and personal growth. Developing self-awareness is the first step toward change. Honest self-reflection helps individuals understand how their actions affect others. Practicing empathy through active listening and understanding different perspectives can significantly reduce excessive self-focus. People must also learn to derive self-worth from personal values and achievements rather than constant external praise. Humility plays an equally important role. It does not mean thinking less of oneself; rather, it means thinking of oneself less often and appreciating the strengths of others. For individuals with severe narcissistic traits or Narcissistic Personality Disorder, psychotherapy can be highly beneficial. Therapy helps improve emotional regulation, empathy, self-esteem, and interpersonal skills. Parents can also play a vital role by providing children with both love and realistic feedback, encouraging confidence while teaching responsibility, respect, and compassion.

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

Views, Opinions, facts etc Expressed by the Authors are their Own and Headlines Today doesn't acknowledge the viewpoint in any manner. And the claims made by the advertisers, promoters through their write-ups need to be ascertained by the readers and Headlines Today Shall not be held responsible for any misleading information in any manner...



# Tips For Healthy and Beautiful Nails in the Summer



■ SHAHNAZ HUSAIN



Just like your skin, your nail plate and cuticles are more vulnerable in the heat.

Sun exposure, chlorine, sea salt, sand, and higher sweat production can cause dryness, discoloration, lifting and brittleness.

Hot weather, air conditioning, and sun exposure rapidly strip moisture from the keratin layers of your nail plates, causing nails to expand, crack and break easily.

Prolonged UV exposure can cause discoloration, yellowing, and dullness to bare nails.

This could affect your nail health and cause them to chip more quickly.

Whether you're rocking gel, lacquer, or natural nails, keeping them looking fresh during hot weather requires more than just a professional application; it needs a regimen that protects and preserves.

Here are the top tips to help your mani survive and thrive all summer long!

## Hydrate

Prolonged soaking in water /exposure to the sun can cause nails to expand and become more vulnerable to premature chipping and peeling. Staying hydrated is key to keeping your nails healthy and strong.

Your body typically gets about 20% of the water it needs from the foods, fruit and vegetables you eat throughout the day. Foods that typically provide the highest water content are raw fruits and vegetables.

Drink plenty of water and include water-rich hydrating fruits and vegetables in your diet, such as cucumbers, watermelon, Lettuce, Peaches, and strawberries.

Regularly apply a moisturising hand cream or nail oil to your nails and cuticles to keep them hydrated. Applying cuticle oil can increase the circulation around your nails, stimulating nail growth.

The oil can also help improve the health and appearance of your nails. If you paint your nails, cuticle oil can also protect your polish for a lasting shine.

## Don't forget to exfoliate

Just like your skin, your nails and cuticles can benefit from exfoliation.

Nail exfoliation is a technique that helps buff out ridges and other uneven textures on the nail plate to ensure smooth, long-lasting nail polish. Gently exfoliating can stimulate blood flow to the nail area, which can contribute to stronger and healthier nails. Use a gentle nail brush or an exfoliating scrub on the nail area to remove dead skin cells and any residual buildup from the surface of your nails and cuticles. Healthy, well-exfoliated nails provide a better base for nail polish, helping it last longer. Plus, it can create a

smooth canvas for traditional nail polish application. Nail exfoliation can help loosen cuticles that have become attached to the nail plate and soften ridges in the nail, allowing for a smoother, shinier finish.

## Nail Polish Break

While many women love to have their toenails painted their favourite colour during open-toe season, the truth is, your toenails could benefit from a break from polish. While it's fun to wear nail polish, it's important to take a break now and then, especially during summer, to maintain healthy nails.

Leaving nail polish on too long can be dangerous because the pigment in it can seep into the top layers of your nails and dry them out. Constant polish wear can weaken nails and make them prone to breakage.

Nails derive oxygen and nutrients from the blood supply and not the air; however, they do need breaks in between manicures for other reasons.

Prolonged wear of nail polish can result in the appearance of keratin granulation (rough and white patches on the surface of the nail), peeling, ridges and splits, discoloration, and dehydration.

## Diet and Nails

Your balanced diet also affects your nail growth.

When you choose nutritious food for healthy nails, you can easily take good care of your nail health from the comfort of your home.

Nails are mostly made up of keratin, a natural protein in our bodies. Focus on consuming foods that provide keratin, the protein that makes up nails, and other nutrients like biotin, zinc, iron, and vitamin C. Minerals are crucial for nail health, especially during summer when nails are more susceptible to dryness and damage. Nuts are also highly recommended.

Many foods contain essential nutrients, protein, and vitamins that keep your nails strong and beautiful and prevent them from becoming brittle, weak, or damaged. Iron deficiency can cause brittle nails, and protein deficiency can lead to ridges.

Dark, leafy vegetables are a pertinent part of a balanced diet for one's holistic development. Spinach, kale, broccoli, and collards contain enough folate, iron, and calcium to keep your nails growing strong. Beans, legumes, and tofu contain rich protein for nail health.

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

# HEALTH BENEFITS OF CHERRIES



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHARTI



Fruits play a vital role in maintaining good health and overall well-being. Everyone wants to stay fit, healthy, and free from diseases. To achieve this, we need nutritious foods that provide energy, support our body's functions, and help keep us active and healthy.

All fruits contain different vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that are essential for the growth and proper functioning of the body. Seasonal fruits are especially beneficial because they provide fresh nutrients required by various organs.

In this article, I am going to discuss the health benefits of cherries.

Cherry is a small, round, fleshy fruit that belongs to the Prunus genus. It contains a hard seed at the centre and is surrounded by juicy edible flesh. Cherries are usually red, dark red, or pink in colour. Kashmir is known for producing several varieties of cherries, many of which are exported to different parts of the country. During the cherry season, fruit vendors sell cherries along highways and at picnic spots, generating employment and supporting local growers.

## Benefits of Cherries

- Rich in Vitamin C, which strengthens the immune system and acts as an antioxidant.
- Contains Vitamin A, which supports healthy eyesight.
- High in dietary fibre, which promotes healthy digestion and may help relieve

- constipation.
- Naturally free from fat, cholesterol, and sodium.
- Contains powerful antioxidants that help protect the body from harmful free radicals.
- May reduce inflammation and lower the risk of certain chronic diseases.
- Helps improve sleep quality due to the presence of natural melatonin.
- May support brain health and help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease.
- Can help lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of stroke.
- Tart cherry juice may help

relieve muscle pain and aid recovery after exercise.

## Suggestion

We should include seasonal fruits and vegetables in our daily diet. They provide essential vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients required for good health. People who experience allergies or other health issues after consuming certain fruits should consult a doctor. Encouraging the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables can help prevent nutritional deficiencies, dehydration, and various health-related problems.

sahilmanzoor9419@gmail.com

# Cleanliness: The First Shield of Health



■ SURINDERPAL SINGH

Personal and environmental hygiene are among the most fundamental determinants of human health. They serve as primary preventive measures against communicable diseases, enhance quality of life, and promote social well-being. From ancient civilizations to modern scientific societies, cleanliness has consistently been recognized as a vital safeguard for both individuals and communities.

Health is not merely the absence of disease; it is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being. Although medical science has made remarkable advances in the treatment of diseases, prevention remains far more effective and economical than cure. Personal and environmental hygiene constitute the first line of defense against illness. Whether practiced at an individual, community, or environmental level, hygiene significantly influences disease patterns, life expectancy, and even economic development. In today's interconnected world, where infectious diseases can spread rapidly across borders, the importance of hygiene has never been greater.

Hygiene encompasses practices that help maintain health and prevent disease. The relationship between hygiene and disease prevention is deeply rooted in microbiology and epidemiology. Proper hygiene controls harmful microorganisms and prevents their transmission. Effective handwashing removes dangerous pathogens such as Escherichia coli (E. coli), Staphylococcus aureus, influenza viruses, and SARS-CoV-2. Studies indicate that proper hand hygiene can reduce diarrheal diseases by up to 40 percent and respiratory infections by nearly 20 percent.

Communicable diseases spread through direct contact, contaminated food and water, or environmental exposure. Hygiene practices interrupt these transmission routes and significantly reduce disease spread. A clean envi-

ronment also minimizes exposure to harmful pathogens, allowing the immune system to function more efficiently. Personal hygiene includes daily habits such as bathing, oral care, wearing clean clothes, and maintaining menstrual hygiene. These practices protect individuals from skin diseases, dental problems, parasitic infections, and reproductive health complications. Good personal hygiene not only promotes physical health but also enhances self-confidence and social acceptance.

Hand hygiene remains one of the most effective public health interventions. Regular handwashing prevents healthcare-associated infections, which are major contributors to illness, mortality, and rising healthcare costs worldwide. Simple handwashing with soap and water can save countless lives.

Food and water hygiene are equally important. Safe preparation, storage, and handling of food prevent foodborne illnesses, typhoid fever, hepatitis A, and various gastrointestinal disorders. Access to clean drinking water remains one of the most powerful tools for reducing preventable deaths, especially among children. Environmental hygiene involves proper waste management, safe sewage disposal, and maintaining clean surroundings. These measures help prevent vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, and plague. Eliminating breeding grounds for mosquitoes, flies, and rodents substantially reduces disease transmission and protects public health.

Community hygiene plays a crucial role in collective well-being. Public sanitation facilities, school hygiene programs, and clean workplaces contribute to healthier communities. Such initiatives improve productivity, reduce healthcare expenses, and strengthen overall public health outcomes.

Hygiene is often associated with infectious disease prevention, but its benefits extend much further. Good oral hygiene has been linked to a lower risk of cardiovascular diseases. Proper food hygiene reduces exposure to carcinogenic toxins such as aflatoxins. Clean and safe environments also promote mental well-being by reducing stress and encouraging healthier lifestyles.

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

# Yasha Mudgal chairs Anantnag CC Bank Board meeting

Lays out strategic plan for long-term growth, organizational enhancement

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:** Commissioner Secretary Cooperative and Chairperson Anantnag Central Cooperative Bank Limited (ACCB), Yasha Mudgal, today chaired a high-level meeting of the Professional Board of Directors at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by members of the Board of Directors along with the DDM National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development as special invitee.

Managing Director and Member Secretary, Muzaffar Sultan, delivered a detailed presentation on the bank's financial standing and operational achievements for the 2025-26 fiscal. He highlighted the significant progress across business expansion, deposit mobilization, credit facility enlargement, recovery operations, digital banking implementation and regulatory compliance.

Following the presentation, the Chairperson conducted an in-depth evaluation of the bank's financial and operational data recorded as of March 31, 2026. She emphasized the critical need for sustained efforts to improve the institution's financial health, instructing the management to drive substantial progress across all primary performance metrics.

Yasha Mudgal stated that reducing Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) to standard levels mandated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) must remain the bank's top priority. Improving asset quality, she noted, would reinforce financial robustness and unlock essential regulatory clearances and licenses needed for future expansion.

To support the core mis-



sion of cooperative banking, the Chairperson directed the institution to broaden its engagement with the farmers and rural populations through its connected Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS). She emphasized that widening credit accessibility for agricultural communities is vital to foster rural development across the region.

Addressing the areas that require accelerated progress, Yasha Mudgal ordered swift, outcome-focused actions to prevent new NPA formation and strengthen the recovery of longstanding overdue accounts. She also directed the management to optimize the Credit-Deposit (CD) Ratio and substantially increase lending within Priority Sector Lending (PSL) categories.

Turning to operational frameworks, the Chairperson mandated that all customer accounts maintain valid nominations to ensure smooth claim settlements.

supervisory orders issued by the RBI and NABARD to preserve transparency and elevate governance.

The Board also deliberated on several key administrative agendas. These included human resource management, promotional opportunities, new recruitment drives, organizational strengthening, governance modernization, and new initiatives designed to boost operational effectiveness and customer service quality.

Yasha Mudgal emphasized that unified efforts, professional management and the effective execution of Board resolutions would secure improved financial outcomes. She urged all Board members and bank management to approach their responsibilities with renewed dedication and shared accountability. She stressed that this collective commitment is essential to amplify the bank's capacity to support economic growth and rural welfare across the Union Territory.

Furthermore, she directed for strict adherence to Know Your Customer (KYC) standards across all branches, reinforcing that the bank must rigorously follow all directives and

## Public Notice

This is for the information general public that MOHAMMAD SHAREEF SHAH S/o: NOOR SHAH R/o: KACHWA MUQAM Tehsil WAGOORA district BARAMULLA expired on 06 of April 2026. Now the family of deceased including BILAL AHMAD SHAH (son), GOUSIA SHAREEF (daughter), SHAZIA SHAREEF (daughter), & SHAHMEEMA BEGUM (wife), want to apply for issuance of dependent certificate of the deceased. Anyone having any objection in this regard may contact ACR Office Baramulla within 7 days from the publication of this notice. After the lapse of 7 days period no objection will be accepted.

**SHAHMEEMA BEGUM**  
W/O: LATE MOHAMMAD SHAREEF SHAH  
R/o: KACHWA MUQAM,  
Tehsil: WAGOORA BARAMULLA.

## Public Notice

### FOR TRANSFER OF KPDCL ELECTRICITY AGREEMENT

It is notified for the information of the general public that the electricity agreement/consumer connection bearing Consumer ID No. 0212040008296 is presently registered in the name of Late Ghulam Mohammad Dar S/o In-law Ahmad Dar, R/o Saloosa, Tehsil Kreeeri, District Baramulla.

The said consumer has expired and his son Bashir Ahmad Dar S/o Late Ghulam Mohammad Dar, R/o Saloosa, Kreeeri, Baramulla has applied before the AEE, KPDC Sub Division Wagoora for transfer of the said electricity agreement/consumer connection in his favour as the legal heir of the deceased.

Therefore, any person having any objection, claim, lien, dispute or interest regarding the transfer of the said electricity agreement/consumer connection may file the same in writing before the office of the AEE, KPDC Sub Division Wagoora within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

In case no objection is received within the stipulated period, the electricity agreement/consumer connection shall be transferred in favour of Bashir Ahmad Dar and no claim or objection shall be entertained thereafter.

**Name of Applicant:**  
**Bashir Ahmad Dar**  
S/o Late Ghulam Mohammad Dar  
R/o Saloosa, Kreeeri, Baramulla  
Consumer ID: 0212040008296

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

Subject. Application of UMER JAVID SOFI S/O JAVID AHMAD SOFI R/O KAKOTHAL Tehsil KREERI for issuance of RBA certificate in favour of self for he 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 KAKOTHAL of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the SOFI community having annual income 95000// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..JAVID AHMAD SOFI Father 44 years Labour
- 2..SARA BAGUM Mother 47 years House wife
- 3..UMER JAVID SOFI self 22 years student

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

**NAIB TEHSILDAR KALANTRA**

## Public Notice

I am the owner of a Maruti Alto 800 bearing number JK05G-1330. The RC (Registration Certificate) of this vehicle has been lost and now applying for duplicate. If anyone has any objection regarding this vehicle, they are requested to submit their objection within 15 days at the office of ARTO Sopore. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Tufail Khaliq, S/o Abdul Khaliq**  
R/o Seer Jagir, Sopore

## Public Notice

This is for the information general public that MAQSOOD AHMAD LONE S/o: ABDUL GAFFAR LONE R/o: KACHWA MUQAM Tehsil WAGOORA district BARAMULLA expired on 1st of March 2026. Now the family of deceased including SHAHID MAQSOOD LONE (son), MUHAMMAD ASIF LONE (son), DILSHADA AKHTAR (daughter), BISMA MAQSOOD (daughter), REHANA MAQSOOD (daughter) & SHAMEEMA BEGUM (wife), want to apply for issuance of dependent certificate of the deceased. Anyone having any objection in this regard may contact ACR Office Baramulla within 7 days from the publication of this notice. After the lapse of 7 days period no objection will be accepted.

**SHAMEEMA BEGUM**  
W/O: LATE MAQSOOD AHMAD LONE,  
R/o: KACHWA MUQAM,  
Tehsil: WAGOORA BARAMULLA.

## Public Notice

I Ghulam Mohammad Bhat son of Ali Mohamad Bhat resident of Vizer Wagoora District Baramulla want to inform the general public through this notice that my name has been mistakenly mentioned in the service book of the department as Ghulam Mohammad Lone instead of Ghulam Mohamad Lone, Now I want to correct it, In this regard if anybody has any objection they may contact the Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Baramulla with in seven days after that no objection will be entertained

**Ghulam Mohamad Lone**  
S/O:- Ali Mohamad Lone  
R/O:- Vizer Wagoora

## Public Notice

Due to inadvertence my name in J&K Bank Branch Safa Kadal A/c No: SB0006040100021063 is recorded as Yasmeen Khan but my actual name is Saida Yasmeen D/o Ghulam Mohiuddin Wani W/o Shabir Hussain Khan. Hence the correction of the name is needed. If any body have any objection may file the same to the concerned branch office within the period of 7 days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Saida Yasmeen**  
D/o: Ghulam Mohiuddin Wani  
W/o: Shabir Hussain Khan

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER MINI-SECRETARIAT KULGAM

Tel: 01931-467195 | email: ceokulgam-accts@jk.gov.in,  
ceokulgamaccts@gmail.com, web: www.ceokulgam.in

Subject: Final Selection of Class IV/MTS posts issued under Order No: 22 CEOK of 2026, Dated: 13.05.2026 in light of LPA No. 109/2020 and submission of Joining thereof.

### FINAL NOTICE

Whereas this office issued the final selection list of Class IV/MTS posts advertised Vide Notice No. CEO/K/NT/01/14/2048-50, Dated: 04.08.2014 in compliance to the judgement/orders passed in LPA No. 109/2020 titled UT of J&K and others Vs. Maria Nazir & Others read with Govt. Order No. 14-JK(Edu) of 2026, Dated: 15.04.2026 issued under Order No. 22 CEOK of 2026, Dated: 13.05.2026.

Whereas the selectees were directed to report this office within seven days for submission of Online CID VRoll and other requisite documents.

Whereas only 10 candidates out of 15 in selection list reported this office and CID Verification was generated online in their favor.

Whereas this office Vide Form No. 158808, generated the Online CID Verification in favor of the below mention candidate and the CID Verification stands received by this office under the said Form No. on 15.06.2026.

S.No	Name	Parentage	Residence	DOB	Category	S.No in the Selection List
1.	Samir Ahmad Naik	Ab. Hamid Naik	Bhan	10-03-1994	OM	04

The above mentioned candidate is hereby accordingly directed to report this office within a period of seven days for joining the department along with acceptance of resignation letter from Police Department failing which the selection of the above mentioned candidate be cancelled without any further notice and the next candidate in wait list shall be selected for final selection and it shall be considered final that the said candidate is already working in the Police Department and has forgone this selection.

**No: CEO/K/Estt-NT/1984-90/2026**  
**Dated: 19-06-2026**

**Sd/- Fayaz Ahmad Mir**  
Chief Education Officer Kulgam

**DIPK: 2361/26 | Dated: 19-06-2026**

## Government of Jammu and Kashmir School Education Department (Human Resource Management Section)

Civil Secretariat, Srinagar / Jammu

Subject: Final seniority list of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Mathematics as on 01.05.2026.

### Government Order No. 233-JK (Edu) of 2026 Dated: 17-06-2026

WHEREAS, the tentative seniority list of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Mathematics was issued vide Notice dated 05.11.2024 for inviting objections, if any, from the members of the service;

AND WHEREAS, after issuance of the tentative seniority, the Department received various representations through the concerned Directorates for inclusion of members /update of service particulars in the seniority list;

AND WHEREAS, the representations received with regard to additions / deletions / corrections have been examined thoroughly in the Department and the genuine objections have been entertained;

AND WHEREAS, the Designated Committees have recommended 258 incumbents, in light of Government Order No. 188-JK(Edu) of 2024, dated 15.03.2024, who have obtained their PG degrees through distance/private mode during service. The recommendations made in favour of these 258 incumbents (Annexure-E and Annexure-F to this Government Order) have been accepted by the Competent Authority in the School Education Department. However, the recommendations shall be deemed to have been withdrawn ab initio in respect of such incumbents who, if at any stage, are found not to have fulfilled the criteria as laid down in Government Order No. 188-JK(Edu) of 2024, dated 15.03.2024;

AND WHEREAS, the incumbents who have obtained their PG degrees through distance/private mode during service, without obtaining proper permission/leave from the competent authority and in whose favour recommendations of the Designated Committee in light of Government Order No. 188-JK (Edu) of 2024, dated 15.03.2024 have not been received till date, have also been incorporated in the final seniority list, with the stipulation that their inclusion in the seniority list is subject to the condition that their cases are recommended by the Committees constituted vide Government Order No. 188-JK (Edu) of 2024 dated 15.03.2024. In case recommendations are not received in their favour, their names shall be deemed to have been deleted from the seniority list ab-initio; Now, therefore, in terms of Rule 24 of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956, the final seniority list in respect of PG Masters/PG Teachers in the discipline of Mathematics, forming Annexure-A to this Government order, is hereby issued. The dates of birth of the incumbents recorded in the seniority list are subject to further verification from their service records and also with reference to the original Matriculation Certificates of all the concerned.

Moreover, 50 incumbents have been included afresh in this final seniority list at appropriate places as detailed in Annexure-B & Annexure-C and 189 incumbents have been deleted from the previous seniority list as detailed in Annexure-D to this Government Order for the reasons as shown against each.

Furthermore, 29 incumbents who have been recommended by the Committee constituted vide Government Order No. 188-JK (Edu) of 2024, dated 15.03.2024, conveyed by Director School Education, Jammu, as detailed in Annexure-E to this Government Order, shall be included in the seniority at appropriate places, as and when full authenticated service particulars of these incumbents are received from the concerned Directorate.

The seniority list so issued is subject to outcome of writ petition(s), if any, pending before any Competent courts of Law.

Any member of the service who is either not included or is aggrieved with the position assigned to him/her in this final seniority list can file a review petition within seven (07) days from the date of issuance of this updated final seniority list along with supporting documents, through the concerned Directorates which shall be decided on case-to-case basis, on merits. No petition shall be entertained directly from any member or after the expiry of stipulated time period.

The final seniority list is also available on the official website of School Education Department (i.e. https://schooleducation.jk.gov.in).

**No: Edu-HRM/226/2023-01 (7267181) | Dated: 17-06-2026**

**Sd/- (Ram Niwas Sharma), IAS**  
Commissioner/Secretary to the Government,  
School Education Department

**DIPK: 2328/26 | Dated: 19-06-2026**

## DC, SSP Kupwara conduct Joint Inspection of NEET-2026 Examination Centres

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA, JUNE 19:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, along with Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kupwara, Syed Al Tahir Gilani, today conducted a joint inspection of various examination centres established to review the arrangements for the conduct of the forthcoming Re-examination of National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)-2026.

The inspection was aimed at assessing the preparedness of the examination centres and ensuring that all necessary arrangements are in place for the seamless conduct of the prestigious national-level examination.

Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Chief Education Officer (CEO), City Coordinator-NEET and other concerned officers accompanied the DC and SSP during the visit.

During the inspection, the officers undertook a comprehensive review of seating arrangements, security deployment, frisking mechanisms, availability of drinking water, uninterrupted power supply with backup facilities, sanitation, medical assistance, and other essential amenities for the candidates.

The duo interacted with Centre Superintendents and other officials, directing them to ensure strict adherence to the guidelines issued by the National Testing Agency (NTA).

They further stressed the need for close inter-departmental coordination to ensure the smooth conduct of the examination.

The Deputy Commissioner and SSP expressed satisfaction over the arrangements made at the examination centres and reiterated the commitment of the district administration and police to ensure smooth and fair conduct of NEET-2026 across the district.

# DC Kulgam flags off Farmers' Exposure Visit to SKUAST-K Shalimar for Capacity Building

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM, JUNE 19:** Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today flagged off a group of around 107 farmers from the district for an exposure-cum-capacity building visit to Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), Shalimar.

The programme is aimed at enhancing farmers' knowledge and facilitating the dissemination of modern horticultural and agricultural technologies, innovative farming practices, and scientific approaches among the farming community of the district.

The flag-off ceremony was attended by Chief Horticulture Officer, M. Ramzan War; Horti-

culture Development Officer (HDO) Kulgam, Dr. Mohsin Ahmad Hajam; HDO Devsar; HDO Qaimoh; and other officials of the Horticulture Department.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of exposure visits and capacity-building programmes in equipping farmers with the latest technological advancements and best man-

agement practices. He encouraged the participating farmers to make the most of the opportunity and adopt innovative techniques to enhance productivity and improve their livelihoods.

The visit to SKUAST-K, Shalimar, is expected to provide the farmers with firsthand exposure to modern technologies, research findings, and successful models

in horticulture and allied sectors, thereby contributing to the overall development of the farming sector in the district.

The participating farmers expressed their gratitude to the District Administration and the Horticulture Department for facilitating the exposure visit and providing them with an opportunity to learn from experts and researchers in the field.

## District Admin Bandipora intensifies Anti-Drug Awareness Campaign across Educational Institutions

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, JUNE 19:** As part of the ongoing 100-Day Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), District Administration Bandipora continued its district-wide awareness campaign with pledge and pledge renewal ceremonies held across several



educational institutions on Friday.

The activities were organized to reinforce the commitment of students and staff towards building a drug-free society and to spread awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse.

Pledge ceremonies and reinforcement programmes were conducted at Government Higher Secondary School Chuntimulla, High School Ketson, Government High School Achoora, Government Higher Secondary School PTL Gurez, Government Higher Secondary School Gadakhud, Government Higher Secondary School Quilmuqam, Boys Higher Secondary School Aloosa, High School Panar, PM SHRI Government High School Sumbal, Government Higher Secondary School Nowgam and High School Mukdamyari Hajin.

During the programmes, students and teaching staff collectively renewed their commitment to abstain from drugs and actively contribute towards creating a healthy, safe and responsible society. The participants were sensitized about the social, economic and health consequences of drug abuse and were encouraged to serve as ambassadors of change within their communities. At HSS Quilmuqam, a special pledge renewal and reinforcement programme was held wherein participants reaffirmed their resolve to remain vigilant against substance abuse and promote a healthy lifestyle.

Similar activities across institutions witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and faculty members. The District Administration Bandipora reaffirmed its resolve to engage educational institutions, youth and community stakeholders in the fight against drug abuse and to foster a culture of awareness, responsibility and collective action towards realizing the vision of a Nasha Mukht Bandipora.

## District AYUSH Offices of Shopian, Pulwama organize "Run for Yoga" ahead of 12th International Day of Yoga 2026

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN/PULWAMA, JUNE 19:** In the run-up to the celebration of the 12th International Day of Yoga, scheduled to be observed on 21st June 2026, the District AYUSH Offices of Shopian and Pulwama organized a "Run for Yoga" event to promote awareness about the importance of yoga and encourage healthy lifestyles among the public at two District Headquarters.

The events witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers and officials of the AYUSH Department, healthcare staff, students, youth volunteers, and members of the general public. The run aimed to spread the message of holistic health and well-being and to create awareness about the significance of incorporating yoga into daily life.

Speaking on the occasion, the organizers emphasized that yoga is a powerful tool for achieving physical, mental, and emotional well-being and plays a vital role in fostering harmony and healthy living. Participants carried placards and banners highlighting the theme of the International Day of Yoga and spreading the message of "Yoga for One Earth, One Health."

The events forms part of a series of activities being organized by the District AYUSH Offices of Shopian and Pulwama in the run-up to the grand celebration of the 12th International Day of Yoga on 21st June 2026 at District Headquarters. These initiatives are aimed at mobilizing community participation and reinforcing the importance of yoga as a way of life.

The District AYUSH authorities expressed gratitude to all participants and stakeholders for their active involvement and called upon the public to join the celebrations of the International Day of Yoga and embrace yoga for a healthier and happier society.

## SKUAST-K Scholar bags International Grant for endangered Kashmir Fish Research

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 19:** In a significant achievement for Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), Misba Rehman, a PhD scholar in the Faculty of Fisheries, has secured an international research grant of US\$6,500 from the US-based Wild Animal Initiative.

The grant will support the project, "Assessing Behavioural and Physiological Welfare Indicators for the Kashmir Loach (*Triplophysa kashmirensis*)," led by Dr Syed Talia Mushtaq as Principal Investigator, with Misba Rehman as lead applicant.

The study focuses on generating scientific evidence on the welfare indicators of the critically endangered Kashmir Loach, an endemic fish species of Kashmir, to support science-based conservation and management strategies.

Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai congratulated Misba Rehman and Dr Syed Talia Mushtaq, stating that the achievement reflects the growing global recognition of research at SKUAST-K and strengthens the university's commitment to impactful research and biodiversity conservation.

Dean, Faculty of Fisheries, Prof. Farooz Ahmad Bhat, described the grant as a major accomplishment, noting that the project addresses an important yet understudied area of fish welfare and conservation.

Head Division of Fisheries Resource Management, Dr Tasaduq Hussain Shah, said that the international funding reflects the scientific merit and growing relevance of the research being undertaken by the Division.

Expressing gratitude, Misba Rehman acknowledged the support of the university and her supervisor, stating that the grant will enable innovative research to better understand the conservation and welfare needs of the Kashmir Loach.

The award further underscores SKUAST-K's growing international recognition in biodiversity conservation and sustainable aquatic resource research.



## DC Ganderbal takes stock of preparations made for Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela at Tulmulla

HT NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL, JUNE 19:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today visited the Mata Kheer Bhawani Temple at Tulmulla to take stock of the arrangements being put in place for the forthcoming annual Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela.

During the visit, the DC conducted a comprehensive inspection of the temple premises and reviewed the preparedness of various departments with regard to facilities being provided for the convenience and comfort of devotees expected to participate in the annual mela.

The DC inspected accommodation facilities established for pilgrims, including the Yatri Niwas and temporary tented accommodation being arranged to cater to the anticipated influx of devotees. He directed the concerned departments to ensure that all lodging facilities are clean, well-maintained and equipped with essential amenities for a comfortable stay.

Reviewing arrangements for community kitchens (langars), the DC instructed the concerned agencies to ensure adequate space, proper sanitation and uninterrupted supply of water and electricity at all designated langar sites. He emphasized that all facilities should be made available in a coordinated manner to facilitate smooth functioning of langars during the mela period.

The DC also inspected healthcare arrangements and reviewed the preparedness of the medical team being deployed at the temple. He directed the Health Department to ensure availability of doctors, paramedical staff, ambulances, emergency medicines and first-aid facilities so that devotees receive prompt medical assistance whenever required.

Special emphasis was laid on the provision of safe drinking water, unin-



terrupted power supply, sanitation facilities and cleanliness around the temple premises. The concerned departments were directed to ensure regular maintenance of toilets, proper waste disposal mechanisms and round-the-clock availability of essential services during the mela.

Later, the DC also visited the Central University of Kashmir campus at Tulmulla to review the accommodation arrangements being made for devotees. During the visit, he inspected lodging facilities, langar sites, parking spaces and other amenities being put in place for the convenience of pilgrims.

He directed the concerned officers to ensure proper cleanliness, adequate drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, sanitation facilities and

clear signage within the campus.

Interacting with officers on the spot, the DC stressed that every effort should be made to provide a safe, comfortable and spiritually enriching experience to devotees visiting the shrine. He directed all stakeholder departments to work in close coordination and remain available on the ground to address any issue that may arise during the mela period.

Among others, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Revenue, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Chief Executive Officer Municipal Council Ganderbal, Executive Engineers of KPDC, Jal Shakti, and PMGSY besides Chief Medical Officer and other officers and officials accompanied the DC during the inspection.

## GDC Bandipora organises Awareness Programmes against Drug Abuse

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, JUNE 19:** Government Degree College (GDC) Bandipora on Thursday organised a series of awareness programmes under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan to sensitize students about the harmful effects of drug abuse and encourage them to become active stakeholders in building a drug-free society.

The Department of Education, HKM Degree College Bandipora, organised an awareness lecture on drug de-addiction under the guidance of Dr. Manzoor Ahmad Parey. The programme highlighted the adverse social, psychological and health consequences of substance abuse and concluded with a strong message urging students to stay away from drugs and contribute towards a healthy society.

The Youth Club of NSS Units also organised an Anti-Drug Pledge ceremony under the convenship of Prof. Irfan Ahmad Wagay. Students participated enthusiastically and pledged to remain



committed to the fight against drug abuse while spreading awareness among their peers and communities.

Meanwhile, under the guidance of the Principal, Prof. Suresh Kumar Dogra, the Red Ribbon Youth Club organised an Interaction-cum-Awareness Session on Drug Addiction for outgoing 8th Semester students. Coordinator, Red Ribbon Youth Club, Dr. Mehrujuddin Talie, sensitised students about the harmful effects of drug abuse, its social and health consequences, and

the importance of making informed and responsible life choices.

The interactive session witnessed active participation from students, who shared their views on the growing menace of substance abuse and discussed ways to safeguard themselves and society from the threat of addiction.

The programmes concluded with a collective resolve to strengthen awareness and contribute towards the vision of a healthy, drug-free and progressive society.

## DDAC BANDIPORA URGES EARLY ACTION AGAINST DRUG ABUSE

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, JUNE 19:** As part of the ongoing 100-Day J&K Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, District De-Addiction Centre (DDAC) Bandipora (Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt of India) in collaboration with District Administration Bandipora today organized a District-Level Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Programme at Govt High School Mukdamyari, Hajin, aimed at strengthening awareness among students and educators regarding the dangers of substance abuse and the importance of early intervention.

The programme witnessed the participation of students from Classes 8th to 10th and members of the teaching and non-teaching faculty.

Project Coordinator, DDAC Bandipora, served as the Resource Person for the awareness session and delivered an informative lecture on the theme "Nasha Se Azadi - Choice Aapki, Zindagi Aapki."

During his address, the Project Coordinator introduced the innovative "SHARE Code" to help students, teachers and parents identify early warning signs of substance abuse. He explained that S stands for Sleep Disturbance, H for Poor Hygiene, A for Ager/Irritability, R for Result Decline in Academic, and E for Evasive Eyes/Behaviour can often indicate the onset of drug dependence. He further clarified the distinction between observable signs noticed by others and symptoms experienced by the affected individual, emphasizing that addiction is a medical condition requiring treatment and support rather than stigma or judgment.

Highlighting the critical role of teachers and parents in prevention, he described them as the "first line of defence" against

substance abuse. He urged teachers to remain vigilant regarding absenteeism, sudden behavioural changes and declining academic performance, while encouraging parents to maintain open communication with their children and be alert to signs such as secrecy, unexplained demands for money and social withdrawal.

"Don't judge, don't delay—report early to save a life," he remarked while stressing the importance of timely intervention.

The session also provided detailed information about the services available at DDAC Bandipora, located in the Old District Hospital Bandipora. Participants were informed that the Centre offers free and confidential treatment services, including Outpatient (OPD) and Inpatient (IPD) care, medical detoxification, psychological counselling, rehabilitation and follow-up support for individuals struggling with substance use disorders.

The DDAC Supervisor also shared the Centre's 24x7 Helpline Number: 9596022376, assuring participants that all services are provided free of cost and that patient confidentiality is strictly maintained. The programme concluded with a collective anti-drug pledge by students, teachers and resource persons, reaffirming their commitment not to consume drugs, not to encourage others to use drugs, and to work collectively towards making Bandipora a drug-free district.

The school administration appreciated the efforts of DDAC Bandipora and observed that such awareness initiatives play a vital role in creating a protective and informed environment for young people and the wider community. IEC material carrying key awareness messages and helpline information was also distributed among participants.

# HCLFoundation invites applications for Edition XII of HCLTech Grant

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI, JUN 19:** HCL Foundation, which drives the corporate social responsibility agenda of global technology company HCLTech in India, announced Edition XII of HCLTech Grant to provide a platform to non-profits in India to create sustainable, community-led change across rural India.

A total of Rs. 24 crore will be provided to NGOs, selected by an esteemed jury, for transformative projects in sustainable rural development across the themes of water, biodiversity, health and education. Four winning NGOs from each category will receive Rs. 5 crore each, while eight other NGOs will receive Rs. 50 lakh each for their proposed projects. The last date for submitting applications on www.hclfoundation.org/hcltech-grant is June 30, 2026.

"At HCL Foundation, we believe that some of the most transformative solutions emerge from grassroots organizations that are deeply connected to the communities they serve. Through this edition of HCLTech Grant, we aim to provide a platform for NGOs to unleash their potential, scale innovative ideas and create sustainable change that improves lives and strengthens communities across the country. We look forward to partnering with organizations that are driving meaningful impact and contrib-



uting to India's development journey," said Dr. Nidhi Pundhir, Director, HCL Foundation.

The HCLTech Grant-supported projects have significantly advanced sustainable development through the years, uplifting 2.3 million lives across 61,000 villages in India. The Grant-funded initiatives have led to the planting of 3+ lakh saplings, the rejuvenation of 68,300+ hectares of land and a reduction of 67,000+ tons in CO2 emissions.

So far, over Rs. 203 crore has been committed by HCL Founda-

tion through HCLTech Grant. In Edition XI of the Grant, Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS) from Rajasthan, Live Foundation from Jharkhand, Goodwill Foundation from Mizoram and Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti from Rajasthan were selected for grant of Rs. 5 crore each for projects ranging from water harvesting in the Thar desert and biodiversity conservation in Jharkhand to enhancing healthcare access in Mizoram and enabling gender equality through education in Rajasthan.

HCL Foundation also announced the HCLTech Grant Edition XII Pan India Symposiums 2026 in an effort to bring together NGOs, experts, government, corporates and policymakers on one platform across India to deliberate on how CSR can contribute towards nation building. This year, the Symposiums have been scheduled in Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Nagpur and Delhi.

About HCL Foundation  
HCL Foundation delivers the corporate social responsibility agenda of HCLTech in India. The

Foundation contributes to national and international development goals by investing in long-term sustainable programs and special initiatives with thematic focus on education, nurturing grassroots sports, health and sanitation, skill development and livelihood, environment and disaster risk reduction and response management. To ensure equitable development, child protective strategies, inclusion and gender transformative approaches are at the core of all the programs of the Foundation. To date, the HCL Foundation has positively impacted over 8.4 million lives. To learn more, visit www.hclfoundation.org

About HCLTech  
HCLTech is a global technology company, home to more than 227,000 people across 60 countries, delivering industry-leading capabilities centered around AI, digital, engineering, cloud and software, powered by a broad portfolio of technology services and products. We work with clients across all major verticals, providing industry solutions for Financial Services, Manufacturing, Life Sciences and Healthcare, Technology and Services, Semiconductor, Telecom and Media, Retail and CPG, Mobility and Public Services. Consolidated revenues as of 12 months ending March 2026 totaled \$14.7 billion. To learn how we can supercharge progress for you, visit hcltech.com

## India needs diversified crude import routes, deeper storage: Report

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JUNE 19:** India needs better options in the form of diversified crude import routes and deeper storage and inventory buffers, S&P Global Energy said.

The West Asia crisis has come as a wake-up call for India for its energy needs, and India needs credible alternatives that reduce its import-linked exposure, including for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), where structural dependence on the Gulf has been exposed.

"India's crisis management has worked in the near term, but a prolonged disruption limits complacency, particularly in securing sufficient feed through the end of the year. The low-demand monsoon season may help by reducing inventory draws, but India also needs to prepare for the seasonal uptick during the fourth quarter festive period, when global crude flows would still take time to return to normal even if routine movements through the Strait of Hormuz resume," S&P Global Energy said.

"While the system has held up so far, the episode has exposed a deeper vulnerability: India's crude oil dependence and the resulting knock to energy security, despite ongoing crude diversification efforts," it added. "Nevertheless, domestic fuel security has largely been protected: India's oil ministry says inventories provide more than adequate coverage for 76-80 days of crude and refined products available in the country," the report said.

It added that these price dynamics, coupled with broader external headwinds, have led to a marginal softening of industrial power demand from export-oriented enterprises, creating operational trade-offs for system operators, leading to renewable curtailment or sub-optimal thermal dispatch. The Hormuz disruption has removed 15 million barrels per day of global oil flows, and for Indian refiners, this has implied a loss of 20 per cent of pre-war West Asia crude supply as they try to quickly make up the shortfall from alternative sources, including Russia, Venezuela, and the US. UNI

## CITI welcomes India-UK CETA as potential boost to textile and apparel sector

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JUNE 19:** The Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) welcomed the announcement of the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), which will come into effect from July 15, as a potential to reshape India's textile and apparel industry.

The textile industry body believes that this pact will open new opportunities for growth, competitiveness and market access for India's textile and apparel industry.

CITI noted that the United Kingdom (UK) is one of the largest markets for Indian textile and apparel products. Under the India-UK CETA, Indian textile and apparel products will enjoy zero-duty access to the UK.

CITI chairman, Ashwin Chandran, said, "Coming in the backdrop of the increased possibilities of stability returning to West Asia soon, clarity also now being available on when the India-UK CETA will come into force will prove of immense benefit to the textile and apparel industry in their business planning and negotiations with existing and prospective buyers of Indian textile and apparel items."

The Chairman noted that India's textile and apparel exporters until now had to contend with a duty handicap in relation to competitors like Bangladesh in the highly promising UK market.

He said that this pact will change the scenario and will provide a level-playing field to India so Indian products will find more willing buyers.

"The agreement will enable our companies to significantly improve their market share not only in the top product categories of the UK's textile and apparel imports but across the broader textile and apparel segment as well."

CITI is working closely with industry and local authorities to ensure that Indian companies can effectively leverage opportunities opening through the India-UK CETA.

"Ultimately, the extent to which companies can derive gains from any trade deal will depend on how prepared they are to do so. Trade deals open doors, but companies will need to walk through those," he added. UNI

## SEFI Backs Visakhapatnam Steel Plant-SAIL Merger, Assures Support for Revival

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**VISAKHAPATNAM, JUNE 19:** A delegation of the Steel Executive Federation of India (SEFI) on Wednesday visited the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) and extended support for its revival, while strongly backing the proposed merger of the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL)-the corporate entity of VSP with the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).

The SEFI delegation, led by Chairman M.K. Banchhor, Vice-Chairman Ajay Pandey and General Secretary Sanjay Arya, inspected key operational units, including the Coke Oven Department and Steel Melt Shop, to assess the plant's functioning and challenges.

The team held discussions

with Coke Oven Department Head Durgaprasad and experts from Bhilai Steel Plant on issues affecting coke oven operations.

The delegation also visited the SMS-1 Continuous Casting Department, where an accident occurred on June 8, and inspected the Bloom Storage Yard.

Later, the SEFI representatives met Chief General Manager (Works In-charge) Anindya Ghosh and Director (Operations) Sen Gupta to discuss operational and employee-related issues at the steel plant.

The delegation also held detailed discussions with RINL Chairman-cum-Managing Director M.N.V.S. Prabhakar on the challenges facing the organisation.

Prabhakar said the employees of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

were working sincerely and expressed confidence that the issues confronting the plant would be resolved soon.

Recalling his experience at NMDC Nagarnagar Steel Plant, he said a similar situation had been overcome through collective efforts, leading to full-scale production and profitability.

SEFI Chairman Banchhor assured that the federation would take up the concerns of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant with the Ministry of Steel and provide full support for its revival.

The delegation also met RINL Director (Finance) Vinay Kumar and discussed measures to improve the company's financial position.

SEFI leaders reiterated that a merger of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant with SAIL would be ben-

eficial for both organisations and would strengthen the domestic steel sector.

They said they would raise the issue with Members of Parliament during the forthcoming Parliament session and seek support from the Central Government for the merger proposal.

The federation urged the management to adopt a positive approach towards resolving long-pending issues of executives, including promotions, wage revisions and pension-related matters.

Later in the day, the SEFI delegation met representatives of the Steel Executive Association, who highlighted the concerns of executives working at the plant.

SEFI representatives said they

would soon discuss these issues with union Steel Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy and Steel Secretary Sandeep Poundrik, while continuing efforts to secure all possible support for Visakhapatnam Steel Plant from SAIL.

The federation recalled that it had previously passed a resolution supporting the merger of VSP with SAIL and had also raised the matter before Parliament. It also noted that a protest programme supporting the merger had been organised at the same venue two years ago.

Expressing optimism about the plant's future, the delegation said the steel industry has historically experienced cyclical fluctuations and that both SAIL and Visakhapatnam Steel Plant had successfully overcome similar challenges in the past. UNI

## INDIA-UK FTA SET TO KICK IN FROM JULY 15: TO BENEFIT AUTO, TEXTILES INDUSTRIES

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JUN 19:** The free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the United Kingdom (UK) is set to kick in from July 15, a year after the two sides signed the landmark deal in London.

Further, India's Double Contribution Convention (DCC), signed along with the FTA, will also take effect on the same date.

The development comes after a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart, Kier Starmer, in France on the sidelines of the G7 Summit.

In a year, both countries have held several rounds of discussions, including a visit to New Delhi by the UK's Business and Trade Secretary Peter Kyle earlier this month to iron

out the sticking points and implement the deal.

As per the information shared by the Indian commerce ministry, both countries have agreed to keep 85 per cent of India's exports out of the steel measures.

"On the lines under the steel measures, India's interest has been protected through a mix of country-specific quota (CSQ), residual quota, and access under Authorised Use Scheme (AUS)," the ministry said in a release.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a post on X, said, "This agreement will significantly boost our bilateral trade and investment. It will also unlock numerous farmers, workers, MSMEs, startups, and innovators, and contribute meaningfully to the realisation of Viksit Bharat 2047."

With the deal coming into play, the UK has committed tariff concessions on 99 per cent of tariff lines.

Following the rollout of the deal, tariffs of up to 70 per cent on processed food products, up to 21.5 per cent on marine products, up to 18 per cent on engineering goods and auto components, up to 16 per cent on leather and footwear products, up to 12 per cent on textiles and clothing, and up to 8 per cent on chemicals and pharmaceutical products will drop to zero.

India has opened 89.5 per cent of its tariff lines, covering 91 per cent of the UK's exports.

India's key offerings include duty concessions on Scotch whisky from 150 per cent to 75 per cent immediately, and to 40 per cent over the next 10 years.

## Solestra Group, Jeh Aerospace Sign Multi-Million-Dollar Manufacturing Pact to establish GMC at Jeh's facility in Hyderabad

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, JUNE 19:** North America-based precision manufacturing company Solestra Group and aerospace manufacturer Jeh Aerospace on Wednesday announced a multi-year, multi-million-dollar agreement for a dedicated Global Manufacturing Center (GMC) at Jeh Aerospace's facility in Hyderabad.

The facility has been established exclusively for Solestra's programmes and is designed to function as an extension of the company's manufacturing operations,

providing dedicated machines, workspace and workforce aligned with its quality standards and operational requirements, the Aerospace company said in a release here.

Solestra Chief Executive Officer Joe DeMartino and Vice-President and General Manager Rocky Barnhart visited Hyderabad to mark the signing of the agreement and inauguration of the facility.

According to the companies, the Global Manufacturing Center model moves beyond traditional subcontracting by providing customers with dedicated manufacturing capacity, faster industrialisation,

enhanced supply-chain resilience, intellectual property protection and digital transparency, while maintaining a single point of accountability. The model has been developed based on the experience of Jeh Aerospace founders Vishal Sanghavi and Venkatesh Mudragalla, who have spent over two decades establishing and managing aerospace joint ventures in India. UNI

## Hyd: Re Sustainability Launches ECOHUB.IN to Support Climate and Clean-Tech Startups

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, JUNE 19:** Resilience Actions, the social and environmental impact initiative of "Re Sustainability" has launched ECOHUB.IN, a sustainability-focused incubator aimed at supporting early-stage enterprises working in climate technology, clean-tech, pollution management, resource efficiency, circular economy solutions and

sustainability innovation.

The incubator is designed for startups that have moved beyond the ideation stage and are ready for commercial scaling, with a working Minimum Viable Product (MVP), a committed team and a clearly identified market opportunity, the Hyderabad based company said in a release.

The initiative seeks to address a critical gap in India's sustain-

ability ecosystem by helping entrepreneurs overcome challenges related to mentorship, access to non-dilutive capital, industry partnerships, pilot opportunities, business validation and commercial adoption.

According to the organisation, ECOHUB.IN will provide participating startups with mentorship, technical and business advisory support, investment-readiness assistance, ecosystem

partnerships and access to pilot-to-commercial pathways.

The programme will also help startups strengthen business models, customer acquisition strategies, pricing frameworks, impact measurement systems and long-term growth plans.

A key feature of the incubator is its integration with Re Sustainability's operational ecosystem, enabling selected ventures to work with industry

experts, validate technologies in real-world environments and explore opportunities for large-scale deployment.

Launching the initiative, Masood Mallick, Managing Director and Group Chief Executive Officer of Re Sustainability, said India's transition towards a sustainable future would be driven not only by infrastructure but also by innovation and entrepreneurship. UNI

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**DUBAI:** Don't we all have that one person in our life who keeps us grounded? For Shafali Verma, it's her opening and senior partner Smriti Mandhana. Shafali has for long been known as someone who wants to go after every ball but, in Mandhana, she has a mature partner who keeps her "calm" by reminding her of other gears a batter can use.

Shafali hadn't had the best of form in T20Is this year, but against Netherlands on Wednesday, she scored her maiden T20 World Cup half-century in 16 innings across four editions. Shafali was the aggressor at the start of India's innings as she and Mandhana put on a century stand to help India post 209, en route to a 95-run victory.

"She keeps advising me, because I feel like hitting a six every ball, but she's the one who keeps me calm, tells me loose balls will come and I have to play along the ground too," Shafali said at the press conference. "So she keeps me calm and she spoke very well with me today, she was making me understand on every ball. So it felt great, we had a 100-plus partnership and we are trying to do the same in the upcoming matches.

"She has the best seat to tell me what I'm doing is right or wrong, and then even I have the best seat to tell her which bowler I can take on. We both know who should take the strike when there's an offspinner, or when there's a left-arm spinner. We have been playing with each other for many years, so we both know about each other a lot."

India's opening partnership had been a concern coming into the T20 World Cup, as Shafali and Mandhana had put on stands of only 19, 0 and 27 in the bilateral series against England. Mandhana, being the senior player and the vice-captain, had vowed at the time to work in the nets along with Shafali, saying they both had a "huge role to play" in the T20 World Cup.

"Of course, as you said in the England series, we couldn't get the kind of partnerships that we wanted," Shafali said on Wednesday. "But, of course, we were both talking a lot and helping each other on how we can build a strong partnership. After the previous match I worked a lot in the nets and tried to play along the ground, controlled myself mentally. And we had a very good partnership today. With God's grace, we have both got a lot of confidence before a crucial match [against South Africa]. And we all know how many crucial matches there are now. We both are ready for that."

# Shafali credits Mandhana as India's openers find their form



## BCCI mulls early start to IPL to minimise matches in extreme summer

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**MUMBAI:** The BCCI is pondering an earlier start to the IPL starting from the 2027 season, in an effort to minimise the number of matches played in extreme summer conditions. Typically, the IPL begins in late March and ends in late May or early June - IPL 2026 ran from March 28 to May 31 - and BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia has revealed that the board plans to start the season earlier, to run from around March 10 to May 15. In 2024, the IPL had informed the franchises of the window for the next three seasons and the 2027 edition was pencilled in from March 14 to May 30.



"This year, IPL started around March 29 [28], and it was over by May 31," Saikia told PTI. "Only thing which we are discussing is that during the fag end of the tournament after May 15... there is apprehension of having rainfall or pre-monsoon season starting. On the other hand, there is hot weather which is not very conducive either for the players or for the crowds." So therefore, there is a discussion going on in BCCI as well as in our IPL governing council regarding whether we can start the tournament a little bit earlier than the fag end of March.

"From next year, we will make an effort and I have already instructed our general manager (games development) [former India fast bowler Abey Kuruvilla] to look for the windows, whether we can start it by 10th of March and conclude it by 15th of May. So that there are no adverse weather conditions in the run-up to the playoffs and the finals of IPL 2027, which will be the 20th edition."

Saikia said he has heard complaints from players and fans about the extreme weather conditions towards the end of IPL seasons.

"I'm hearing a lot of complaints from the fans as well as from the players, because not all players are very well-equipped or well-acclimatised to play in such hot conditions," he said. "So, to provide a pleasant atmosphere for the tournament, we want to close it by 15th of May."

## Roberta Moretti, Brazil's trailblazing women's cricketer, retires from internationals

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**RWANDA:** Former Brazil captain Roberta Moretti has retired from international cricket, drawing curtains on a 13-year career. She played 68 T20Is, the most for Brazil, scoring 1278 runs and picking up 33 wickets.

"It has been a long journey. We had a lot of tears but now I feel the moment is right," Moretti said in a video on Instagram. "Since I started playing cricket in 2013, my dream was to represent the Brazilian national team. When I started playing for Brazil, my dream was to win championships. When we started winning, my dream turned

out to be about not just winning but winning with clear values, a purpose and that we could be better people through sport. I have given this game everything, but cricket gave me more."

Beyond those numbers, though, Moretti truly blazed a trail for women's cricket in Brazil and currently serves as Cricket Brasil's president. Her enthusiasm for the sport started with playing soft-ball cricket before fully transitioning to leather ball in 2013. She made her debut for Brazil in March 2014 in the South American Championship in Lima, much before they had secured international status.

Moretti also captained Brazil



33 times in T20Is before stepping down in 2023. Under her cap-

taincy, Brazil won the South American Women's Champion-

ship two times in three editions between 2018 and 2023. She also led them in the Women's T20 World Cup Americas Region Qualifier in 2021 and 2023. Moretti was among the first batch of 14 players to receive central contracts from Cricket Brazil in January 2020, much before the contracts were drawn for men's cricket there.

"It was never only about a sport; it was always about growing as people," Moretti said. "I am thrilled with every achievement for Cricket Brazil from the time we were just playing South American tournaments when we needed to sell raffles and pizzas to fundraise and compete to know where we are in an Olympic sport."

**LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS**  
ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL PRINTING NEEDS

NEWSPAPER | BOOKS | FLYERS | LOGO | FLEX | MAGAZINES  
VISITING CARDS | BROCHURES | 3D BOARDS | COVER PAGES  
WEDDING CARDS | CALLIGRAPHY | WALL PAINTINGS

9999038812  
9419008414

Radio Colony,  
Gund Hassibhat, Lawaipora Srinagar-190017

**HEADLINES TODAY INVITES CONTRIBUTIONS**

Are you a writer, poet, storyteller, columnist, or feature writer with a passion for literature or health writings? Headlines Today offers a platform to share:

Literature Section: Well-crafted essays, literary articles, reflections, and creative writings.

Health Section: Well-researched articles, expert columns, and in-depth feature reports from professionals and specialists.

Send your contributions to:  
Dr Basharat Khan  
Honorary Editor: Literature & Health Sections (HT) at  
chogalwriter76@gmail.com

YOUR WORDS CAN INSPIRE, INFORM, AND IGNITE; LET THEM BE HEARD.