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Future Belongs to Those Who Embrace Innovation and Change: LG Sinha

Urges Students and Teachers to Harness AI, Foster Creativity and Build a Compassionate Society

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday called upon students and teachers to embrace Artificial Intelligence (AI), innovation and emerging technologies to prepare for a rapidly changing future, asserting that success in the modern era will be defined not merely by academic achievements but by creativity, futuristic thinking and the ability to solve real-world challenges.

The Lieutenant Governor made these remarks while felicitating meritorious Class 10th and 12th students at the Amar Ujala Medhavi Chhatra Samman Samaroh in

Turn on Page 2



LG Offers Prayers at Kheer Bhawani Shrine

HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, JUNE 22: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today paid obeisance at the revered Mata Kheer Bhawani Temple at Tulmulla in Ganderbal on the auspicious occasion of Jyeshtha Ashtami and offered prayers for peace, prosperity and the well-being of the people of Jammu Kashmir.

The Lieutenant Governor extended his greetings to devotees and wished that

Turn on Page 2

Rain, hailstorm lash Kashmir, inundate parts of Srinagar

Temperatures decline across Valley, MeT forecasts dry weather till June 26

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: Heavy rain accompanied by thunderstorms and hailstorm lashed several parts of Kashmir on Monday, causing waterlogging in many areas of Srinagar and bringing a noticeable drop in daytime temperatures across the Valley.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) many parts of the Valley witnessed rain and thunderstorms during the afternoon, while several areas of Jammu division, including Ramban, Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, Rajouri, Reasi and Udhampur districts, also received precipitation. The weather activity was accompanied by

brief intense showers, thunderstorms, hailstorm and gusty winds at several places, including along the Sonamarg-Baltal-Holy Cave and Pahalgam-



Holy Cave routes, officials said. The heavy downpour led to waterlogging

Turn on Page 2

Safety of Pilgrims Remains Top Priority: DGP Prabhat

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Monday reviewed security arrange-



ments for the upcoming Amarnath Pilgrimage 2026, stressing that the safety and security of pilgrims remain the highest priority and directing all security agencies to maintain close coordination and heightened vigilance.

The DGP chaired a high-level Security Review Meeting to assess the prevailing security situation in South Kashmir and evaluate preparedness

Turn on Page 2

High Devotee Turnout at Kheer Bhawani Festival Reflects Atmosphere of Peace in J&K: BJP

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

TULMULLA, JUNE 22: The Jammu and Kashmir unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday said the large turnout of devotees at the annual Kheer Bhawani festival in Ganderbal district reflects the prevailing atmosphere of peace and stabil-



ity in Jammu and Kashmir. Hundreds of devotees, including members of the Kashmiri Pandit community from different parts of the country, gathered at the revered Ragnya Devi Temple in Tulmulla to participate in the annual festival, one of the most important religious occasions for the community. Addressing reporters

Turn on Page 2

Your Cooperation Ensures a Safe and Hassle-Free Journey: J&K Police

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Monday issued a detailed traffic advisory for the annual Amarnath pilgrimage, scheduled to commence on July 3 and conclude on August 28, announcing a series of traffic restrictions and route regulations aimed at ensuring the safety and smooth movement of pilgrims, tourists and local commuters. The advisory, issued as part of the

security and traffic management plan for the pilgrimage season, imposes restrictions on the movement of general traffic through the Navyug Tunnel during specified hours each day.

Under the revised traffic arrangements, vehicles travelling from Kashmir towards Jammu will not be allowed to cross the Navyug Tunnel before 11:30 am, while traffic moving from Jammu towards Kashmir will not be permitted to

Turn on Page 2

Reunions, Remembrance And Return To Homeland Call Mark Zeashta Ashtami At Kheer Bhawani

HT NEWS NETWORK

TULMULLA, JUNE 22: Amid chants of Vedic hymns and the sounds of conch shells, thousands of devotees gathered at the Kheer Bhawani shrine here on Sunday to celebrate Zeashta Ashtami, one of the most important religious festivals of the Kashmiri Pandit community, with many reiterating their demand for a dignified and secure return to their homeland.

The annual festival witnessed one of the highest footfalls in recent years, with devotees from across the

Turn on Page 2



CBI Registers FIR Against SMC Engineer in Alleged Bribery Case

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a formal FIR against a Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Executive Engineer, who was also serving as In-Charge Superintending Engineer, and a peon in connection with an alleged bribery case involving the processing of a contractor's bill and signing of an official agreement.

One of the accused, identified as Sajad Hussain Bhat, a peon posted in the Left River Works Division of the SMC, was arrested during a CBI trap operation after allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 5,000. The Executive

Turn on Page 2

Every lost hour of sleep damages brain, heart, immunity: GMC Sgr expert

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: Stressing that sleep is a biological necessity rather than a luxury, a leading public health expert from Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar has urged people to prioritise adequate and timely sleep, warning that chronic sleep deprivation can have far-reaching consequences on physical health, mental wellbeing,

and overall quality of life.

In a public health awareness message, Dr S. Muhammad Salim Khan, Professor, Department of Community Medicine, GMC Srinagar, described adequate sleep as the body's most powerful natural medicine, emphasising that every hour of lost sleep ultimately affects the brain, heart, metabolism, immune system, and emotional health.

According to the advisory, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), adults between 18 and 64 years of age require 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night, while older adults aged 65 years and above should aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep daily. Consistently sleeping for less than six hours has been linked to a wide range of adverse health outcomes. The advisory notes that human

beings are biologically programmed to sleep during the night. Habitually staying awake beyond midnight disrupts the body's natural circadian rhythm, which is regulated by the brain's suprachiasmatic nucleus. Such disruption can negatively affect hormonal balance, metabolism, mood, and overall health.

Dr Khan said that sleep plays a crucial role in regulating

Turn on Page 2

Dr Jitendra Launches 'IAS e-List', Underscores Technology Driven Mapping Of Officers

HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, JUNE 22: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today launched the IAS e-Civil List 2026 at Kartavya Bhawan, New Delhi.

Emphasising the growing role of technology in governance, the Minister said that digital platforms such as the e-Civil List have emerged as important



instruments for administrative planning, talent identification and effective deployment of

human resources across the country. He said that easy access to information relating to officers' qualifications, experience, cadre and postings enables governments and institutions to make informed decisions and strengthens the overall governance framework.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that the Civil List has evolved beyond being a mere directory of officers and today serves as a dynamic knowledge resource for governments, institutions and stakeholders. Referring

Turn on Page 2

No Eligible Household Should Be Deprived of PMAY-G 2.0 Benefits: J&K Govt

Review Ordered for Wrongly Excluded Beneficiaries

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has ordered an immediate review of cases in which eligible households may have been excluded from the beneficiary list under the Pradhan Mantri Rural Housing Scheme (PMAY-G) 2.0, directing officials to ensure that no deserving family is denied assistance due to errors or procedural lapses.

The directive was issued by Mohammad Aijaz, Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati

Turn on Page 2

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Future Belongs.....

Srinagar. Teachers were also honoured during the event for their significant contribution to education and nation-building.

Addressing the gathering, Sinha said the world is witnessing unprecedented transformation driven by AI and modern technologies, which are reshaping classrooms and redefining learning processes. He urged students and educators to view these developments as opportunities for growth and innovation.

"We are living in an era of constant change. AI and modern technologies are reshaping our classrooms. It is an opportunity for students and teachers to rise higher, think more deeply, and take bolder steps. Let us embrace the challenge and shape the future," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that the coming years would bring revolutionary changes across sectors, with several traditional occupations likely to give way to new forms of employment and innovation. In such an environment, he said, excellence should be measured not only through marks and medals but also through imagination, innovation and the capacity to develop solutions for future challenges.

Highlighting the qualities required for success in the evolving world, Sinha said true brilliance lies in the continuous pursuit of improvement, the courage to adapt to change, the passion to create something new and the confidence to move forward despite uncertainty.

Addressing educators, he stressed that the role of teachers extends beyond completing academic syllabi. He said teachers must cultivate lifelong learning skills among students while nurturing creativity, compassion and empathy.

"Teachers should guide students to become more humane rather than simply preparing them to compete with machines. The future belongs to those who combine skills with sensitivity and values," he remarked.

Expressing confidence in the younger generation, the Lieutenant Governor said students equipped with knowledge, skills and empathy would emerge as leaders of innovation, strengthen communities and uphold the ideals of justice and compassion.

Describing students as the architects of the future, he urged them to balance ambition with responsibility, courage with compassion and achievement with humility.

"Your success will ultimately be measured not just by personal achievements but by the positive impact you create in the lives of others and the communities you serve," he said.

Sinha further noted that the students honoured at the event represented the future scientists, engineers, innovators, artists, leaders and responsible citizens who would play a vital role in building a stronger, more progressive and inclusive society.

Among those present were Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, Yasha Mudgal, Ram Niwas Sharma, Anshul Garg, Shreya Singhal, G.V. Sundeeep Chakravarthy, Uday Sinha and Abhishek Raj, besides senior government officials, members of the Amar Ujala Group, teachers and students.

LG Offers.....

the blessings of Mata Ragnya Devi continue to guide everyone towards harmony, progress and spiritual fulfilment.

Interacting with Kashmiri Pandit Community members, the Lieutenant Governor assured that the comprehensive arrangements have been successfully put in place to ensure a seamless and spiritual experience for everyone.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the proactive efforts of the local administration, emphasizing that the administration remains fully committed to enhancing infrastructure and support services to accommodate the growing influx of devotees from across the nation.

He also appreciated all the stakeholders for their seamless coordination and arrangements in organizing the annual Mela.

The Lieutenant Governor also met representatives of various Kashmiri Pandit organisations, PM Package employees and civil society delegations. He listened to their concerns and assured them of the Administration's commitment towards ensuring their welfare.

Speaking to media-persons, the Lieutenant Governor said, "Today, I prayed for the well-being, peace and prosperity of all. May the blessings of Mata Kheer Bhawani be upon everyone. This year, the number of devotees visiting the holy shrine is higher compared to previous years. The administration has made comprehensive and foolproof arrangements to ensure the convenience, safety and smooth conduct of the pilgrimage for all devotees."

The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Shri Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Shri Nalin Prabhat, Director General of Police; Shri Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Shri Jatinder Kishore, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal; Dr Arvind Karwani, Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner; senior officials of police and civil administration and heads of Kashmiri Pandit organizations.

Rain, hailstorm.....

in several localities of Srinagar, particularly in low-lying areas of the old city, where roads and lanes were inundated following the accumulation of rainwater. Traffic movement was affected at some places as drains struggled to cope with the sudden spell of rain.

Residents in parts of Srinagar and south Kashmir's Anantnag district also reported hailstorms, while strong winds accompanied the rainfall in several areas.

According to data released by the Meteorological Department, Srinagar recorded 2.2 mm rainfall between 8:30 am and 5:30 pm on Monday. Pahalgam received 2.8 mm rainfall, while Gulmarg recorded 4.4 mm during the same period.

The rainfall brought temperatures down across Jammu and Kashmir, with most stations recording maximum temperatures below normal.

TEMPERATURES SETTLE BELOW NORMAL

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 26.6 degrees Celsius, which was 2.6 degrees below normal, while the minimum settled at 15.4 degrees Celsius. Qazigund recorded a maximum of 25.2 degrees Celsius, Kokernag 25.3 degrees Celsius and Kupwara 26.5 degrees Celsius.

Pahalgam, one of the coldest stations in the Valley, recorded a maximum temperature of 21.6 degrees Celsius, while Gulmarg registered 17 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 35.8 degrees Celsius, 1.8 degrees below normal. Banihal recorded 24.7 degrees Celsius, Batote 25 degrees Celsius, Katra 32.2 degrees Celsius and Bhaderwah 22.5 degrees Celsius.

MET ISSUES ADVISORY

The Meteorological Department advised people to remain indoors during thunderstorms and lightning activity and stay away from electric poles, overhead wires, loose structures and old trees. Authorities also urged suspension of boating and shikara operations during periods of thunderstorms and gusty winds.

The department said brief intense showers at isolated places could trigger minor flash floods and mudslides, particularly in vulnerable areas of Kashmir and parts of Ramban, Banihal and Kishtwar districts. People have been advised to stay away from nallahs and streams during periods of heavy rainfall.

The weather department forecast generally dry weather from June 23 to June 26, although brief spells of light rain, thundershowers and gusty winds cannot be ruled out at a few places.

From June 27 to June 29, the Union Territory is expected to witness partly to generally cloudy weather with light rain, brief intense showers, thunderstorms and gusty winds at scattered places.

A fresh spell of rain and thundershowers, accompanied by brief heavy showers, thunderstorms and gusty winds at many places, is likely between June 30 and July 1, the department said.

Farmers and orchardists have been advised to undertake spraying operations during the early morning hours when weather conditions are expected to remain favourable—(KNO)

Safety of.....

for the annual pilgrimage. The meeting was attended by senior officers from the Army, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Jammu and Kashmir Police, and district police chiefs from the region.

During the meeting, officers presented detailed assessments of the security environment, ongoing counter-terror operations, intelligence coordination mechanisms, and arrangements being put in place along the pilgrimage routes and other sensitive locations.

Reviewing the operational readiness of all agencies, Prabhat emphasized the need for seamless intelligence sharing, joint operational planning, and synchronized action among security forces. He directed officers to maintain a strong security framework and remain alert to any potential threat.

The DGP also called for enhanced surveillance and effective deployment of personnel to ensure the smooth and peaceful conduct of the pilgrimage. He underscored the importance of uninterrupted coordination among all stakeholders involved in the security and management of the event.

Officials briefed the meeting on area domination plans, security measures along the routes, and the multi-layered security arrangements being established to safeguard pilgrims throughout the pilgrimage period.

Appreciating the efforts of security personnel in maintaining peace and stability across the region, Prabhat urged all agencies to continue working in close coordination to ensure a secure and conducive environment for the successful conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

High Devotee.....

during his visit to the shrine, Jammu and Kashmir BJP President and Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament Sat Sharma said the increasing number of pilgrims attending the festival was a positive indication of peace and normalcy in the region.

"The number of devotees is increasing, and it signifies that there is an atmosphere of peace in Jammu and Kashmir, especially in the Kashmir Valley," Sharma said.

He noted that people from different faiths and political backgrounds were participating in and supporting the event, describing it as a reflection of social harmony and collective goodwill.

Sharma offered prayers at the temple and sought blessings for continued peace, prosperity and development in Jammu and Kashmir. He expressed hope that the positive environment witnessed in recent years would continue to strengthen.

The BJP leader also prayed for the progress of the country and for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's continued leadership, saying the nation was moving steadily towards greater development.

The annual festival witnessed a significant influx of devotees amid elaborate arrangements by the administration and local stakeholders. The event passed off peacefully, reinforcing its sig-

nificance as a symbol of faith, cultural heritage and communal harmony in Kashmir.

Your Cooperation.....

cross the tunnel after 3:00 pm. To facilitate orderly traffic movement, police have also prescribed cut-off timings at key locations across the Valley. Vehicles travelling from Mir Bazar towards Srinagar and Anantnag must cross before 4:00 pm, while those heading towards the Navyug Tunnel will be allowed up to 5:00 pm.

At Panthachowk in Srinagar, vehicles proceeding towards Ganderbal, Baramulla and Anantnag must cross before 3:00 pm. Similarly, at Shadipora in Sumbal, traffic moving towards Manigam and North Kashmir will be regulated with a cut-off time of 3:30 pm.

Authorities said vehicles travelling from Manigam towards Srinagar will be permitted until 1:00 pm, while traffic heading towards Batal can continue up to 5:00 pm. Vehicles travelling from Manigam towards Srinagar and North Kashmir must cross before noon.

Police advised all travellers to plan their journeys well in advance and keep adequate time margins for security checks, weather-related disruptions and traffic regulation measures. Commuters have also been urged to follow instructions issued by traffic personnel, civil administration officials and security agencies deployed along the route.

The advisory further recommends that motorists ensure their vehicles are adequately fuelled and avoid unnecessary halts during travel to prevent congestion and delays.

According to the police, travellers reaching designated cut-off points after the stipulated timings will be accommodated at the nearest designated camps as a precautionary measure to ensure their safety.

The department has appealed to the public to stay updated through official traffic advisories and announcements issued during the pilgrimage period and reiterated its commitment to ensuring a secure, smooth and well-managed pilgrimage for all participants.

"Your cooperation ensures a safe and hassle-free journey," the advisory stated.

Reunions.....

country thronging the shrine complex in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district to pay obeisance to Mata Ragnya Bhagwati.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, accompanied by senior civil and police officials, visited the shrine and participated in religious rituals and prayers.

The festival marks the appearance day of Goddess Ragnya Bhagwati.

It is celebrated at several shrines dedicated to the deity across Kashmir, including Kheer Bhawani at Tulmulla, Tripur Sundari at Devsar, Ragnya Bhagwati at Mangzam, Loktipora and Tikker.

For many displaced Kashmiri Pandits, the pilgrimage was not merely a religious journey but an emotional return to their roots.

Roopa, 78, originally from Srinagar and now settled in Bengaluru, said she prayed for an end to the community's exile and hoped to spend her final years in her homeland.

Similar sentiments were expressed by Prem Nath, a native of Kilam village in south Kashmir who is now settled in Mumbai.

"We pray collectively for the return of our community to its homeland in a safe and secure environment," he said.

The shrine complex remained packed throughout the day as devotees offered prayers, lit earthen lamps and chanted hymns in praise of the Goddess. Long queues were witnessed outside the temple, the yagya shala and community kitchens amid the heavy rush of pilgrims.

Several devotees reiterated their long-standing demand for the establishment of a secure homeland for Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley.

Rattan Lal Zutshi, president of the Kulvagishori Temple Association, urged the government to take concrete steps towards rehabilitation of the community.

"We want immediate measures for establishing a secure township and facilitating the dignified return of Kashmiri Pandits to the Valley," he said.

Vikas Raina, whose father Ashok Kumar Raina was killed by terrorists, expressed hope that the Centre would address the community's demand for a secure homeland.

"We continue to look towards the country's leadership for a lasting solution that ensures safety, dignity and permanent rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits," he said.

Emotional scenes unfolded at the shrine as local Muslims warmly greeted visiting Kashmiri Pandits, rekindling memories of their shared past and centuries-old bonds of coexistence. Many displaced Pandits who had come to the Valley for the annual pilgrimage met former neighbours and friends, turning the religious gathering into an occasion of reunion and remembrance.

Shabir Ahmad Dar, a resident of Budgam, said he had come to meet his childhood friend Deepak, now settled in the United States.

"This is his first visit after many years, and our reunion came after 36 years," Dar said.

He said the meeting was deeply emotional as they recalled their childhood and life in Kashmir before the migration of Pandits from the Valley.

Several similar reunions were witnessed at the shrine complex as members of the two communities exchanged greetings, recalled old times and expressed hope for the return of peace and harmony in Kashmir. The scenes of Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits embracing each other drew attention from pilgrims and visitors alike, reflecting Kashmir's traditional ethos of communal harmony and brotherhood.

Several political leaders visited the shrine dur-

ing the day and interacted with pilgrims. Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti also visited the shrine and greeted devotees. (Agencies)

CBI Registers.....

Engineer, Er Sajad Kawoosa, is reportedly absconding and efforts are underway to trace and apprehend him.

According to the FIR, the case originated from a complaint filed by a contractor who stated that his firm had been awarded a project for the installation of a nine-metre high mast pole and a 200-watt high mast light at Saderbal Chowk in Srinagar in April 2025. The contractor claimed that despite completing the work within the stipulated period and submitting the bill, payment could not be processed because the required agreement had not been signed by the concerned officer.

The complainant alleged that during a meeting with the Executive Engineer on June 18, 2026, he was asked to pay Rs 10,000 for signing the agreement and facilitating clearance of the pending bill. Unwilling to pay the amount, he approached the CBI and lodged a written complaint.

The agency subsequently conducted a verification exercise and allegedly established a demand for Rs 5,000 by the peon acting in conspiracy with the Executive Engineer. Investigators further alleged that the officer had conveyed approval for the demand through gestures.

Following the verification, the CBI laid a trap operation and caught the peon while allegedly accepting the bribe amount. He was immediately taken into custody.

The agency also carried out searches at the residence of the Executive Engineer in the Bhagat Barzulla area of Srinagar. However, he could not be found and is believed to be evading arrest.

Based on the findings of the verification and trap proceedings, the CBI registered FIR No. RC1232026A0006 under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita against both accused officials.

The investigation is continuing, with the agency focusing on locating the absconding officer and examining all aspects of the alleged corruption case.

Every lost.....

important neurotransmitters and hormones, including melatonin, serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin, catecholamines, and GABA. "Healthy sleep patterns promote emotional stability, stronger immunity, improved concentration, motivation, empathy, and cardiovascular health. Conversely, inadequate sleep can lead to irritability, anxiety, depression, impaired judgment, reduced productivity, social withdrawal, and heightened stress responses," he said.

The advisory further outlines the widespread effects of sleep deprivation on various organs and body systems. Lack of sleep can impair memory, attention, learning ability, and decision-making while reducing the brain's ability to clear harmful waste products linked to neurodegenerative diseases. It can also increase blood pressure, heart rate, inflammation, and the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Sleep deficiency adversely affects the pancreas and metabolism by reducing insulin sensitivity, increasing cravings, and raising the likelihood of obesity and Type 2 diabetes. It weakens the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to infections and reducing vaccine effectiveness.

The respiratory system is also impacted, with poor sleep increasing vulnerability to respiratory infections and worsening chronic lung conditions such as asthma. Hormonal imbalances caused by inadequate sleep can elevate stress hormone levels, reduce growth hormone production, lower testosterone levels in men, and contribute to menstrual irregularities in women.

The advisory warns that chronic sleep deprivation significantly increases the risk of mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety disorders, burnout, substance abuse, cognitive decline, and even dementia. Research cited in the advisory suggests that even a single night of poor sleep can increase emotional reactivity by nearly 60 per cent, making individuals more vulnerable to stress, conflict, and emotional instability.

Among the most common consequences of insufficient sleep are persistent morning fatigue, poor concentration, mood swings, increased appetite, weight gain, reduced work performance, weakened immunity, and an elevated risk of hypertension and diabetes.

To promote healthy sleep, the advisory recommends following the "Golden Sleep Rules", which include maintaining a regular sleep schedule, going to bed preferably before 10:30-11:00 PM, ensuring a dark and quiet sleeping environment, engaging in regular physical activity, and obtaining exposure to morning sunlight.

People have also been advised to avoid heavy meals late at night, excessive consumption of tea, coffee, and nicotine during evening hours, unnecessary use of sleeping pills without medical advice, excessive screen exposure before bedtime, and the habit of routinely sleeping after midnight.

Reiterating the importance of sleep as a cornerstone of public health, Dr Khan said, "Sleep is not a luxury—it is a biological necessity. Every hour of lost sleep is a debt paid by the brain, heart, metabolism, immunity, and mental health."

Health experts believe that improving sleep habits can play a significant role in preventing chronic diseases, enhancing mental well-being, boosting productivity, and improving overall quality of life—(KNO)

Dr Jitendra.....

toits advanced search and hyperlinking features, he said that the digital format allows users to identify officers based on professional background, domain expertise and experience, thereby facilitating better administrative planning and policy implementation.

The Minister said that the Department of Personnel and Training, in coordination with State Governments and various cadres, undertakes extensive efforts every year to update and maintain the database. He said that the initiative reflects the Government's commitment to leveraging technology for improving governance processes while ensuring greater efficiency, accessibility and transparency.

Highlighting the importance of data-driven governance, Dr Jitendra Singh reviewed the cadre strength position of the Indian Administrative Service and discussed the evolving manpower requirements of States and the Centre. He observed that governance responsibilities continue to expand across sectors and regions, making efficient human resource planning increasingly important. He expressed confidence that continuous assessment of requirements and regular cadre reviews would help address emerging needs and further strengthen administrative capacity.

Dr Jitendra Singh also highlighted the importance of recognising India's vast geographical and developmental diversity while designing governance frameworks. He said that administrative requirements often vary significantly across regions, particularly in hilly, remote and geographically challenging areas, and therefore governance solutions must remain flexible and responsive to local realities. He added that technology-enabled databases can play an important role in helping governments identify suitable expertise and administrative experience for diverse developmental requirements.

The Minister further said that the transition from printed publications to digital platforms is fully aligned with the vision of Digital India and reflects the Government's broader efforts to modernise public administration. He added that digitalisation not only improves accessibility and efficiency but also promotes optimal utilisation of public resources.

The e-IAS Civil List 2026 was launched in the presence of Secretary, Department of Personnel & Training, Rachna Shah; Establishment Officer and Additional Secretary, Manisha Saxena; Additional Secretary (Services & Vigilance), Faiz Ahmed Kidwai; Additional Secretary (Personnel Policy), Manoj Kumar Dwivedi; and other senior officers of the Department.

The e-IAS Civil List 2026 is the 71st edition of the Civil List and the sixth edition to be released as an e-book in PDF format. Equipped with advanced search facilities and hyperlinking features, it enables quick and convenient access to information at the click of a button.

The publication contains comprehensive details relating to IAS officers, including their batch, cadre, present posting, pay level, educational qualifications and date of superannuation. It also provides information regarding cadre-wise strength, the number of officers retiring during the next five years, and the number of IAS officers appointed through the Civil Services Examination from 1969 onwards.

The publication of the e-book has enabled the Department of Personnel and Training to move away from the traditional practice of printing voluminous physical copies of the Civil List. The initiative contributes to the Government's Digital India mission while reducing expenditure on physical publication and ensuring more efficient utilisation of public resources.

No Eligible.....

Raj Department, following reports and grievances received from several districts regarding the exclusion of eligible households during the preparation of the Permanent Wait List under the scheme.

According to the official communication, representations from different areas pointed to cases where deserving beneficiaries were allegedly rejected or removed from the list because of survey deficiencies, verification-related issues, or inadvertent mistakes. The government said such cases require urgent examination and rectification to safeguard the interests of eligible families.

The department has instructed the Directors of Rural Development for the Jammu and Kashmir divisions to issue necessary directions to Assistant Commissioners Development and Block Development Officers for strict compliance with guidelines issued by the Government of India while identifying and removing ineligible households from the beneficiary database.

Officials have also been directed to identify and correct cases where eligible beneficiaries may have been wrongly excluded and to ensure prompt disposal of grievances submitted by affected households. In a strong warning to the field administration, the government stated that any omission, rejection, or deletion of a genuinely eligible beneficiary resulting from negligence, inadequate verification, lack of due diligence, or oversight would be treated seriously. Officers found responsible for such lapses will be held personally accountable and may face action under the applicable rules.

Describing the matter as one of utmost importance, the department has directed all concerned authorities to accord top priority to the exercise and ensure timely resolution of genuine cases.

The move is aimed at strengthening transparency and fairness in the implementation of PMAY-G 2.0 and ensuring that housing assistance reaches every eligible rural household covered under the scheme.

LG Vinai Kumar Saxena lays foundation stone of country's first-of-its-kind high-altitude Flower Fields

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

LEH, JUNE 22: In a major initiative aimed at diversifying Ladakh's biodiversity, enhancing farmers' incomes and creating new livelihood opportunities through floriculture, Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today laid the foundation stone for two high-altitude flower fields in Leh, which will be the first such projects in the country. The projects envisage creating two Flower fields at Choglamsar and Stakna in Leh. The Choglamsar Park is spread over an area of 92,687 square metres, and the Floriculture Project at the

School of Agriculture Science and Technology, University of Ladakh, Stakna, is spread over 1.02 lakh square metres of land.

The Flower Garden at Choglamsar is being developed as one of the largest organised high-altitude floriculture parks in the country and is the first project of its kind in Ladakh. The project assumes special significance as the idea originated during the Lieutenant Governor's visit to the site on April 7, 2026, when he had directed that the area be developed as a dedicated floriculture park.

The Choglamsar flower park will serve as a demonstration and

model floriculture centre where high-value flowers such as Lilium, Gladiolus, Tulips and other ornamental species, with strong market demand in national and international markets, will be cultivated. The garden will also function as a recreational and educational space for residents and tourists alike.

Under the project, for the first time, farmers will be trained in Floriculture, and later on, these fields will be handed over to them for commercial utilisation through the cooperatives. The Floriculture Project at Stakna has been conceived as a livelihood-generation and economic-diversification initiative.

The project aims to establish a model floriculture centre for promoting scientific flower cultivation in Ladakh and will focus on producing premium-quality cut flowers for marketing in metropolitan cities and other markets across the country.

On the occasion, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Department of Agriculture, UT Ladakh, and the CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), Palampur, Himachal Pradesh, under which scientific and technical support will be provided for the projects. The collaboration will

facilitate the promotion of scientific floriculture in Ladakh through the introduction of modern technologies, capacity-building programmes, demonstration activities, development of floriculture infrastructure and identification of suitable floriculture crops for Ladakh's unique climatic conditions.

Speaking on the occasion, L-G Shri Saxena said that the floriculture projects represent far more than the cultivation of flowers and mark the beginning of a new vision for Ladakh's development, combining economic growth with environmental sustainability.

Haj Committee Opens Applications for Haj 2027 Pilgrimage

Online Registration Begins; Selection Process to Be Held in July, Advance Deposit Deadline Fixed for August 10

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: The Haj Committee of India has invited online applications from eligible intending pilgrims for the Haj pilgrimage in 2027 (1448 Hijri), marking the commencement of the registration process for one of the largest annual religious journeys undertaken by Indian Muslims.



According to an official announcement, applications can be submitted through the Haj Application Form available on the official website of the committee as well as through the HAJ SUVIDHA mobile application. The registration window opened on June 22 and will remain available until July 20, 2026, at 11:59 PM.

The committee stated that the digital random selection process, commonly known as Qurrah, is expected to be conducted during the last week of July. Applicants selected provisionally will be required to deposit an advance amount of Rs. 1,52,300 on or before August 10, 2026, to confirm their participation in the pilgrimage.

The Haj Committee has directed applicants to carefully review all guidelines before submitting their forms and ensure that the required documents are uploaded correctly. These include scanned copies of the front and back pages of a machine-readable Indian passport valid at least until December 31, 2027, a passport-size photograph with a white background, a bank passbook or cancelled cheque, and proof of address.

Emphasising the importance of responsible registration, the committee cautioned applicants against cancelling their allotted Haj seats after selection. It noted that such withdrawals create significant operational and logistical challenges and may attract substantial penalties under the Haj-2027 guidelines.

Prospective pilgrims have therefore been advised to apply only after ensuring their readiness, eligibility and firm commitment to undertake the sacred journey. The committee expressed hope that the streamlined online application system and digital selection process would facilitate a smooth and transparent registration procedure for Haj 2027.

Resident Commission J&K New Delhi marks 12th International Yoga Day with focus on healthy aging

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, JUNE 22: The Resident Commission, J&K, New Delhi celebrated the 12th International Day of Yoga 2026 with enthusiastic participation from the officers, officials, staff members and representatives of its subordinate offices.

This year's theme, "Yoga for Healthy Aging," underscored yoga's role in promoting longevity, mobility, mental well-being and preventive healthcare. The theme holds added significance amid rising life expectancy and a growing focus on holistic health and wellness.

The event was organized under the overall supervision and guidance of Additional Resident Commissioner Anil Sharma and coordinated by the Government Ayush Dispensary, Resident Commission.

Dr. Jyotsna Mukhi, Nodal Officer, Directorate of Ayush, Jammu & Kashmir, hosted the programme. Expert instructors from the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga conducted a 45-minute yoga session. They demonstrated various yogic practices and asanas designed to enhance flexibility, balance, strength and overall well-being.

Speaking on the occasion, Anil Sharma emphasized the importance of adopting yoga as a way of life for maintaining physical fitness, mental well-being and healthy aging. He also appreciated the efforts of the Directorate of Ayush, the yoga instructors and all the participants for making the event a success.

KU celebrates International Day of Yoga -2026 with enthusiastic participation

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 21: The University of Kashmir (KU) on Sunday celebrated International Day of Yoga (IDY)-2026 at the Athletic Track, Sports Ground, with enthusiastic participation from students, faculty members, officers and non-teaching staff.

The programme was organized by the Department of Students' Welfare (DSW), KU in collaboration with the Directorate of Physical Education & Sports (DPE&S) KU.

Held under the theme "Yoga for Healthy Ageing", the event sought to promote physical fitness, mental well-being and holistic development through the practice of yoga.

The event was led by Vice-Chancellor, KU Prof. Nilofer Khan, and witnessed the participation of Registrar KU Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Dean Students' Welfare Prof. Seema Singh, Chief Proctor Prof. Imtiaz Khan, Coordinator DPE&S Dr. Surjeet Singh, besides faculty members, officers, students, research scholars, hostel boarders and non-teaching staff of the University.

As part of the celebrations, Prof. Nilofer Khan, administered the Yoga Pledge to the participants, reaffirming the University's collective commitment towards adopting yoga as a means of achieving physical, mental and emotional well-being.

The pledge ceremony was followed by a collective yoga session during which participants performed various yoga asanas and breathing exercises.

Addressing the gathering and interacting with the participants, Prof. Nilofer Khan emphasized the importance of integrating yoga into daily life. She said, "Yoga should be a part of our life. I realize how important it is for everyone to engage in regular exercise and physical activity. We need to take such initiatives forward. The vision introduced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of the country has today reached all parts of the world, with yoga emerging as a global movement for health and wellness."

She further said that the University remains committed to the holistic development of its students and expressed hope that KU students would continue to excel and represent the institution at both national and international levels.

Speaking on the occasion, Registrar, KU Prof. Naseer Iqbal, observed that the University community had gathered to celebrate International Day of Yoga 2026 in the true spirit of wellness and collective responsibility.

Earlier, Dean Students' Welfare KU Prof. Seema Singh, welcomed the participants and highlighted the significance of yoga in promoting physical fitness, mental health and emotional resilience.

'Panchayat-Led Service Delivery Key to Strengthening Rural Governance'

Regional workshop in Srinagar to bring together grassroots representatives, officials and experts from seven States

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: The Ministry of Panchayati Raj will organise a regional workshop on Panchayat-led service delivery in Srinagar on June 23, bringing together elected representatives, Panchayat functionaries, policymakers and rural governance experts from seven States to deliberate on improving public services at the grassroots level.

Titled "Seva Se Samridhi: Panchayat-led Service Delivery," the workshop will be inaugurated by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The event will also be attended by Jammu and Kashmir Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Javid Ahmad Dar, Ministry of Panchayati Raj Secretary Vivek Bhadraraj, Joint Secretary Palka Sahni and Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Secretary Mohammad Aijaz Asad.

The workshop is being organised by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in collaboration with the Common Services Centre Special Purpose Vehicle under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the Jammu and



Kashmir Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.

Officials said the programme is part of the Ministry's ongoing "Seva Se Samridhi" initiative aimed at enhancing service delivery, improving ease of living in rural areas and strengthening local self-governance through empowered and accountable Panchayati Raj Institutions.

The one-day event will witness participation from Panchayat representatives, Village Level Entrepreneurs, government officials and stakeholders from Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka,

Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Representatives from civil society organisations, academic institutions and organisations engaged in rural technology and digital public infrastructure are also expected to attend.

A key feature of the workshop will be the recognition of high-performing Gram Panchayats and outstanding Common Service Centres from the participating States for their contributions to citizen-centric governance and effective public service delivery.

Discussions during the workshop will focus on leveraging digital technologies, promoting citizen

participation, encouraging innovation and enhancing access to public services in rural areas. Panel discussions, technical sessions and State-level presentations will facilitate the exchange of best practices and successful governance models that can be replicated across regions.

The Ministry believes that strengthening Panchayat-led governance through technology-enabled and citizen-focused service delivery mechanisms will play a crucial role in accelerating rural development and ensuring effective implementation of welfare programmes at the grassroots level.

Thousands Gather at Kheer Bhawani Shrine in Ganderbal as Annual Festival Celebrated Amid Extensive Civic Arrangements

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, JUNE 22: Thousands of devotees from across Jammu and Kashmir and different parts of the country assembled at the revered Kheer Bhawani shrine in Tulmulla on Monday to participate in the annual festival observed on the occasion of Jyeshtha Ashtami, with authorities ensuring elaborate arrangements for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the event.

The temple complex witnessed a massive turnout from the early hours of the day as devotees offered prayers and sought blessings in an atmosphere marked by devotion, faith and spiritual reflection.

Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatinder Kishore, said the annual festival holds immense religious significance and attracts devotees from various regions every year. He stated that the district administration had made comprehensive arrangements to facilitate pilgrims and ensure the successful conduct of the celebrations.

"On behalf of the district administration and the people of Ganderbal, we welcome all devotees. Every effort has been made to ensure a comfortable, safe and spiritually fulfilling experience for the pilgrims," he said.

Devotees described the occasion as a symbol of faith and cultural heritage. Among them, Ashish Nand Bhatt expressed pride in his roots and said he had visited the shrine to pray for peace, prosperity and the well-being of society.

The festival was marked by heightened security and extensive civic measures.



Authorities deployed adequate security personnel and put in place traffic management plans to regulate the movement of pilgrims. Healthcare facilities, sanitation services and other essential amenities were also arranged to ensure convenience for devotees throughout the day.

Meanwhile, the Inspector General of Police, Kashmir, extended greetings to devotees and expressed hope that the occasion would further strengthen peace, harmony, spiritual values and communal brotherhood.

The annual gathering at the Kheer Bhawani shrine remains one of the most significant religious events in the region, drawing devotees from across the country and reflecting the enduring cultural and spiritual traditions associated with the historic place of worship.

Kheer Bhawani Mela Celebrated with Religious Fervour, Communal Harmony in Kulgam

■ FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, JUNE 22: The annual Kheer Bhawani Mela was celebrated with great religious fervour, enthusiasm, and a spirit of communal harmony at the revered Shri Tripura Sundari Temple in Khanbarni, Devsar, and Kheer Bhawani Asthan in Manzgam area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district. A large number of Kashmiri Pandit devotees from different parts of the Valley and outside Jammu and Kashmir participated in the annual festival and offered prayers, performed traditional rituals, and took part in various religious ceremonies at both shrines. The occasion witnessed an atmosphere of devotion, peace, and brotherhood.

In a remarkable display of Kashmir's centuries-old tradition of communal harmony, members of the local Muslim community actively participated in the celebrations and extended their support and goodwill to the visiting devotees. The event reflected the enduring ethos of mutual respect, coexistence, and brotherhood that has long been a hallmark of Kashmir's composite culture. The District Administration Kulgam had made elaborate arrangements to ensure the smooth and peaceful conduct of the mela. Essential facilities, including drinking water, electricity, ration supplies, medical assistance, medicines, sanitation, transport, and other basic amenities, were provided for the convenience of the devotees. Officials from various departments remained present on the ground throughout the day and closely monitored the arrangements. Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam (IAS), accompanied by Additional Deputy Com-

missioner Vikar Ahmad Giri (JKAS) and other district and tehsil-level officers, visited both the Shri Tripura Sundari Temple at Khanbarni and the Kheer Bhawani Asthan at Manzgam to review the arrangements and interact with members of the Kashmiri Pandit community. The officers assessed the facilities being provided and assured the devotees of all possible support from the administration.

Sub-Divisional Magistrate D.H. Pora, Bashir-ul-Hassan (JKAS), and Tehsildar D.H. Pora, Zahid Gani (JKAS), also visited the Kheer Bhawani Asthan at Manzgam, where they reviewed the arrangements and interacted with devotees. They extended their greetings to the Kashmiri Pandit community and reiterated the administration's commitment towards ensuring the smooth conduct of the annual religious event. Among the officers who played a significant role in ensuring the successful conduct of the mela was Tehsildar Devsar, Rakib Ahmad (JKAS). He remained actively involved in overseeing the arrangements on the ground and coordinated closely with various departments to facilitate a smooth and hassle-free experience for the devotees. His dedicated efforts and hands-on supervision were widely appreciated by members of the Kashmiri Pandit community as well as local residents. Adequate security arrangements were also put in place by the district police and security agencies to ensure the safe and peaceful conduct of the religious event. Devotees expressed satisfaction over the arrangements made by the administration and appreciated the efforts of the district authorities, police, and other concerned departments.

HT EDITORIAL

Beyond the Downpour:
Building a More Resilient
Srinagar for Tomorrow

Monday's intense spell of rain, though brief, offered an important lesson in the realities of urban life in a rapidly evolving city. Within less than an hour, several areas of Srinagar and parts of Budgam witnessed water accumulation, traffic disruptions and inconvenience to residents, bringing into focus the growing need for resilience in the face of increasingly unpredictable weather conditions.

Cities across the world are confronting similar challenges. Climate variability, changing rainfall patterns and expanding urban settlements are placing unprecedented pressure on civic infrastructure. Srinagar, with its distinctive geography, network of waterways and growing urban footprint, is no exception. The recent downpour should therefore be seen not as an isolated incident but as an opportunity to strengthen preparedness for the future.

Over the past few years, Srinagar has witnessed remarkable improvements in its urban landscape. Modern roads, upgraded public spaces and enhanced civic amenities have transformed the city's appearance and improved the quality of life for its residents. Such progress reflects a long-term commitment to development and modernization. However, as cities grow, infrastructure systems must evolve alongside them to meet emerging demands and changing environmental realities.

Rainwater management has become an increasingly important aspect of urban planning. Even short-duration rainfall events can place considerable stress on drainage networks, particularly in densely populated areas. Continuous assessment, technological innovation and timely maintenance are therefore essential to ensure that civic infrastructure remains capable of handling future challenges.

The scenes witnessed during Monday's rainfall also highlighted the value of coordinated response mechanisms. Efficient field monitoring, swift action by civic agencies and active public cooperation play a crucial role in minimizing disruption and restoring normalcy. Equally important is the role of citizens in maintaining cleanliness, protecting drainage channels and promoting responsible waste disposal practices that contribute to smoother water flow during heavy rains.

Srinagar's relationship with water has always been central to its identity. Its lakes, rivers, wetlands and canals are not merely natural assets; they are an integral part of the city's environmental and urban ecosystem. Protecting and strengthening these systems can significantly enhance the city's ability to manage rainfall while preserving its ecological character.

As the city continues its developmental journey, resilience must remain at the heart of planning. Investments in infrastructure, smart technologies and sustainable urban management will help ensure that future weather events cause minimal disruption to public life.

The recent downpour was short-lived, but its message is enduring. A modern city is defined not only by the infrastructure it builds but also by its ability to adapt to changing circumstances. By embracing innovation, preparedness and collective responsibility, Srinagar can continue to grow as a city that is both progressive in vision and resilient in practice.

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HAPPY FATHER'S DAY:
The Story That Began with
My Father's Hand

"Every great story has a beginning. Mine began with a small hand held firmly by a father whose love became the foundation of my life."



MUZAMIL ARIF

Some heroes make history; others quietly shape it. My father belongs to the second kind. He has never sought applause, recognition, or appreciation, yet every achievement in my life bears the imprint of his sacrifices. On this Father's Day, I do not simply celebrate a man I celebrate the greatest blessing that Almighty Allah has entrusted to me.

My earliest memories begin with him. Before I understood the value of education, he understood it for me. Every morning, before the first rays of sunlight touched our home, he would gently wake me up, help me get ready for school, make sure my uniform was neat, my shoes were polished, and my school bag was complete. He would encourage me with a smile, remind me to study sincerely, and send me off with love and prayers. At that time, I believed it was just part of my daily routine. Today, I realize those ordinary mornings were extraordinary expressions of a father's unconditional love.

As I grew older, I discovered that my father was much more than the person who prepared me for school. He became my first teacher, my first mentor, and my lifelong guide. Long before textbooks introduced me to lessons, he taught me the values that truly define a person's character: honesty over shortcuts, kindness over pride, discipline over excuses, patience over anger, and hard work over comfort. He taught me to respect every individual regardless of status, to remain humble in success, to stay hopeful during failure, and to never compromise my principles. These priceless lessons have become the foundation of my education, my career, and the person I strive to become.

Life has never been a journey without obstacles. Like countless families, we encountered moments of uncertainty and hardship. Yet I never witnessed fear overcoming my father. He faced every challenge with courage, dignity, patience, and unwavering faith in Almighty Allah. Even when difficulties surrounded him, he ensured they never stole our hope. Looking back, I now understand that many of his silent sacrifices were made so that my dreams could continue to grow without interruption.

One truth has remained constant throughout my life: whenever I stumbled, my father stood beside me. Whenever I doubted myself, he believed in me. Whenever the world seemed uncertain, his words restored my confidence. His support has never depended upon my success or failure because a



father's love does not measure achievements; it embraces the child in every circumstance. Such unconditional support is among the rarest blessings one can ever receive.

As I matured, I gradually understood a truth that every child realizes with time: many of the greatest sacrifices parents make are never spoken aloud. There were moments when my father silently put aside his own wishes so that mine could come true. He carried responsibilities without complaint, endured hardships with remarkable strength, and made countless compromises so that I could receive opportunities he perhaps never had. Every comfort I enjoyed was often the result of sacrifices he chose to hide behind a smile.

Another priceless gift my father gave me was faith in myself. Whenever I questioned my abilities, he reminded me that determination, honesty, patience, and sincere effort could overcome even the greatest obstacles. He never measured my worth by marks, achievements, or failures. Instead, he encouraged me to become a person of integrity, compassion, humility, and responsibility. His words continue to guide me every day, reminding me that true success is not measured by wealth or position, but by the goodness of one's character and the positive impact one leaves on society.

In a world where many relationships are shaped by expectations, parents remain the purest example of selfless love. They give without counting, sacrifice without complaining, forgive without hesitation, and pray without ceasing. Their greatest happiness lies in the happiness of their children, and their greatest achievement is seeing them become good human beings. If humanity wishes to witness the truest form of unconditional love, it need only look into the hearts of parents.

As we celebrate Father's Day, I have a humble request to every son and daughter: cherish your parents while they are with you. Spend time with them, listen to their stories, express your gratitude, and never let a single day pass without making them feel loved and respected. One day, the memories we create with them will become our most precious treasures. A father's love is one of life's greatest blessings, and there is no greater honour than making him smile through our actions, our character, and the life we choose to live.

Whatever I am today and whatever I aspire to become tomorrow is deeply rooted in the values my father planted within me. Every success I celebrate carries his unseen effort. Every step I take forward reflects the confidence he nurtured. Every dream I pursue is strengthened by the belief he placed in me long before I believed in myself.

Today, instead of making promises that fade with time, I make one that will guide my entire life.

Dear Father, I promise to live with honesty, humility, compassion, and perseverance. I promise to protect the values you have entrusted to me, to honour our family's name through my character, and to strive every day to become a person who reflects your teachings. My greatest achievement will never be measured only by professional success, but by becoming the good human being you always wanted me to be. I promise that, with the help of Almighty Allah, I will work tirelessly to make you proud not only through my accomplishments but through the values I live by.

I pray that Almighty Allah blesses you with a long, healthy, peaceful, and joyful life. May every sacrifice you have made be rewarded beyond measure. May your heart always remain free from sorrow, your face always shine with happiness, and your life be filled with countless blessings. May Allah grant me the strength, wisdom, and sincerity to fulfil every dream you have for me and to always remain worthy of your love, your prayers, and your trust.

To the world, you may simply be a father. But to me, you are my first teacher, my greatest mentor, my strongest supporter, my safest place, and the architect of every dream I have dared to pursue. If my life ever becomes meaningful, it will forever be because it was built upon the silent legacy of an extraordinary father.

Happy Father's Day. Thank you for holding my hand when I was too small to walk, for believing in me when I was too weak to believe in myself, and for teaching me that the greatest success in life is not merely to become successful, but to become a good human being. The story of my life began with your hand, and with Allah's grace, I hope it will always continue with your blessings.

Happy Father's Day Papa.
The author is an aspiring civil servant and freelance writer from Jammu & Kashmir who writes on education, social values, family, and human relationships.

International Yoga Day 2026

A Call for Health, Harmony, and Holistic Well-Being



SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

It gives me immense pleasure to highlight that our nation is touching new heights in various fields such as sports, science and technology, health, agriculture, aviation, education, and business. India is progressing steadily towards greater achievements with every passing year. Throughout the year, many important events and occasions are celebrated with great enthusiasm and energy. Among them, 21 June holds special significance as it is observed worldwide as International Yoga Day.

On this occasion, events and programmes are organized at various levels across the country. From the Prime Minister of India to officials from different departments, people actively participate in yoga sessions and awareness campaigns. These celebrations convey a clear message

to the world that India places great importance on the health and well-being of its citizens. Healthy people build a healthy nation, and ensuring the welfare of our citizens remains one of our highest priorities. There is nothing more valuable than good health, and the Government of India has launched several beneficial schemes aimed at improving the well-being of the nation.

Every individual aspires to stay healthy and fit in order to lead a long, fulfilling, and productive life. Across the world, doctors and health experts encourage people to engage in various physical activities such as football, cricket, volleyball, badminton, jogging, and regular morning walks. These activities not only improve physical fitness but also help prevent many life-threatening diseases.

In recent years, a growing trend toward gym culture has been observed, particularly among the younger generation. While some people exercise to achieve peace of mind and maintain good health, others are motivated by the desire to build muscle, improve their appearance, or stay fashionable. Regardless of the reason, one fact remains clear: physical activity is essential for the

overall development of both body and mind.

Today, the world is witnessing a rapid increase in lifestyle-related diseases such as cardiovascular disorders, diabetes, obesity, and hypertension. To combat these health challenges, governments and healthcare professionals strongly advocate regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and healthy lifestyle practices.

Yoga: India's Gift to the World
Among the most effective and holistic practices for health and wellness is Yoga. Derived from the Sanskrit word "Yuj," meaning "to join" or "to unite," yoga symbolizes the union of body, mind, and spirit. Practised in India since ancient times, yoga is much more than physical exercise; it is a complete system of well-being that promotes harmony, inner peace, and self-awareness.

Recognizing its universal appeal and immense benefits, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as International Yoga Day in 2014. Since then, the day has been celebrated annually across the globe to raise awareness about the importance of yoga in achieving physical, mental, and spiritual health.

International Yoga Day 2026

In 2026, millions of people around the world will celebrate International Yoga Day with enthusiasm and dedication. Schools, colleges, government institutions, social organizations, and yoga centres will organize special yoga sessions, awareness programmes, and community events to encourage healthy living.

The celebration serves as a reminder that yoga is not merely a form of exercise but a way of life that fosters discipline, mindfulness, and balance. By practising yoga regularly, individuals can reduce stress, improve concentration, enhance flexibility, and strengthen their overall well-being.

Conclusion
International Yoga Day is a global movement that promotes health, harmony, and holistic development. It reminds us that true wellness is achieved when the body, mind, and spirit work together in perfect balance. Let us all take a pledge on this International Yoga Day to make yoga a part of our daily routine and inspire others to embrace this timeless gift of India for a healthier and happier world.

sahilmanzoor9419@gmail.com

Vivekananda Brought Yoga to the World as a Way of Life



DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

Yoga today stands at a remarkable crossroads of history. What began as an inward journey of self-realization in the forests of ancient India has now become a global cultural force, a universal language of wellness, and a shared spiritual grammar for millions across continents. The world has embraced yoga not merely as a physical discipline but as a holistic way of life — a philosophy that harmonizes body, mind, and soul. Its global acceptance is not an accident of modern wellness trends; it is the natural flowering of a timeless wisdom that speaks to the deepest human longing for peace, balance, and meaning.

Swami Vivekananda stands as one of the most influential spiritual ambassadors of India, credited with introducing Yoga to the modern world not merely as a set of physical postures but as a holistic way of life. At a time when the West largely viewed India through colonial stereotypes, Vivekananda presented the spiritual heritage of his country with clarity, confidence, and universal appeal. His interpretation of Yoga transcended ritual and asceticism, offering a practical philosophy for personal growth, social harmony, and global understanding.

Vivekananda's historic appearance at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893 marked a turning point in global spiritual discourse. His opening words, "Sisters and brothers of America," reflected the essence of Yoga—unity, compassion, and the recognition of the divine in every being. Through his speeches, he introduced the West to the core principles of Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Jnana Yoga, explaining that Yoga is not confined to physical exercises but is a disciplined path toward self-realization and service to humanity. One of Vivekananda's greatest contributions was his ability to reinterpret ancient ideas in modern language. He emphasized that Yoga is a science of the mind, a method for mastering one's inner world. In his book Raja Yoga, he described meditation as a systematic process for strengthening concentration, calming the mind, and awakening higher consciousness. This rational and experiential approach resonated deeply with Western audiences, who were seeking alternatives to materialism and dogmatic religion.

Vivekananda also highlighted Karma Yoga, the Yoga of selfless action, as a way to spiritualize everyday life. He taught that work done without attachment purifies the heart and leads to inner freedom. This idea transformed Yoga from a monastic discipline into a practical ethic for householders, professionals, and social workers. Similarly, his teachings on Bhakti Yoga emphasized universal love and tolerance, while Jnana Yoga encouraged critical thinking and the pursuit of truth. By presenting these four paths as complementary, he made Yoga accessible to people of all temperaments and cultures. Another significant aspect of Vivekananda's contribution was his insistence that Yoga promotes strength, fearlessness, and character-building. He believed that spiritual life must be grounded in courage and self-confidence. His famous call to "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached" reflects the dynamic, life-affirming spirit he brought to Yoga. This message inspired countless individuals to pursue personal excellence and social responsibility.

Today, Yoga is a global phenomenon practiced by millions. While modern Yoga often emphasizes physical postures, the deeper philosophical foundation—unity, mindfulness, self-discipline, and service—can be traced directly to Vivekananda's teachings. He transformed Yoga from an esoteric tradition into a universal path for harmonious living,



bridging East and West, ancient and modern. In essence, Vivekananda did not merely teach Yoga; he revived it, reinterpreted it, and globalized it. Through his vision, Yoga became not just a practice but a way of life, guiding humanity toward inner peace and collective well-being. The story of yoga's global rise is also the story of humanity's search for inner stability in an age of unprecedented speed, stress, and fragmentation. As modern life becomes increasingly mechanized and digitally saturated, yoga offers a counter-rhythm — a return to breath, presence, and embodied awareness. It is this universal relevance that has transformed yoga from a regional spiritual practice into a worldwide movement.

Today, from New York to Nairobi, from Tokyo to Toronto, yoga studios, meditation centers, and wellness retreats echo the same ancient chants that once resonated along the banks of the Ganga. Yoga's origins lie deep in the Vedic and Upanishadic traditions, where sages explored the nature of consciousness and the pathways to liberation. Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, composed around the 2nd century BCE, codified yoga into an eight-fold path — yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi. This framework was not merely a set of exercises but a complete ethical, psychological, and spiritual system. Yoga was envisioned as a disciplined journey toward self-mastery, where the body becomes a vehicle for the expansion of consciousness. Yet, even in its earliest formulations, yoga was never rigid or exclusionary. It evolved through centuries, absorbing influences from Buddhism, Jainism, Tantra, and Bhakti traditions. This adaptability — this ability to remain rooted while embracing change — is one of the reasons yoga could travel across cultures and epochs. Its core message of harmony resonates with all civilizations. The seeds of yoga's global journey were planted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Indian spiritual leaders like Swami Vivekananda introduced the West to the philosophical foundations of yoga.

Vivekananda's electrifying address at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893 opened a new chapter in intercultural dialogue. He presented yoga not as an exotic ritual but as a rational, universal science of the mind. His lectures across America and Europe laid the groundwork for yoga's intellectual acceptance. In the decades that followed, teachers like Paramahansa Yogananda, Swami Sivananda, B.K.S. Iyengar, Pattabhi Jois, and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi carried yoga across oceans. Each brought a unique interpretation — from Iyengar's precision-based asanas to Yogananda's Kriya Yoga and Maharishi's transcendental meditation. By the mid-20th century, yoga had already entered Western consciousness as a path to physical health, emotional balance, and spiritual awakening. The counter-culture movement of the 1960s further accelerated yoga's popularity. As young people in the West sought alternatives to materialism and mechanized living,

Vivekananda's historic appearance at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893 marked a turning point in global spiritual discourse. His opening words, "Sisters and brothers of America," reflected the essence of Yoga—unity, compassion, and the recognition of the divine in every being. Through his speeches, he introduced the West to the core principles of Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Jnana Yoga, explaining that Yoga is not confined to physical exercises but is a disciplined path toward self-realization and service to humanity. One of Vivekananda's greatest contributions was his ability to reinterpret ancient ideas in modern language

yoga offered a doorway to inner exploration. The Beatles' association with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi made meditation a global phenomenon. Yoga studios began to appear in major cities, and by the 1980s, yoga had become a mainstream wellness practice.

One of the most significant reasons for yoga's global acceptance is the growing body of scientific research validating its benefits. Modern medicine, neuroscience, and psychology have increasingly recognized yoga as a powerful tool for holistic health. Studies show that yoga:

- i) reduces stress by lowering cortisol levels
 - ii) improves cardiovascular health
 - iii) enhances flexibility, strength, and posture
 - iv) boosts immunity
 - v) alleviates anxiety and depression
 - vi) improves sleep quality
 - vii) enhances cognitive function and emotional regulation
- Neuroscientists have found that meditation

and pranayama increase grey matter density in brain regions associated with memory, empathy, and emotional balance.

Yoga's emphasis on breath awareness activates the parasympathetic nervous system, countering the chronic stress response that plagues modern life. This scientific validation has helped yoga transcend cultural boundaries. Hospitals, universities, corporate offices, and even military institutions now integrate yoga into their wellness programs. The U.S. Army uses yoga and mindfulness to help soldiers cope with trauma. Schools across Europe and America include yoga in their curriculum to improve concentration and emotional resilience among children. Yoga has become a way of life. A major milestone in yoga's global journey came in 2014 when the United Nations declared June 21 as International Yoga Day. Proposed by India and supported by 177 nations — the highest number of co-sponsors for any UN resolution — this recognition marked yoga's arrival as a global cultural heritage.

Every year, millions participate in mass yoga events across continents. From Times Square to Trafalgar Square, from the Sydney Opera House to the Eiffel Tower, yoga mats unfurl like symbols of unity. The world pauses for a moment of collective breath. This global celebration is not merely symbolic; it reflects a shared human aspiration for peace, health, and harmony. While yoga's physical postures have gained immense popularity, its deeper essence lies in its philosophy of living. Yoga is not confined to the mat; it is a way of being. At its heart, yoga teaches: i) Ahimsa — non-violence in thought, word, and action ii) Satya — truthfulness

iii) Aparigraha — non-possessiveness iv) Santosha — contentment v) Svadhyaya — self-study vi) Dhyana — meditation vii) Samadhi — union with the higher self These principles offer a moral and emotional compass for navigating modern life. In a world fractured by conflict, polarization, and ecological crisis, yoga's message of interconnectedness is profoundly relevant. It reminds us that personal well-being is inseparable from collective well-being.

The 21st century has witnessed a silent epidemic of stress, anxiety, and loneliness. Digital overload, social fragmentation, and the pressures of hyper-productivity have created a mental health crisis. Yoga offers a sanctuary — a space where individuals can reconnect with themselves. Meditation and pranayama cultivate mindfulness, emotional clarity, and inner calm. Asanas release stored tension and trauma from the body. The practice of pratyahara — withdrawal of the senses — helps individuals detach from external noise and cultivate inner stillness. Yoga teaches that healing begins from within. Therapists worldwide now integrate yoga into trauma-informed care. Veterans suffering from PTSD, survivors of violence, and individuals battling depression have found solace in yoga's gentle, non-judgmental embrace. Yoga's emphasis on breath and presence helps individuals reclaim

agency over their bodies and minds.

Yoga's global acceptance has also created a new cultural phenomenon — a shared spiritual vocabulary that transcends borders. Words like asana, pranayama, chakra, mantra, and namaste have entered everyday language. Yoga festivals, retreats, and teacher-training programs attract participants from dozens of countries. Social media has amplified yoga's reach, creating global communities of practitioners who share their journeys, challenges, and insights. This cultural diffusion, however, also raises questions about authenticity and appropriation. Some critics argue that yoga has been commercialized, stripped of its spiritual depth, and reduced to a fitness trend. While these concerns are valid, they also highlight yoga's extraordinary adaptability. Yoga has always evolved — from the ascetic practices of ancient sages to the household spirituality of the Gita, from tantric traditions to modern therapeutic yoga. Its essence remains intact: the pursuit of harmony. As the world confronts climate change, pandemics, and social unrest, yoga offers a framework for sustainable living. Its emphasis on simplicity, mindfulness, and ecological harmony aligns with global movements for environmental consciousness.

The yogic principle of aparigraha encourages minimalism; ahimsa inspires compassion toward all living beings; saucha promotes purity of body and environment. Yoga also fosters intercultural dialogue. It brings people together across religions, races, and nationalities. In yoga studios worldwide, individuals from diverse backgrounds practice side by side, united by breath. This shared experience cultivates empathy and dissolves boundaries. While yoga is now global, India remains its spiritual home. The country's ancient traditions, philosophical texts, and living lineages continue to guide the world's understanding of yoga. India's contribution is not merely historical; it is ongoing. From Rishikesh to Mysore, from Varanasi to Pondicherry, India's yoga schools attract seekers from every continent. At the same time, India has embraced yoga as a tool for national health and cultural diplomacy. Government initiatives, public health programs, and educational institutions promote yoga as a lifestyle.

The global recognition of yoga has strengthened India's soft power, showcasing its civilizational value. Despite its global scale, yoga ultimately remains an intimate, personal journey. Each practitioner discovers yoga in their own way — through breath, through movement, through silence. Yoga teaches that transformation begins with a single moment of awareness. It is not about perfection but presence; not about achievement but alignment. Yoga invites individuals to listen to their bodies, observe their minds, and cultivate compassion toward themselves and others. It teaches resilience, patience, and surrender. It reminds us that peace is not something to be found outside but something to be cultivated within.

Yoga's global acceptance is a testament to its timeless relevance. In a world torn by conflict, ecological crisis, and emotional exhaustion, yoga offers a path toward healing — not only for individuals but for humanity as a whole. It teaches us to breathe deeply, live mindfully, and act compassionately. It reminds us that we are interconnected, that our well-being is intertwined with the well-being of others. As yoga continues to evolve and spread, it carries with it the ancient Indian vision of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — the world as one family. Yoga is not merely a practice; it is a philosophy of unity. It is a way of life that invites us to replace fear with awareness, division with harmony, and restlessness with peace. In embracing yoga, the world has embraced a universal heritage of wisdom.

International Tagore Awardee Dr Ratan Bhattacharjee is a former Affiliate Faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University USA & multilingual poet cum columnist prof.ratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com

DC Samba reviews preparedness for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SAMBA, JUNE 22: Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a high-level review meeting at the DC Office Complex to assess the preparedness for the smooth, safe and successful conduct of the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026.

The meeting was attended by senior functionaries from key departments and agencies tasked with facilitating the annual pilgrimage through district Samba. The Deputy Commissioner conducted a detailed department-wise review, covering the full spectrum of logistical and operational arrangements essential for the Yatra. These encompassed security deployment, traffic management, safe drinking water supply, uninterrupted power availability, healthcare services, sanitation and waste management, lodgement centres, temporary toilet facilities, langar arrangements and emergency response mechanisms. Each department was called upon to present its state of readiness and outline the measures being put in place to meet the demands of the pilgrimage season. Emphasising the paramount



importance of meticulous advance planning and effective inter-departmental coordination, the Deputy Commissioner issued specific operational directives to each department. The Jal Shakti Department was directed to ensure an adequate and uninterrupted supply of safe drinking water at all points along the Yatra route. JPDCL was instructed to maintain reliable and continuous power supply throughout the duration of the pilgrimage. The Health Department was directed to deploy well-equipped medical teams and establish robust emergency healthcare services at strategic

locations. Municipal authorities were tasked with ensuring rigorous sanitation standards, installation of adequate temporary toilet facilities and the scientific disposal of waste. The Traffic Police and other security agencies were directed to put in place comprehensive traffic regulation measures and ensure a strong security apparatus along the entire Yatra corridor within the district.

The DC further directed NIC to ensure reliable and uninterrupted internet connectivity at RFID Centres being created at Nonath and Chichi Mata so as to facilitate

seamless pilgrim registration, biometric verification and the full range of digital services integral to the Yatra management framework. She underscored that any disruption in digital infrastructure could impede the smooth flow of pilgrims and directed that contingency measures be kept in readiness at all times.

Ms. Sudan categorically directed all departments to maintain the highest state of operational readiness and to respond with urgency and efficiency to any exigency that may arise during the Yatra period. She stressed that close inter-departmental coordination, proac-

tive planning and a zero-tolerance approach to lapses in service delivery would be the hallmarks of the district administration's conduct during the pilgrimage and called upon every officer to discharge their responsibilities with utmost dedication and a sense of public service.

Among others present in the meeting included Senior Superintendent of Police Anuj Kumar; Additional District Development Commissioner Champa Devi Thakur; Programme Officer, ICDS Rajesh Lakhan and other district officers from the concerned departments.

Public Notice

It is hereby notified that my daughter' DOB has been wrongly mentioned in adhar regard bearing aadhar no 5460 0251 9233 DOB 03/01/2007 instead of DOB 05/02/2009 as for School record now I have applying for it's correction of the same if any person have any objection in this regard may file the same to the office of the Municipal committee handwara/ Tehsil office Handwara within the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice After that no objection shall be entertained.

ASMAT ALI
DOB 05/02/2009
D/O ALI MOHAMMAD MIR
R/O BRARIPORA TEHSIL HANDWARA
DISTRICT KUPWARA

Public Notice

My name has been wrongly written in my adhaar card as Mymoona With Adhaar No :-5895-4189-9476 While my Actual Name Is Mymoona .Now I want to correct It.

If any person has any objection in this regard may file in the office Concerned Department within seven days from date of publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained.

Name: Mymoona
Adhaar No :-5895-4189-9476

Public Notice

I, Ishfaq Ahmad Mir, S/o Abdul Gani Mir, R/o Bangdara Reshipora, Tehsil Kreeri, District Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform the general public that I have lost my Discharge Certificate issued by Government Higher Secondary School, Authoora Reshipora.

The particulars of the lost certificate are as follows:
Admission No.: 1646
Certificate No.: 168
Date of Issue: 25/09/2009

Despite thorough searches, the said certificate could not be traced and is presumed to have been lost permanently.

Through this public notice, I request that if anybody finds or possesses the above-mentioned certificate, he/she may kindly return it to the undersigned. If any person has any objection regarding the issuance of a duplicate certificate in my favour, he/she may contact the undersigned within 7 days from the publication of this notice. Otherwise, no objection shall be entertained thereafter, and I shall proceed to obtain a duplicate certificate from the concerned authorities.

Ishfaq Ahmad Mir
S/o Abdul Gani Mir
R/o Bangdara Reshipora, Kreeri
District Baramulla, J&K

Public Notice

My name has been wrongly written as SHAHNAZI GANI in my Bank Account bearing Account No ,0486040100006724 while my correct name is SHAHEENA GANI as per Adhaar record which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may contact with J&K BANK WAGOORA within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name...SHAHEENA GANI
ACCOUNT NO..0486040100006723

Public Notice

This is for the information general public that MOHMAD SHAREFF 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. MOHMAD SHAREFF 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 Kreeri, District Baramulla.

The said consumer has expired and his son Bashir Ahmad Dar S/o Late Ghulam Mohammad Dar, R/o Saloosa, Kreeri, Baramulla has applied before the AEE, KPDCL 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, KPDCL 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, Kreeri, Baramulla
Consumer ID: 0212040008296

DC Samba chairs NCORD Meeting, pitches for multi-pronged measures to combat drug menace

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SAMBA, JUNE 22: Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a meeting of the District Level Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) Committee to review the implementation of anti-drug initiatives to curb the menace of narcotics and substance abuse in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the action taken by the stakeholder departments and stressed the need for a coordinated, intelligence-driven and community-oriented approach to eliminate drug abuse and trafficking from the district.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments to undertake detailed mapping of the district to identify drug hotspots and other areas susceptible to illegal narcotic activities. She instructed enforcement agencies to intensify surveillance and strengthen enforcement measures in all such vulnerable pockets.

To reinforce preventive efforts in educational institutions, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Education Department to ensure installation of CCTV cameras in coaching centres and educational institutions wherever required. She also called for regular counselling sessions to facilitate early identification of vulnerable students and promote awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse.

Highlighting the need for constructive youth engagement, the Deputy Commissioner instructed the concerned departments to organise regular sports activities and ensure adequate availability of sports equipment to encourage healthy lifestyles and channelise the energy of youth towards positive pursuits.

The DC further directed all departments to strengthen Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, particularly in rural areas, by ensuring close coordination among all stakeholders to maximise awareness at the grassroots level.

Reviewing road safety and enforcement measures, she instructed the concerned authorities to conduct mandatory medical examinations of drivers involved in rash driving and take stringent action, including cancellation of driving licences, in cases of drunk driving.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed the Drug Control authorities to intensify inspections of pharmaceutical outlets and ensure 100 percent CCTV surveillance and Computerised Billing System (CBS) coverage in medical establishments to prevent misuse of prescription drugs.

Reiterating the District Administration's commitment towards building a drug-free Samba, the Deputy Commissioner called upon all departments, enforcement agencies, educational institutions and community stakeholders to work in close coordination and adopt a proactive approach to effectively combat the drug menace.

The meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police, Anuj Kumar; Assistant Commissioner Development; Sub-Divisional Magistrates; Chief Medical Officer; the heads of Government Degree Colleges; representatives from enforcement agencies and other senior district and sectoral officers.

Bhaderwah gears up for Pulse Polio drive

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BHADERWAH, JUNE 22: In preparation for the forthcoming Pulse Polio Immunization Programme scheduled to be held on June 28-2026, the Block Medical Officer Bhaderwah Dr. Versha Sharma today convened a training session cum meeting for the staff of health institutions of the Medical Block, here today.

District Mass Education and Information Officer (DMEIO) from Dy CMO Office Mubashir Bin Muzamil was the Master Trainer for the training session.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held regarding the arrangements and preparedness for the effective implementation of the Pulse Polio Programme. The meeting reviewed the operational aspects, including deployment of vaccination teams, Booth management, supervision-cum-monitoring and awareness generation activities to ensure comprehensive coverage of all eligible children.

Dr. Versha Sharma stressed the importance of meticulous planning and coordinated efforts to ensure that no eligible child is left out during the

immunization drive. She urged the health functionaries to work with dedication and commitment for the successful conduct of the programme.

Mubashir Bin Muzamil sensitized the participants to various technical and operational aspects of Pulse Polio activities. He elaborated on vaccination protocols, reporting mechanisms, supervisory responsibilities, and strategies to maximize community participation and coverage. He also addressed queries raised by the participants and emphasized adherence to the guidelines issued for the campaign.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAYHI RAJI'UN

CONDOLENCE MESSAGE

It is with profound grief and sorrow that we learn about the untimely demise of

Muzamil Ahmad Wagay

S/o Abdul Khaliq Wagay
R/o Maloora, Shalteng, Srinagar

who passed away due to
Heart Attack
during a picnic at
Doodpathri
on
22 June 2026

Condolence from
The Express News Team

This tragic loss has deeply saddened us all. We pray to Almighty Allah to grant the departed soul the highest place in Jannah and bestow patience, strength, and courage upon his family and loved ones during this difficult time.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَهُ وَارْحَمَهُ وَأَسْكِنهُ فِسْحَ جَنَّاتِكَ
May Allah forgive him, have mercy on him and grant him a place in Jannah.

Sakeena Itoo reviews medical preparedness for upcoming SANJY at Pahalgam

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG, JUNE 22: Minister for Health & Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today visited Pahalgam and chaired a meeting to review the medical preparedness preparations for ensuing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026 at Pahalgam Club here.

MLA Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Wani; Director SKIMS; Principal GMC Anantnag; Director Health Services, Kashmir; MD JKMSCL; RTO Kashmir; Superintending Engineers PHE and KPDCCL, SDM Pahalgam, ACD, CMO, DD Tourism, Executive Engineers of various engineering wings and other officials attended the meeting.

The Minister had a detailed review of healthcare, logistical and other preparations being put in place by the different departments for the smooth conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

Addressing the officers, the



Minister emphasized on the critical importance of robust medical facilities along the Yatra route including transit camps, stations and other prominent places. She stressed that the department must provide best possible healthcare to the pilgrims for their health and well-being during the entire pilgrimage.

Sakeena Itoo also reviewed the drinking water and power supply, availability of essential com-

modities, transport and sanitation, road connectivity, telecommunication and other facilities related to the SANJY.

The Minister placed special emphasis on robust transport management and sanitation, including measures for the post-Yatra period, saying that this would ease the experience for both pilgrims and tourists. She also called for upgrading facilities wherever needed, backed by well-

planned contingency plans ready for immediate execution.

Sakeena Itoo impressed upon the officers to exhibit full hospitality to the pilgrims so they have an enriching, pleasant and lasting experience of the place. "Pilgrims need to be facilitated in all possible ways for smooth conduct of the sacred journey", she remarked.

The Director Health Services, Kashmir, briefed the Minister about the healthcare arrange-

ments made by the department for the devotees on both Pahalgam and Baltal Axis. He said that facilities including establishment of hospitals, advance and critical care units, deployment of specialists having expertise in high altitude healthcare, ambulances, medicines and other logistics have been meticulously planned and put in place.

Following the meeting, several public delegations and representatives of various associations called on the Minister and put forth their issues and concerns.

The Minister assured them that their genuine issues will be resolved in a time bound manner.

Later, Sakeena Itoo visited the Government Hospital Pahalgam to take stock of its functioning and readiness for the SANJY. She inspected various sections of the hospital and directed the concerned officials to ensure best possible healthcare facilities are available at the hospital.

Javid Dar visits Ramban, reviews development works; e-inaugurates projects

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN, JUNE 22: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar, today reviewed the progress of development works besides assessing implementation of flagship schemes in Ramban during his whirlwind tour to the district.

He also e-inaugurated several projects and conducted extensive field visits to assess the development initiatives on the ground.

MLA Ramban, Arjun Singh Raju; MLA Banihal, Sajjad Shaheen; Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan; Directors of Agriculture Jammu; Animal Husbandry Jammu; Horticulture Jammu; Fisheries Department; Registrar Cooperatives J&K; senior officers of Sheep Husbandry Department and other district officers were present.

Addressing the officers, the Minister stressed the importance of maintaining close coordination with public representatives while identifying and finalizing the developmental works. He directed the officers to expedite the execution of ongoing projects and ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach the grassroots level in a time-bound manner. He also called for enhanced public outreach and awareness programmes to maximize beneficiary coverage under various welfare initiatives.

The Minister remarked that with the operationalization of key tunnel projects and the continuous improvement of the National Highway corridor, travel time is being reduced significantly while ensuring all-weather connectivity. He said these transformative projects will not only strengthen the regional connectivity but also open up new avenues for trade, horticulture, agriculture and employment generation in the district.

The Minister also e-inaugurated various developmental projects completed by different departments and reviewed their impact on service delivery and public welfare.

Earlier, Javid Ahmad Dar inaugurated the Cooperative Super Bazaar Ramban and visited the Advanced Centre for Horticulture Development, Govindpora. He inspected the functioning of the centre and reviewed the initiatives aimed at promoting horticultural development and farmer welfare.

Later, the Minister laid the foundation stone for the Shah-i-Asrar Memorial School Building at Kashkoot.

Addressing the gathering, he appreciated the efforts of Advocate Raja Salim in establishing the institution and described the initiative as a significant contribution towards educational advancement and social upliftment in the region.

As part of his extensive tour, the Minister visited the Veterinary Hospital Banihal, Sheep Husbandry Office, Seed Farm, Agriculture Farm Tethar and Sheep Farm Zaban. He reviewed the functioning of these institutions and assessed the status of ongoing developmental and extension activities. He directed the concerned officers to further strengthen the farmer-centric services, improve livestock healthcare facilities and ensure timely availability of quality inputs to the farming community.

Speaking on the occasion, Javid Ahmad Dar said that Ramban district is witnessing a new era of development and connectivity, driven by unprecedented investments in infrastructure, road networks and public welfare programmes. He observed that major highway upgrades and strategic tunnel projects are transforming Ramban into an important gateway district, boosting the economic opportunities, tourism potential and ease of transportation for the local residents.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner presented a comprehensive overview of developmental achievements and the status of ongoing projects across various sectors. He informed that under MGNREGA, the district has 36,550 active job cards during the financial year 2025-26 while 2,382 works have been physically completed. Besides, Aadhaar seeding has reached 99.78 percent completion and timely wage payment stands at 70 percent.

He apprised that 3,758 works had been approved under MGNREGA during 2025-26 while 3,564 works have already been approved for 2026-27. Under PMAY-G, 503 houses have been completed while the survey conducted under PMAY-G 2.0 has identified 25,530 prospective beneficiaries.

Regarding the achievements under Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), the Deputy Commissioner stated that 1,505 works have been completed under different components of the mission, significantly improving the sanitation infrastructure in rural areas.

Highlighting the performance of the agriculture sector, he informed that substantial progress has been registered in crop production, particularly in oilseeds with production touching 15,687 quintals. He added that farmers and rural youth are actively benefiting from schemes such as Soil Health Cards, Kisan Credit Cards (KCC), PM-KISAN and Kisan Khidmat Ghar (KKG), which are contributing towards enhanced agricultural productivity and income generation.

The Deputy Commissioner also briefed the Minister regarding the arrangements put in place for the smooth and successful conduct of the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2026.

During the meeting, the legislators from Ramban and Banihal highlighted several developmental requirements and public issues pertaining to their respective constituencies and sought timely redress of the same.

Rahim Rather visits fire affected Dara-ul-aloom site in Pakherpora

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, JUNE 22: Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, today visited the site of the fire incident at Dara-ul-aloom, Pakherpora, to assess the situation on the spot and express solidarity with the affected students, staff and local residents. During his visit, the Speaker expressed deep grief and sorrow over the unfortu-



nate incident that caused huge damage to the educational institution. He interacted with the students, management and members of the local community and assured them of all possible support in restoration of the institute.

Abdul Rahim Rather emphasized the importance of the institution and assured the affected people that Dara-ul-Uloom would be re-established at the earliest. He stated that every effort would be made to ensure that educational activities resume without undue delay.

The Speaker also directed the district administration to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the damages caused by the fire and initiate the reconstruction process on a priority basis. He urged the concerned authorities to expedite all necessary formalities to facilitate the early rebuilding of the institution. The local residents and members of the institute's management expressed gratitude to the Speaker for his assurance of timely support and rehabilitation measures.

J&K H&UDD receives SKOCH National Awards for digital governance initiatives

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: The Jammu and Kashmir Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD) has achieved a significant milestone in the field of digital governance by securing two prestigious SKOCH National Awards, Gold and Silver, for its innovative and citizen-centric digital transformation initiatives.

Both projects were conceptualized and initiated under the visionary directions and continuous guidance of Mandeep Kaur, Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, with the objective of transforming the public service delivery and enhancing the digital governance across the Urban Development sector. Her unwavering focus on innovation, transparency and technology-enabled governance has played a pivotal role in successful implementation of these initiatives.

On behalf of H&UDD, Ankush Kapoor, Chief Informatics Officer and Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), H&UDD, received the awards during the SKOCH Awards Ceremony held in New Delhi.

The awards were conferred for the flagship projects including Automated Building Permission System (ABPS) using Auto DCR technology integrated with GIS-based Land Use and J&K Gati Shakti GIS Asset Mapping System for comprehensive GIS-based asset mapping, monitoring and infrastructure planning.

The Automated Building Permission System has revolutionized the process of granting building permissions by introducing automated scrutiny of building plans through Auto DCR technology integrated with GIS-based land use verification. The system has significantly reduced the processing time, enhanced transparency, ensured compliance with planning regulations and improved ease of doing business for the citizens and



stakeholders.

The J&K Gati Shakti GIS Asset Mapping System has enabled digital mapping and monitoring of public infrastructure assets across Urban Local Bodies and government agencies. The platform supports evidence-based planning, inter-departmental coordination, efficient asset management and informed decision-making through advanced GIS technology.

Both the initiatives have brought about a transformative change in public service delivery, government digital functioning, monitoring mechanisms and data-driven governance across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Commissioner Secretary appreciated the efforts of the officers, technical teams, Urban Local Bodies and all stakeholders associated with the projects. She reiterated the department's commitment towards leveraging the technology for improving governance and delivering efficient, transparent and citizen-centric services.

The national recognition further reinforces Jammu and Kashmir's growing reputation as a leader in digital governance and highlights the department's continued efforts towards building a modern, technology-driven and responsive urban administration.

MD KPDCCL reviews progress of Power arrangements for SANJY-2026

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG, JUNE 22: Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCCL), Mahmood Ahmad Shah, accompanied by the Chief Engineer (Distribution) KPDCCL, Nissar Ahmad Lone and Superintending Engineer of Circle South (Bijbehara) conducted an extensive review of the ongoing works and preparedness for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2026 at Pahalgam Anantnag.

During the on-ground review, the Managing Director took detailed stock of the power infrastructure being put in place and issued clear directives to field officers to maintain 24x7 power availability throughout the Yatra period.

The Superintending Engineer apprised the Managing Director that almost all requisite arrangements have been put in place for the Yatra, which is scheduled to



commence on 3rd July 2026. He briefed the MD on the illumination arrangements made at various

Padavs, including the deployment of DG sets and Gen sets of varying capacities, and the installation of

Solar Lighting Systems along Yatra tracks where grid supply is not feasible. It was informed that ade-

quate fuel stocks are available at all sites, with regular replenishment protocols in place. A sufficient number of buffer Distribution Transformers (DTs) and standby DG sets have also been stationed to meet any unforeseen contingencies.

MD KPDCCL assured that there will be no shortage or power cuts during the Amarnath Yatra and we have deployed special teams at all important places to ensure seamless electricity during the yatra. He appreciated the dedication and professionalism of the engineers and field staff working tirelessly, often in challenging terrain and adverse weather conditions, to ensure seamless power arrangements for the Yatra.

The MD emphasized that no stone must be left unturned in delivering efficient services to the pilgrims and assured that the management will remain fully supportive and responsive to the needs of the teams on the ground.

Jaiswal Misses England ODI Tour Squad Despite Ton



■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

VISAKHAPATNAM: Yashasvi Jaiswal has missed out on a place in India's squad for the three-match ODI series in England next month despite having scored a century in his most recent match in the format, an unbeaten 110 in the third ODI against Afghanistan on Saturday. It was his second hundred in just his sixth ODI, but it couldn't seal him a place in the 15-man squad for England, in a reflection of India's batting riches in white-ball cricket.

Virat Kohli returns to the squad subject to a fitness clearance; Jaiswal had been called up for the ODIs against Afghanistan as a replacement for Kohli, who was ruled out with a hamstring injury.

It is understood Kohli will undergo his fitness assessment at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru over the coming week.

With India building up towards the 2027 World Cup in South Africa, they named a full-strength squad for the England series, with Axar Patel and Jasprit Bumrah returning to the squad. Bumrah has not played an ODI since the 2023 World Cup final due to workload-management reasons, while Axar had been out of the ODI squad for India's last three series - all at home against South Africa, New Zealand and Afghanistan.

Bumrah takes the place of Prince Yadav in India's pace attack while Axar comes back as a straight swap with left-arm spin allrounder Harsh Dubey. Both Prince and Dubey made their ODI debuts against Afghanistan.

Hardik Pandya has not been included in the squad either. The allrounder was originally picked for the ODIs against Afghanistan but was ruled out after suffering a leg strain while training at the CoE.

The three ODIs on the England tour are scheduled to take place in Birmingham (July 14), Cardiff (July 16) and at Lord's (July 19).

Sorry Universe Boss: Pollard surpasses Gayle despite embracing finisher role

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

DALLAS: Kieron Pollard spoke of his pride at becoming the leading run-scorer in T20 history from a middle-order role, although offered a little apology to former team-mate Chris Gayle for knocking him off top spot after 12 years. Pollard also reflected on the "leap of faith" players such as himself and Gayle took in the earlier years of the format.

Only 22 of Pollard's 653 T20 innings have come from higher than No. 4, while 286 innings have come from Nos. 6 and 7 combined. But now he has



14,582 runs at a strike rate of 151.12, although his knock of "100" for MI New York against Washington Freedom (WF) in the MLC 2026 game on Saturday was just the second century of his career.

"Surpassing Chris Gayle, someone we looked up to in the West Indies over a period of time, is special," Pollard said at the post-match presentation. "He has done great things in all formats of cricket, so again, sorry Universe Boss, but we are both at the top there. "Having said that, batting at No. 6 or 7 is very difficult. Somebody needs to do the dirty work, though, and while everyone rushes to bat at the top of the order, a cricket match involves 11 people, and everyone has a role to play. I guess my role over time was to finish matches, and I embraced that. Once you embrace the challenge and practice for it, good things come."

When Pollard reached 81 against WF on Saturday, in what was the 736th match of a mighty T20 career, he overtook Gayle, who had been in the top position since 2014. Recently, it had become a race between Pollard, Alex Hales and potentially Jos Buttler as to who would eventually move to No. 1. But fittingly, it was Pollard who got there with a six albeit his century ended in defeat.

Pollard said such milestones had been far from his mind when he started but that there was satisfaction in seeing how T20 has changed the sport after the likes of himself, Gayle and Dwayne Bravo faced "ridicule" for opting to prioritise the format.

"One thing I've understood in life about human beings is that when you do something different, change is something we're not really accustomed to. I'm happy that I've lived the day to see it, and I hope everyone who criticised us over the years can sit back and say, 'Cheers'."

KCFL Emerges as Landmark Platform for Grassroots Football in Kashmir

Inaugural league draws growing crowds, showcases district talent and ignites football enthusiasm across the Valley

■ HT SPORTS DESK

SRINAGAR: The inaugural edition of the Kashmir Champions Football League (KCFL) 2026 has created a fresh wave of excitement in Kashmir's sporting landscape, attracting enthusiastic crowds and providing a major platform for emerging football talent from across the Valley.

Organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council, the tournament has witnessed a strong response from football enthusiasts since its launch on June 16, with the first ten matches producing competitive contests and steadily increasing spectator turnout at the TRC Turf Ground in Srinagar.

The league has brought together teams representing districts from across Kashmir, creating an opportunity for local players to display their skills in a professionally organised competition. Spectator interest has continued to grow with each fixture, as supporters from different parts of the Valley gather to cheer for their district teams.



The atmosphere reached a new high during Sunday's fixtures when, alongside local fans, tourists visiting Kashmir also attended the matches, reflecting the tournament's widening appeal and growing popularity.

The opening phase of the competition has been marked by closely fought encounters, impressive individual performances and a strong display of sportsmanship. The participation of players from

all districts has added a distinctive character to the tournament, fostering healthy competition while strengthening football's grassroots base.

Officials associated with the league said the encouraging response from spectators and the quality of football on display reaffirmed Jammu and Kashmir's deep-rooted passion for the sport. They expressed confidence that the competition would inspire aspir-



ing footballers and contribute significantly to the development of grassroots football across the Union Territory.

The KCFL is being viewed as a pioneering initiative, with district-level players scouted and organised into balanced teams that compete alongside professional footballers from across the Valley. The model has been described as one of the first government-supported football competitions in

the country to provide equal opportunities for district players within a structured league format.

As the group stage progresses and excitement continues to build around upcoming fixtures, the Kashmir Champions Football League is rapidly establishing itself as a significant sporting event, dedicated to identifying and nurturing local football talent while strengthening the region's football ecosystem.

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