

Srinagar

Wednesday

July 22 | 2026

6 Safar 1448 AH

Issue No: 174

Volume: 16

Pages: 08

Price: Rs 02/-

# HEADLINES TODAY

16TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Voice To The Voiceless

**LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS**

ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL PRINTING NEEDS

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

9999038812  
9419008414

Radio Colony,  
Gund Hassibhat, Lawaipora Srinagar-190017

## Mission Far From Complete; We Will Neutralise Drug Cartels and Narco-Terror Networks: LG Manoj Sinha

Marks 100 Days of Drug-Free J&K Campaign; 2,581 Traffickers Arrested, ₹188.89 Crore in Illicit Assets Seized

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JUL 21:** Declaring that the fight against narcotics has entered a decisive phase, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said the administration is determined to dismantle drug cartels and narco-terror networks targeting the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that the successful completion of the first 100 days of the Drug-Free J&K Campaign is only the beginning of a sustained and intensified effort.

Addressing a commemorative function organised by the Department of Social Welfare in Srinagar, the Lieutenant Governor said that although the campaign has achieved significant milestones, the mission to eradicate drug abuse and its financing networks



remains far from over.

"While this milestone marks significant progress, our mission is far from complete. We are determined to neutralise the drug cartels and narco-terror networks that target our youth. We will continue dismantling illicit trafficking ecosystems, strengthening public awareness and expanding rehabilitation so that affected individuals can rebuild their lives," Sinha said.

Reviewing the achievements of the campaign, he said he travelled across all 20 districts during the 100-day initiative, interacting directly with communities and families affected by drug addiction. These visits, he said, revealed both the pain caused by substance abuse and the resilience

● Turn on Page 2

## LG Addressed "Shakti Mimamsa" national symposium

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today addressed the "Shakti Mimamsa" national symposium, a collaborative initiative by the Central Sanskrit University (Jammu Campus), Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University. He said the deliberation on the spiritual heritage of the 51 Shakti Peethas over next 4-days will allow us to reconnect with the ancient Sanatana consciousness that has long defined India's soul.

"Shakti is the very heartbeat and sustaining consciousness of the cosmos. It manifests in all motion and creation, shining

● Turn on Page 2

## Inquiry To Be Ordered Into Srinagar Smart City Project : Omar Abdullah

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday announced that his government will order an inquiry into the Srinagar Smart City Project following widespread waterlogging caused by heavy rainfall, saying the project's execution and effectiveness would also be examined through an independent third-party audit.

Addressing a press conference after several parts of Srinagar, including the Civil Secretariat, were

● Turn on Page 2

### People's Safety Remains Government's Highest Priority: Omar Abdullah

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**JAMMU, JULY 21:** Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday reaffirmed that the safety and well-being

● Turn on Page 2

## No One Will Be Allowed To Play With The Future Of Our Youth: PM Modi

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, JULY 21:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that the government has taken strong action against those involved in the NEET paper leak case to ensure that no one is allowed to play with the future of the country's youth, while calling for coordinated efforts by the Centre and state governments to eradicate the menace of examination paper



leaks.

Addressing a meeting of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Members of Parliament in New Delhi, the Prime Minister said the issue should be treated as one of national importance rather than partisan politics.

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju, briefing reporters after the meeting, said Modi informed the MPs that the government acted swiftly after

● Turn on Page 2

### This Is Not the Time for Politics, but for Standing With the People: LoP on Flood Disaster

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, JUL 21:** Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma on Tuesday called for setting aside political differences in the wake of the devastating flash floods across Jammu and Kashmir, urging the government to focus entirely on relief, rehabilitation and restoring normalcy for affected families.

Describing the widespread loss of lives and property as "highly unfortunate," the senior BJP leader expressed concern over what he termed the inadequate presence of the Omar Abdullah-led National Conference government in the disaster-hit areas. He said people affected by

## Statehood Is the Foundation for Restoring J&K's Constitutional Rights: Omar Abdullah

■ HT NEWS NETWORK



**SRINAGAR, JUL 21:** Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday declared that the restoration of statehood is the essential foundation for reclaiming the region's constitutional rights, asserting that any meaningful discussion on special status can only take place after Jammu and Kashmir regains full statehood.

Addressing reporters in Srinagar a day after the National Conference's protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, Abdullah said

● Turn on Page 2

## Ladakh Administration Urges Tourists to Defer Travel Until Weather Improves

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**LEH, JUL 21:** The Union Territory Administration of Ladakh has urged tourists to postpone travel to vulnerable areas as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast heavy rainfall across the region, raising concerns over flash floods, landslides and disruption of essential services.

In an advisory issued by the Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRRR) Department, the administration warned that adverse weather conditions could pose serious risks to travellers and residents alike. The advisory stressed that safety must remain

● Turn on Page 2

## Atal Dulloo Attends Uma Bhagwati Shrine Celebrations

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, JULY 21:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today visited the Mata Uma Bhagwati Shrine at Umanagri, Brariangan, Shangus, to participate in the celebrations of the Murti Pratishthan Divas, being observed with religious fervour through a two-day Yagya and other spiritual programmes organised by the Uma Bhagwati Asthapan Trust here.

The Chief Secretary, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, paid obeisance at the shrine and sought the blessings of the deity for peace, prosperity and well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He also participated in the Kalash Pooja and the sacred rituals performed as part of the Murti Pratishthan celebrations.

Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, along with senior officers of the district administration

● Turn on Page 2

## LG, CM condole demise of Shaleen Kabra's father

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has condoled the passing away of Ramprasad Kabra, father of Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department and Financial Commissioner (Revenue), Shaleen Kabra.

In a post on X, the Lieutenant Governor said: "My deepest condolences to Shri Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary, on the sad demise of his father Shri Ramprasad Kabra. I pray to the Almighty to grant strength to the bereaved family

members to bear this loss. May the departed soul rest in eternal peace."

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has expressed profound grief over the demise of Ramprasad Kabra, father of Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department and Financial Commissioner (Revenue), Shaleen Kabra.

In his condolence message, the Chief Minister conveyed his heartfelt sympathies to Shaleen Kabra and the entire bereaved family during this difficult time.

● Turn on Page 2

## Govt extends summer vacation till July 26

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Tuesday announced an extension of the ongoing summer vacation for all government as well as recognised private schools across the Kashmir Division and the Winter Zones of Jammu Division until July 26, 2026, citing the prevailing weather situation.

Education Minister Sakina Itoo said the decision was taken after reviewing the existing weather conditions, with the safety and well-

being of students, teachers and their families remaining the government's foremost concern.

She informed that educational institutions falling under the affected regions will now reopen on Monday, July 27, 2026, following the extended vacation period.

The Minister also urged people to remain cautious and cooperate with the administration by adhering to all weather-related advisories and safety guidelines issued by the concerned authorities.

● Turn on Page 2

## Massive flash floods ravage Beerwah, Khag; man swept away

■ HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, JUL 21:** Torrential rains triggered massive flash floods in Beerwah and Khag areas of Central Kashmir's Budgam district on Tuesday, sweeping away a man and causing widespread damage to markets and residential areas, while rescue teams intensified the search for missing persons in the flood-hit districts of Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu division.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) a man identified as Shabir Ahmad Poswal, of Drang village in Khag, was swept away near Gujarpatti, Drung Khag. "He is feared dead and search for the



body is on," the official added. In Budgam's Beerwah town, the

Sukhnag stream overflowed following incessant rain, triggering flood-

● Turn on Page 2

**چرا**

Preserve Your Ideas  
We Bring Them to Life

**LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS**

ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL PRINTING NEEDS

We Publish in  
Arabic | Urdu | Hindi | Persian | Kashmiri

Contact us:  
9697071471 | 9999038812  
lubaabpublications01@gmail.com



# Div Com Kashmir reviews Flood Preparedness in Kulgam, directs for High-Level Readiness

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM, JULY 21:** In view of the prevailing inclement weather conditions, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting in Kulgam to assess the district's preparedness for potential weather-related emergencies and evaluate the readiness of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA). At the outset, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, presented a detailed overview of the district's preparedness, highlighting department-wise mitigation strategies and the operational readiness of relief, rescue, and rehabilitation mechanisms. Reviewing the flood protection and mitigation measures undertaken by various departments and agencies, the Divisional Commissioner directed all concerned officers to maintain a high level of preparedness and ensure the immediate deployment of field teams to effectively respond to any emergency. He emphasized the need for continuous monitoring of water levels, vulnerability mapping of flood-prone villages, strategic deployment of manpower and machinery, and ensuring the full



operational readiness of the disaster response system and the district control room. The Divisional Commissioner also reviewed the status of essential public services, including telecommunications, healthcare, drinking water supply, electricity, and the availability of essential commodities across the district. He instructed the concerned departments to ensure uninterrupted services during any adverse weather situation. Highlighting the importance of timely communication, he stressed the need for issuing public advisories and strengthening awareness initiatives among vulnerable communities to minimize the impact of any potential flood situation. The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Additional Commissioner Revenue, Additional Superintendent of Police, Assistant Commissioner Development, and other district and sectoral officers. Earlier, the Divisional Commissioner visited Mata Kulwagishori Temple at Bungam and Mata Katyani Temple at Kakran to review the arrangements for the smooth and successful conduct of the upcoming Annual Maha Yagya.

FCS&CA department to undertake advance lifting, distribution of foodgrains for August–October 2026

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** In a significant step to ensure uninterrupted availability of foodgrains to beneficiaries during the forthcoming monsoon season, the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), J&K has decided to undertake the advance lifting and distribution of foodgrains allocated under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and Non-Priority Household (NPHH) schemes for



the months of August, September and October 2026. The decision has been taken as a precautionary measure to address any logistical and transportation challenges that may arise during the rainy season and to ensure uninterrupted food security across the Union Territory. Accordingly, the Department has made advance allocation of foodgrains for the three months, enabling the beneficiaries to receive their entitled ration through a single transaction. The entire distribution process has been targeted for completion on or before 31st August, 2026. To facilitate smooth implementation of the initiative, the NIC, J&K has been requested to enable the one-time transaction facility in the e-PoS devices for distribution of foodgrains pertaining to the months of August, September and October 2026. The Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, while speaking in this regard, said that the advance lifting and distribution of foodgrains would strengthen the departmental preparedness and enable an effective response to any situation arising during the monsoon season. He said that the initiative would ensure uninterrupted availability of foodgrains and safeguard the food security of eligible beneficiaries throughout the Union Territory. The Commissioner Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department, reiterated that the advance lifting, transportation and distribution of foodgrains shall be undertaken in close coordination with all the stakeholders, including the Food Corporation of India (FCI), the Jammu & Kashmir Road Transport Corporation (JKRTC) and the district administration. Necessary instructions were passed on to the Director, FCS&CA, Jammu and the Director, FCS&CA, Kashmir to personally monitor the lifting, transportation and distribution of the allocated foodgrains. This will ensure that the exercise is completed within the stipulated timeline and that no eligible beneficiary is deprived of his or her entitlement, he added. The Department issued necessary directions to all concerned officers, Fair Price Shop dealers and other stakeholders to ensure timely lifting, transportation and distribution of the allocated foodgrains, with the entire exercise to be completed by 31st August, 2026, in the interest of public convenience and uninterrupted food security.

## SSP Kulgam Grants In-Situ Grade Promotion to 38 Police Personnel

■ FAROOQ RATHER

**KULGAM, JULY 21:** In a significant welfare initiative aimed at boosting the morale of the police force, the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Kulgam, on Tuesday approved In-Situ Grade Promotion for 38 police personnel serving in the district. The promotion order covers 31 Constables and 7 Followers who have completed the prescribed years of unblemished service in the department and fulfilled the eligibility criteria for the financial upgradation. An official spokesperson said that In-Situ Grade Promotion is granted as a welfare measure to provide eligible personnel with financial advancement and recognition of their dedicated service, particularly in cases where regular promotional opportunities are limited or not immediately available. Congratulating the promoted personnel, the SSP Kulgam expressed confidence that the promotions would further inspire them to discharge their duties with greater dedication, professionalism and commitment. He reiterated that the welfare of police personnel remains one of the department's highest priorities and emphasized that such initiatives are intended to acknowledge the hard work, discipline and invaluable contribution of the force in maintaining peace, law and order in the district. The promoted personnel expressed gratitude to the department for recognizing their services and assured that they would continue to serve the public with renewed commitment, sincerity and dedication.

## 87 Drug Peddlers Held in Budgam Anti-Drug Drive

DC urges citizens for responsible contribution towards drug-free district

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JULY 21:** District Administration Budgam and Police has achieved significant success under the 100-Day Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, intensifying its crackdown on drug peddlers and strengthening preventive, enforcement and rehabilitation measures across the district. During the 100 day campaign, launched by Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha across Jammu and Kashmir on April 11 this year, as many as 87 drug peddlers were arrested, while nine notorious offenders were detained under the PIT-NDPS Act. During the crackdown, six properties both movable and immovable worth Rs 1.50 crore belonging to drug peddlers were attached, while six illegally constructed properties were demolished. During the campaign, 89 cases under the NDPS Act were registered against drug peddlers in the district. Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan said the fight against the drug mafia will continue with full vigour. He appealed to parents, educational institutions, community leaders and society at large to actively contribute towards making Budgam a drug-free district. He said that the campaign received massive public participation, with rigorous, a million awareness cum outreach activities including semi-

nars, essay, painting competition, interactive sessions, door to door campaigning, debates, plantation, cleanliness drives, sports events etc, were conducted by various departments across the district on day basis during the 100-day programme. The Pad Yatra organised on May 5 further re-energised the anti-drug campaign and reinforced the message of collective responsibility. The campaign launched under the leadership of the Lieutenant Governor, witnessed massive public participation across Budgam District, with people from different walks of life volunteering to contribute to curb the drug menace in the society. Among other strict administrative measures taken during the campaign, 136 Aadhaar numbers were recommended for flagging, two passports were recommended for cancellation, one arms licence and one driving licence were suspended, while 20 vehicle registrations were suspended or blacklisted. To curb the illegal sale of narcotic substances through medical outlets, 47 pharmacy licences were suspended, 30 unlicensed medical shops were sealed, and three drug licences were cancelled. Besides, four FIRs were registered for serious violations of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. In its drive against illegal cultivation of narcotic crops, the administration registered six FIRs against poppy

cultivators and destroyed illegal poppy and cannabis cultivation spread over more than 56 kanals of land across the district. On the rehabilitation front, the Deputy Commissioner said 48 patients are currently undergoing treatment through OPD and IPD services at the Drug De-addiction Centre, while 12 recovered individuals have been rehabilitated under various self-employment schemes during the campaign. At the Addiction Treatment Facility, 93 patients were registered, and 3,450 psychological and clinical follow-up sessions were conducted. The Deputy Commissioner further said that nearly 100 CCTV cameras have been installed at identified drug hotspots jointly by the civil administration and police to strengthen surveillance. Intensive awareness campaigns were also conducted through eight Nasha Mukta Panchayats, five Urban Local Bodies, 296 Youth Clubs and 285 Mahila Samitis, ensuring widespread community participation in the movement against drug abuse. The Deputy Commissioner reiterated that the administration, in close coordination with the police and all stakeholders, will continue its sustained and uncompromising campaign against drug trafficking while simultaneously focusing on awareness, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation to build a drug-free Budgam.

## SKUAST-K Strengthens Apple Pest Management Through Farmer Awareness Programme at Watergam

■ DR. AB QAYOOM

**BARAMULLA, JUL 21:** Reinforcing its commitment to sustainable horticulture and scientific farming, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) organised an awareness programme on the scientific management of the Apple Leaf Blotch Miner at the Community Hall, Watergam, in Baramulla district. Sponsored by SKUAST-K, the programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of apple growers, horticulture officials, scientists and research scholars. The programme was inaugurated by Prof. Mohammad Jamal Ahmad, Coordinator and Head of the Division of Entomology, Fac-

ulty of Agriculture, SKUAST-K, who attended as the chief guest. Among those present were Dr. Ishtiyak Ahad, Dr. Uzma Arifie, HDO Shakir, scientists, research scholars and other employees of the Department of Horticulture. Addressing the gathering, Prof. Mohammad Jamal Ahmad stressed that timely scientific intervention is essential to protect apple orchards from emerging pest challenges. He said that the Apple Leaf Blotch Miner has become a significant concern for apple growers, making awareness, early detection and scientific management indispensable for sustaining quality production and improving orchard profitability. Experts from the Division of Entomology delivered detailed technical sessions on the identification,

biology and economic significance of the Apple Leaf Blotch Miner. They explained that integrated pest management (IPM) remains the most effective strategy for controlling the pest while safeguarding environmental and human health. Prof Ishtiyak Ahad educated orchardists on the use of pheromone traps for pest monitoring, the need for judicious and need-based application of recommended insecticides, proper spray scheduling and post-harvest orchard management practices. They emphasised that excessive and indiscriminate pesticide use not only increases production costs but also affects ecological balance and fruit quality. A practical demonstration on the installation and use of pheromone traps



was conducted, enabling farmers to gain hands-on knowledge of pest monitoring techniques. The interactive session allowed participants to seek expert guidance on pest-related issues affecting their orchards and receive scientific recommendations tailored to local conditions. The participating farmers appreciated the initiative and described the programme as highly informative and beneficial. They urged FoA, SKUAST-K to organise similar awareness and capacity-building programmes regularly to keep growers updated on modern technologies, emerging pests and sustainable orchard management practices. In his concluding remarks, Prof. Mohammad Jamal Ahmad and Dr Uzma Arifie thanked the farmers for their active participation

and reaffirmed SKUAST-K's commitment to extending scientific knowledge to farming communities through research-based outreach programmes. He assured growers that the university would continue to provide technical support and advisory services to help improve apple productivity and ensure sustainable horticultural development across Kashmir. The awareness programme once again highlighted SKUAST-K's proactive role in bridging the gap between scientific research and farming communities, empowering orchardists with practical knowledge to effectively tackle pest challenges while promoting environmentally responsible and economically viable apple cultivation.

## PM Vishwakarma awareness programme on Branding and Marketing" organised at Kulgam

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM, JULY 21:** A PM Vishwakarma awareness programme on Branding and Marketing was organised today in Auditorium of Mini Secretariat Kulgam, by the Branch MSME Development and Facilitation Office (DFO), Srinagar, in collaboration with the District Administration, Kulgam.

The programme aimed to strengthen the entrepreneurial and marketing capabilities of PM Vishwakarma beneficiaries and enhance their access to financial services, digital tools, and market opportunities.

An awareness sessions were held by the officials of the Ministry of MSME and the District Industries Centre, highlighting the objectives of the programme and the progress of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme in Kulgam.

The technical sessions covered

important topics including banking and credit facilitation, QR code generation, entrepreneurship development, product packaging, branding, digital marketing, e-commerce, Udyam Registration, and various schemes available through the District Industries Centre.

A special session on Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Product Branding and Market Promotion introduced participants to practical AI tools that can help artisans improve product promotion, reach wider markets, and enhance their business prospects.

Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, while addressing the gathering, highlighted the significant role of traditional artisans in preserving the district's rich cultural and economic heritage. He emphasized that initiatives like the PM Vishwakarma Scheme are aimed at empowering artisans



by providing them with access to skill upgradation, modern

tools, financial assistance, branding, marketing support, and

digital platforms.

Stressing the importance of convergence among government departments and stakeholders, he reaffirmed the District Administration's commitment to ensuring effective implementation of the scheme and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for artisans, thereby contributing to the socio-economic development of the district.

Earlier, GMDIC Kulgam, Bashir Ahmad Lone encouraged artisans to fully utilise the benefits available under the scheme for sustainable livelihood and economic growth.

The program was also attended by Saheel Afaqband (IEDS), Assistant Director, Ministry of MSME Govt of India; LDM, Iftikhar Ahmad Padder, PM Vishwakarma SLPDU team and other officers along with the participation of PM Vishwakarma beneficiaries from across the district.

### District Admin Bandipora releases Coffee Table Book, screens documentary on culmination of 100 Days NMBA Campaign

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, JULY 21:** District Administration Bandipora on Monday organised a function at the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora to mark the culmination of the 100 Days Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) Campaign, during which a Coffee Table Book documenting the district's achievements under the campaign was released and a documentary showcasing its impact was screened.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, along with Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Bandipora, Ajaz Ahmad Zargar, presided over the function.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner released the Coffee Table Book prepared by the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Bandipora, highlighting the major activities, achievements and milestones recorded during the 100-day campaign through the coordinated efforts of various departments and stakeholders across the district.

A documentary titled "Andheroon Se Ujalon Tak (From Darkness to Light)", also produced by the DIPR, Bandipora, was screened during the programme.

The documentary showcased the collective efforts and achievements of the District Administration, Police Administration, law enforcement agencies, educational institutions and other stakeholders in generating mass awareness against drug abuse and advancing the vision of a drug-free society.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the efforts of the Department of Information and Public Relations for effectively documenting the campaign through the Coffee Table Book and documentary.

She also commended the dedicated contribution of Police, civil administration, educational institutions, PRIs, volunteers and civil society organisations in ensuring the successful implementation of the campaign across the district.

She said the campaign had witnessed encouraging public participation and significantly strengthened awareness and community engagement against drug abuse. Reiterating that the fight against the menace is a continuous process, she called for sustained awareness, coordinated enforcement and rehabilitation initiatives to carry forward the momentum generated during the campaign.

Among others, the function was attended by senior officers from the civil and police administration, district and sectoral officers, officials and representatives of various departments.

### SWD Srinagar holds Awareness Programme on PC&PNDT Act for Teachers

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** Social Welfare Department (SWD), SANKALP-HEW, Srinagar organized a one-day awareness programme on Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (PC&PNDT Act) for teachers of Government and Private educational institutions.

The programme, held at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Kothi Bagh, Srinagar, was aimed at sensitizing teachers about the objectives and provisions of the PC&PNDT Act and highlighting their vital role in promoting gender equality, protecting the rights of the girl child, and creating awareness against sex selection and female foeticide. As educators and opinion leaders, teachers were encouraged to foster positive social attitudes towards the girl child and disseminate awareness among students, parents, and the community.

Resource persons from the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, and the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Office, Srinagar, delivered informative sessions on the legal, medical, and social dimensions of the PC&PNDT Act. They elaborated on the objectives of the Act, its key provisions, the legal consequences of violations, and the collective responsibility of society in preventing gender-biased sex selection. The speakers also emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts by educational institutions, government departments, and the community to safeguard the rights and dignity of the girl child.

The programme witnessed active participation from teachers representing Government and Private schools, who engaged in interactive discussions and reaffirmed their commitment to spreading awareness through school-based activities and community outreach initiatives.

Speaking on the occasion, Staff of SANKALP-HEW Srinagar reiterated that awareness and education are essential tools in addressing gender discrimination and ensuring the effective implementation of the PC&PNDT Act. The Department of Social Welfare, Srinagar, remains committed to organizing such awareness and capacity-building programmes to promote gender justice and uphold the rights of women and girls.

## District Admin Bandipora participates in UT-level valedictory function of 100 Days NMJKA Campaign

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, JULY 21:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, along with SSP Bandipora, Ajaz Ahmad Zargar, and senior officers from the civil and police administration on Monday participated virtually in the UT-level valedictory function of the 100 Days Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan (NMJKA), presided over by the Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha at SKICC Srinagar.

The UT-level function marked the successful culmination of the 100-day campaign launched across Jammu and Kashmir to strengthen awareness, prevention and community participation against drug abuse.

Speaking after the culmination of the UT level event, the DC said



that the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan has emerged as a strong platform for promoting awareness and mobilising communities against the menace of drug abuse. She said sustained awareness, active public participation and coordinated ef-

forts of all stakeholders are essential to achieve the vision of a drug-free society.

The DC appreciated the efforts of all departments, Police, educational institutions, Panchayati Raj Institutions, volunteers and civil society organisations for their contribution towards the successful implementation of the campaign in the district.

She reiterated the commitment of the District Administration to continue working in coordination with all stakeholders to sustain the momentum generated under the campaign.

On the occasion, all participants renewed their pledge to continue working collectively towards realising the vision of a Drug-Free Bandipora and contributing to the larger objective of a Nasha Mukta J&K.

## SUCCESSFUL WILDLIFE OPERATION CONCLUDES IN OMPORA, THREE LEOPARDS CAPTURED, PUBLIC SAFETY RESTORED

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JULY 21:** In a successful wildlife operation, three leopards were safely captured at Housing Colony Ompora, Budgam.

The Wildlife Department in close coordination of District Administration Budgam safely captured two leopards during the intervening night of July 19 and 20, taking the total number of leopards captured from the area to three. One leopard was captured on June 21, following sustained surveillance and co-ordinated field operations.

Ompora and its adjoining localities had remained a per-

sistent hotspot for leopard movement, prompting the Department of Wildlife Protection to establish a temporary Man-Animal Conflict (MAC) Camp in the area in May. In view of continued leopard sightings and growing public concern, the camp was subsequently upgraded into a 24x7 MAC Control Room.

The MAC team remained stationed at Ompora for nearly three months, carrying out round-the-clock surveillance, responding promptly to public reports and maintaining trapping arrangements under challenging field conditions.

The operation was led by Range Officer Sajid Farooq, while



the field team was headed by Block Officer Bashir Ahmad. Their sustained efforts, professional handling of the situation and close coordination with supporting agencies were instrumental

in the successful completion of the operation.

The District Police Budgam, district administration and local authorities extended vital support in ensuring public safety

and facilitating field operations.

The coordinated efforts of all the participating departments ensured the safe and humane capture of the three leopards, significantly reducing the immediate threat to residents of Ompora and adjoining areas.

Appreciating the dedication and professionalism of the MAC team of the Wetlands Division, Kashmir, and all supporting agencies, Wildlife Warden, Wetlands Division Kashmir, Altaf Hussain, said the successful operation exemplifies effective interdepartmental coordination in managing human-wildlife conflict while ensuring the safety of both people and wildlife.

## SKUAST-K trains IFS Officers from 14 States in AI-led Forest & Wildlife Conservation

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** Thirty senior Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers from 14 states are undergoing a five-day national training program at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies for forest and wildlife conservation, reinforcing the University's growing role in technology-driven environmental governance.

The program, "Smart Conservation: Technological Solutions for Forest and Wildlife Protection," is being organized by the Division of Basic Sciences and Humanities, Faculty of Horticulture, SKUAST-K, in collaboration with the Research & Training Division of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

(MoEFCC), Government of India.

Held from July 20 to 24, it brings together senior forest administrators, including Principal Chief Conservators of Forests (PCCFs), Conservators of Forests, Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs) and Assistant Conservators of Forests (ACFs), for training in AI, Remote Sensing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), drones, satellite monitoring and other digital tools for sustainable forest governance.

The inaugural session was presided over by Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, while Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force, Jammu & Kashmir, Sarvesh Rai, attended as the Guest of Honor.

Delivering the keynote address, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai stressed that conservation in



the 21st century requires the convergence of forestry, agricultural sciences, climate science, data analytics and digital technologies. Highlighting SKUAST-K's strengths in Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, drone technology, precision agriculture and remote sensing, he said these innovations are transforming wildlife monitoring, habitat

assessment, forest health surveillance, climate-risk prediction, forest fire management and ecosystem restoration.

Emphasizing the vulnerability of the Himalayan region, Prof. Ganai said mountain ecosystems require science-based, technology-enabled management and called for stronger collaboration among universities, forest depart-

ments, research institutions and policymakers to accelerate climate-resilient conservation.

Addressing the gathering, Sarvesh Rai, highlighted the Jammu & Kashmir Forest Department's use of geospatial mapping, smart forest surveillance systems, and community-based conservation models to protect forests and wildlife. He urged participants to ac-

tively engage in the practical sessions and replicate successful conservation practices in their respective states.

Course Director Prof. Javed Iqbal Ahmad Bhat said the program marks the third consecutive batch of IFS officers being trained at SKUAST-K under the aegis of the MoEFCC, reflecting the University's emergence as a national capacity-building partner in environmental governance. He said the program integrates advanced technologies with ecological principles and policy frameworks to address climate change, biodiversity loss and habitat degradation through technology-enabled conservation.

The program combines expert lectures, laboratory demonstrations and field-based learning. Participants will visit the Center for Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learn-

ing (CAIML), SKUAST-K Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship Center (SKIE) and the Faculty of Forestry, besides undertaking field visits to Dachigam National Park and Wildlife Rescue Center, Wular Lake conservation projects, Gulmarg Biosphere Reserve and the protected forests of the Zabarwan Hills to gain first-hand exposure to ecosystem restoration, biodiversity management and smart conservation practices.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the program aims to strengthen collaboration among scientists, policymakers and forest professionals while equipping senior officers with advanced technological tools to address emerging conservation challenges across India's ecologically sensitive landscapes.



# Ministers Javed Rana, Satish Sharma visit Rajouri, Review flood relief measures

Unveil multi-crore relief package to provide immediate relief to the affected public

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAJOURI, JULY 21:** Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana accompanied by Minister for Youth Services & Sports, Transport, Information Technology, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Science & Technology, ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma today visited Rajouri to review the flood situation, inspect relief measures, and assess the restoration of essential services in the district.

The Ministers visited the Relief and Rehabilitation Centre established at Government Boys Higher Secondary School (BHSS), Rajouri, where they interacted with the families shifted to the centre. They enquired about their well-being and reviewed the facilities being provided by the District Administration, including accommodation, food, drinking water, healthcare and other essential services.

Later, the Ministers held a high-level review meeting attended



by MLAs, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma, and senior district and sectoral officers to assess the overall situation and review the ongoing relief, rescue and restoration efforts.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner briefed the Ministers about the prevailing ground situation, relief measures

undertaken by the district administration, restoration of water supply and other essential services, and the immediate requirements for rehabilitation in the flood-affected areas.

After reviewing the requirements, the Ministers announced immediate support for strengthening the water supply infrastructure

and restoring essential services.

Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Rana announced the establishment of 20 minor water supply schemes at an estimated cost of Rs. 15 lakh each (Rs. 3 crore), provision of transformers for 10 water supply locations at an estimated cost of Rs. 1 crore, 1,000 water storage crates at an esti-

imated cost of Rs. 1 crore, procurement of five dewatering pumps costing approximately Rs. 2.5 lakh, provision of five 125 KVA generator sets at an estimated cost of Rs. 50 lakh, and Rs. 4 crore for the restoration of damaged water supply schemes. The Minister stated that these interventions would provide immediate relief to the affected population and help restore essential public services at the earliest. The Ministers appreciated the prompt response and dedicated efforts of the District Administration under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma, along with all line departments, in carrying out rescue operations, providing relief to affected families, and ensuring the restoration of essential services despite challenging conditions.

The meeting was attended by all district and sectoral officers, who also presented updates on the status of relief operations and restoration works in their respective departments.

**DC Ganderbal visits Shrine of Hazrat Qamar-Ud-Din Bukhari (RA), interacts with devotees and locals**

Reviews arrangements for Urs Mubarak

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL, JULY 21:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today visited the shrine of Hazrat Qamar-Ud-Din Bukhari (RA) and reviewed the arrangements put in place for the Urs Mubarak.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with representatives of the Shrine Management Committee and local residents to obtain first-hand feedback regarding the arrangements made for the



Urs Mubarak.

The DC interacted with the officers of the line departments and was apprised of the arrangements being made to ensure the smooth conduct of the Urs, including sanitation, uninterrupted drinking water and power supply, security, approach roads and other essential facilities. He instructed all concerned officers to work in close coordination and ensure all arrangements for the convenience of the devotees.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Engineer R&B to ensure that all approach roads leading to the shrine are maintained in good condition and any pending works are completed well in time. Similarly, the Executive Engineer PHE was instructed to ensure uninterrupted supply of safe drinking water, while the Executive Engineer KPDCL was directed to provide uninterrupted power supply with adequate backup arrangements during the Urs days.

The CEO, Municipal Council Ganderbal, was directed to maintain proper sanitation, cleanliness, scientific waste management and installation of adequate public convenience facilities in and around the shrine premises and adjoining areas.

The DC stressed the importance of coordinated efforts by all departments to ensure seamless arrangements for the convenience, safety and comfort of the devotees expected to participate in the Urs Mubarak.

The DC was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Executive Engineers of R&B, PHE and KPDCL, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council Ganderbal and other concerned officers.

**Govt constitutes Committee to examine career progression of Panchayat Accounts Assistants**

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** In a significant step towards addressing the long-pending service concerns of Panchayat Accounts Assistants (PAAs), the Jammu and Kashmir government has constituted a high-level committee to examine and finalize a comprehensive proposal on the Assured Career Progression (ACP) of the cadre. The move is expected to provide a major impetus to resolve the long-pending service matters of nearly 1,700 Panchayat Accounts Assistants, who have been awaiting a structured career progression framework, including service rules and promotional avenues, since their recruitment through the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB).

According to Government Order No. 109-JK (RD&PR) of 2026, issued by the Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, the five-member committee has been entrusted with examining all aspects of the matter and preparing a comprehensive proposal for the career progression of Panchayat Accounts Assistants serving in the department.

The committee will be headed by the Director, Rural Development, Kashmir, as Chairperson. Its members included the Director Finance, RDD&PR; the Additional Secretary (Works), RDD&PR; the Deputy Legal Remembrance (P), RDD&PR and the Under Secretary (R), RDD&PR, who will function as the Member Secretary. The committee has been directed to submit its recommendations, along with the relevant records, to the Administrative Department within a stipulated timeframe to facilitate consideration of the proposal by the Government.

Secretary, RDD&PR, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, said the committee has been constituted to undertake a comprehensive examination of the issue and submit its recommendations in a time-bound manner so that the matter can be placed before the Government for an appropriate decision.

## DC Budgam visits Beerwah, Narbal areas to assess flood situation

Urges public to stay safe, avoid venturing into embankments, breached spots

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JULY 21:** Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today visited various flood-prone areas of Beerwah and Narbal areas to assess the situation following incessant rainfall and the rise in water levels in Nallah Sukhnag and its tributaries.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the ground situation at Main Town Beerwah, Hanjigund, Makhama, Chewdara, Kanihama, Malpur, Sanoor, Narbal, Mazhama and inspected vulnerable locations, and took stock of the preparedness and response measures put in place by the district administration.

He directed high alert and immediate activation of all rescue and emergency response teams including Police, SDRF, Civil Defence, Fire & Emergency Services and other line departments, to ensure prompt response to any eventuality. He instructed officers to maintain round-the-clock monitoring of nallahs, drains and other vulnerable locations and remain fully prepared for emergency response.

The Deputy Commissioner said that Station House Officers (SHOs), field officers and rescue teams are on the ground, continuously monitoring



the situation and advising residents in vulnerable areas to evacuate wherever necessary as a precautionary measure.

Appealing to the public to extend full cooperation to the administration, the Deputy Commissioner urged people to stay indoors unless absolutely necessary and strictly avoid venturing near nallahs, embankments, breached spots and other flood-prone areas. He also advised people not to gather near water bodies out of curiosity, as such actions could endanger lives. He further urged residents living close to nallahs or other vulnerable locations to immediately comply with evacuation advisories issued by the police or local

administration and shift to safer places until the situation improves.

The Deputy Commissioner reiterated that the district administration is maintaining constant vigil, with all departments working in close coordination to safeguard lives and property. He assured the public that every possible measure is being taken to effectively deal with the situation and appealed to citizens to remain calm, vigilant and follow official advisories.

ADDC Budgam, Vivek Agarwal, ADC Budgam, Taufeeq Ahmad Gazi, SES, XENs of various Engineering Departments, Concerned Tehsildar and other concerned officers also accompanied the Deputy Commissioner.

**Forest Department Conducts Anti-Encroachment Drive in Burnate, Retrieves 22 Kanals of Forest Land**

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA, JULY 21:** As part of its ongoing campaign against illegal encroachments on forest land, the Forest Department, JV Forest Division Baramulla, today carried out an effective anti-encroachment drive in the Burnate area of Bonyar Range.

Acting on the directions of DFO JV Forest Division, Zahid Aslam Moghal, a joint operation was led by Range Officer Bonyar, Farhan Miraj, along with Block Officers and other field staff in Compartment No. 34, Beat Block 12. During the operation, 22 kanals of government forest land were retrieved from the illegal occupation of 12 encroachers. Fencing, barbed wire, and other structures erected on the encroached land were removed, and the land was restored to the custody of the Forest Department. Speaking on the occasion, DFO Zahid Aslam Moghal reaffirmed the department's commitment to safeguarding government forest land and stated that illegal encroachments would not be tolerated under any circumstances. He emphasized that strict legal action would continue against anyone involved in encroaching upon forest land, establishing unauthorized structures, or causing damage to forests.

He also appealed to the public to consider the protection of forests as a shared responsibility and to extend full cooperation to the Forest Department by promptly reporting any illegal encroachment or unlawful activities on forest land to the concerned authorities.

## MDC Play "VYETH" Impresses Audience at SKICC in Chinar Book Festival

■ GULFAM BARJI

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** Mekah Dramatic Club "MDC" Srinagar staged its acclaimed theatrical production "VYETH" on the third day of the Chinar Book Festival 2026 at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) Srinagar, winning widespread appreciation from theatre lovers, writers, students, artists, and members of the cultural fraternity. The play captivated the audience with its engaging storyline, powerful performances, and thought-provoking social message. The cast received enthusiastic applause for their realistic portrayal of characters and their compelling stage presence making the performance one of the highlights of the festival.

The production was directed by noted theatre director Farhat Siddiqui, whose creative vision



and artistic direction added depth and impact to the play. Through his direction "VYETH" effectively highlighted important social issues while reflect-

ing the richness of Kashmir's theatrical traditions. On the occasion members of Mekah Dramatic Club expressed their gratitude to the organisers of

the Chinar Book Festival for providing a valuable platform to promote theatre and cultural expression. They reaffirmed the club's commitment to present-

ing meaningful productions that encourage social awareness and contribute to the preservation and promotion of Kashmir's rich cultural heritage.



## Nature's Warning Demands Immediate Action

The tragic loss of nearly 25 lives in the past three days due to flash floods and rain-related incidents across Jammu and Kashmir is a sobering reminder that extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and increasingly destructive. Families have been displaced, homes and infrastructure damaged, roads washed away and livelihoods disrupted. While heavy rainfall may have triggered the disaster, the scale of devastation reflects a growing environmental crisis that can no longer be ignored.

Nature is sending unmistakable signals. The recent instance of Srinagar and Jammu recording almost identical temperatures—a phenomenon once considered highly unusual—underscores the changing climate of the region. Kashmir, long celebrated for its pleasant summers and moderate weather, is now witnessing prolonged heatwaves, rising humidity, erratic rainfall, cloudbursts and sudden weather extremes. Shrinking glaciers, drying springs and changing snowfall patterns further reinforce the reality that climate change is no longer a distant concern but an immediate challenge affecting everyday life. However, climate change alone cannot explain the extent of the destruction. Human intervention has significantly increased the vulnerability of the region. Unregulated urban expansion, encroachments on flood channels, construction along riverbanks and wetlands, indiscriminate extraction of natural resources and the steady loss of forests have weakened the natural systems that once helped absorb excess rainfall. When rivers, streams and drainage channels are obstructed, heavy rain quickly turns into a disaster.

The government must respond with urgency and determination. Environmental laws should be enforced without compromise, particularly with regard to illegal constructions near rivers, streams, wetlands and other waterbodies. Development cannot be allowed to come at the cost of environmental security. Every infrastructure project must be subjected to rigorous environmental scrutiny, while vulnerable areas should be identified through scientific planning and protected from further encroachment. Equally important is the need to strengthen disaster preparedness. Investment in modern forecasting systems, effective early warning mechanisms, improved drainage infrastructure, restoration of wetlands and regular maintenance of flood channels should become policy priorities. Climate resilience must be integrated into every aspect of development planning.

At the same time, the responsibility does not rest solely with the government. Every citizen has a role to play in protecting the environment. Conserving water and electricity, reducing plastic consumption, planting and preserving trees, preventing pollution of rivers and lakes, and discouraging activities that damage forests and natural watercourses are practical steps that collectively make a significant difference. Educational institutions, religious organisations, civil society groups and the media must also intensify efforts to promote environmental awareness. Climate education should become part of everyday public discourse, encouraging communities to adopt sustainable practices and understand the consequences of environmental degradation.

The recent tragedy should not be viewed merely as another natural disaster. It is a warning that demands decisive action. The loss of nearly 25 lives within just three days should compel both policymakers and citizens to rethink their relationship with nature. Protecting the environment is no longer an option; it is essential for safeguarding lives, livelihoods and the future of Jammu and Kashmir. Nature has delivered its message with painful clarity. The question is not whether climate change is real, but whether we are prepared to act before today's warning becomes tomorrow's catastrophe.

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

# The Chinar Book Festival: Where Every Book Whispered a New Beginning



■ SYED GAZANFAR RAZVI

There are places that we visit and soon forget, and then there are places that quietly become a part of our soul. The 3rd Chinar Book Festival was one such place for me. It was not merely a gathering of publishers, authors, and readers; it was a celebration of ideas, imagination, and the timeless relationship between human beings and books. As I walked through its welcoming entrance, I did not feel that I was entering an exhibition hall—I felt as though I was stepping into a sanctuary where words breathed, stories lived, and dreams patiently waited to be discovered.

In an age where screens compete for every moment of our attention, seeing thousands of books standing proudly on shelves was a deeply moving sight. Every cover seemed to invite me into a different world. Every page carried the possibility of changing the way I think, feel, and understand life. It reminded me that books are not silent objects; they are conversations across generations. They preserve wisdom, challenge ignorance, heal wounded hearts, and keep civilizations alive.

The atmosphere of the festival was unlike anything I had experienced before. Children wandered through the aisles with wonder in their eyes, students searched eagerly for books that could shape their future, elderly readers smiled as they rediscovered old companions, and young dreamers looked for stories that reflected their own aspirations. There was a beautiful sense of unity. We were all different, yet we were connected by a single love—the love of reading.

As a Kashmiri poet, I found myself reflecting on the power of literature. Poetry and books have always been more than hobbies for me; they have been a refuge in difficult times and a source of hope when words seemed impossible to find. Standing among thousands of books, I realized that every writer begins as a reader. Before a poet writes a verse that touches a heart, they must first allow their own heart to be transformed by the words of others.

I spent hours exploring the stalls, carefully selecting books that spoke to my curiosity. History, literature, philosophy, biographies, and works of personal growth all competed for my attention. Each book promised a



new lesson, another perspective, another opportunity to understand the world a little more deeply. Buying books did not feel like shopping—it felt like investing in my own future.

Among all the books I purchased, one quietly rose above the rest and found a special place in my heart: How to Become a Writer by Ruskin Bond.

Some books are read, while others become companions. This book became my companion from the very first page. Ruskin Bond writes with remarkable simplicity, yet behind that simplicity lies profound wisdom. His words carry warmth, humility, honesty, and an enduring belief in the beauty of ordinary life. As I read, I felt that he was not merely explain-

ing how to write—he was teaching how to observe, how to feel, how to listen, and how to remain truthful to one's own voice.

For a young poet like me, this book arrived at the perfect moment. It reminded me that writing is not measured by fame, awards, or applause. True writing begins with sincerity. A writer must first become a careful observer of life, a patient listener to human emotions, and a humble student of nature and society. Every experience, every joy, every sorrow, every conversation, and every silence becomes material for meaningful literature.

The festival also made me realize that literature is one of humanity's greatest acts of resistance against

ignorance. A society that reads is a society that questions, imagines, and progresses. Libraries, book festivals, and literary gatherings are therefore not luxuries; they are essential foundations of a thoughtful civilization. They nurture empathy, encourage dialogue, and inspire people to dream beyond the limitations of their circumstances.

For Kashmir, where culture, poetry, and storytelling have always flourished, the Chinar Book Festival carries a special significance. It reminds us that our future will not be shaped only by technology or economics, but also by ideas, education, and creativity. Every young person who leaves the festival carrying a book also carries a possibility—the possibility of becoming a scientist, a teacher, a philosopher, a novelist, or a poet whose words may one day inspire countless others.

As the day drew to a close and I prepared to leave, I looked once more at the bustling halls filled with readers. My bag had become heavier with books, but my heart had become lighter with hope. I realized that the true gift of the festival was not the books themselves; it was the renewed belief that literature still has the power to transform lives.

Long after the festival ended, its spirit remained with me. Every book on my shelf now reminds me of those unforgettable hours spent among people who believe in the enduring magic of words. Whenever I open How to Become a Writer, I remember the excitement of discovering it and the quiet promise I made to myself—to read more deeply, to write more honestly, and to continue my literary journey with humility and dedication.

The Chinar Book Festival was not simply an event on a calendar. It was a reminder that books are among humanity's greatest miracles. They outlive generations, cross every boundary, and connect hearts that may never meet. They teach us that knowledge is freedom, imagination is strength, and words—when used with sincerity—can change the world.

As I walked away from the festival beneath the shade of Kashmir's timeless chinars, I carried more than books. I carried inspiration. I carried purpose. Above all, I carried a renewed faith that every page we read shapes the person we become, and every honest word we write has the power to illuminate another human soul.

"A book does not simply fill a shelf; it fills a life. And sometimes, a single book becomes the beginning of an entirely new journey."

The author is a  
Poet/author/ TEDx speaker.  
From Tantraypora Magam

## Sports Activities Should Be Stopped in Forests



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

Sports play a vital role in shaping the personality and future of young people. They help build confidence, leadership qualities, discipline, and teamwork while keeping individuals mentally, physically, and socially active. In recent years, sports such as cricket have gained tremendous popularity in Kashmir. Youth participation in tournaments organized by the district administration, local organizations, and sports bodies is highly encouraging. Despite limited facilities, many young players are performing exceptionally well and making a mark at higher levels.

However, one unfortunate trend has emerged: forests are increasingly being used as cricket grounds and sports venues. This is neither sustainable nor environmentally responsible. Forests are the natural habitat of wildlife and play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance. At a time when the world is facing the challenges of climate change, rising temperatures, irregular rainfall, and changing snowfall patterns, it is essential to protect our forests rather than convert them into sports hubs. The government should immediately stop and ban organized sports activities in forest areas to preserve these precious natural resources for future generations.

At the same time, the promotion of sports deserves appreciation. Sports are more than just games; they inspire hope, determination, and a healthy lifestyle. Today, IAS officers, senior government officials, and political leaders regularly inaugurate tournaments and encourage Valley youth to participate and showcase their talent. Such initiatives provide opportunities for young athletes to bring pride to their families, communities, and the nation.

The administration has made commendable efforts to engage youth through sports. Young people need encouragement, motivation, and opportunities. When they are supported with proper infrastructure, guidance, and recognition, they are less likely to fall into harmful activities such as drug abuse. The youth of the Valley possess immense talent, energy, and determination. It is our collective responsibility to provide them with quality playgrounds, sports equipment, trained coaches, and a positive environment where they can achieve their dreams.

A healthy environment plays a significant role in shaping responsible citizens. Success motivates others, and when youth see opportunities to excel, they naturally move towards discipline and hard work. Therefore, every government department and public institution should continue working for the welfare and empowerment of society.

Public awareness is equally important in combating drug abuse. The Government of India's campaign launched on 15 August 2020 by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment aimed to create a drug-free India by spreading awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse. Such initiatives encourage counseling, seminars, awareness rallies, and educational programs in schools, colleges, and

universities. These efforts help educate young people about the devastating impact of drugs on health, education, families, and society.

A successful and healthy life is built on dedication, consistency, perseverance, and a positive mindset. Youth should channel their talent and energy towards constructive activities and strive to bring honour to their communities and the nation.

Why We Need Proper Sports Academies  
The Valley urgently needs modern cricket academies, football academies, gyms, and sports training centres in both urban and remote areas. Every talented young person deserves equal opportunities to learn and grow. Advanced coaching methods and modern technology should be introduced to improve the standard of sports in the region.

Professional academies help athletes develop technical skills, improve fitness, and gain confidence under expert guidance. Playing without proper coaching often limits a player's potential. Establishing sports academies will not only produce better athletes but also create employment opportunities for coaches, trainers, physiotherapists, and other sports professionals.

Government-built stadiums and playgrounds should be properly maintained so that sports activities can take place in a safe, disciplined, and environmentally friendly manner. These facilities are valuable assets for future generations, and it is our shared responsibility to protect and preserve them.

Let forests remain the home of wildlife, and let stadiums and playgrounds remain the home of sports. Stay healthy, stay fit. Say no to drugs and yes to happiness, life, and success.

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

# From Satisar To Smart City; Srinagar's Sinking Reality: A City Undone by a Drizzle

Srinagar's Sinking Reality—Natures Fury or Non-Visionary Urban Planning



■ DR. FIAZ MAQBOOL FAZILI

Srinagar is not drowning because it rains. It is drowning because perhaps we have forgotten how cities are meant to drain. A doctor should not have to write about storm-water engineering. This responsibility belongs to urban planners, drainage engineers, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation and Smart City project managers. But when hospitals are flooded, patients cannot reach emergency departments, businesses shut, and schoolchildren wade through contaminated water after a modest shower, silence is no longer an option. Poor drainage is not merely an engineering defect but a gap in non-visionary system resulting in drainage failure with direct consequences for public health, safety and the economy. If a city can be crippled by a drizzle, the problem is not the weather—it is us. This was neither a cloudburst nor a once-in-a-century flood. It was an ordinary monsoon shower. Yet roads disappeared beneath water, homes were inundated, markets closed, traffic collapsed, and healthcare facilities became difficult to access. For a city proudly carrying the Smart City label, the images were deeply unsettling but in planning, governance and our collective neglect. Srinagar was once known as Satisar—the legendary lake from which Kashmir is believed to have emerged. Centuries later, despite remarkable advances in engineering and ambitious urban development, the city still struggles with water. On 20 July, if figures are correct barely 45.6 mm of rainfall in about two hours brought the summer capital to a standstill.

Perhaps the most disturbing scene came from SKIMS Medical College Hospital, Bemina, where floodwater entered the premises and patients and attendants struggled through waterlogged surroundings. When a hospital—the very institution entrusted with saving lives—becomes vulnerable to rainwater, the issue transcends engineering. It becomes a test of governance and preparedness. Cities are judged not by how they perform on sunny days but by how they respond when conditions become difficult. Rain does not create weak systems; it merely exposes them. Since joining the Smart Cities Mission in 2017, Srinagar has witnessed visible improvements in public spaces, transport corridors, cycle tracks and urban aesthetics. These achievements deserve recognition. However, the

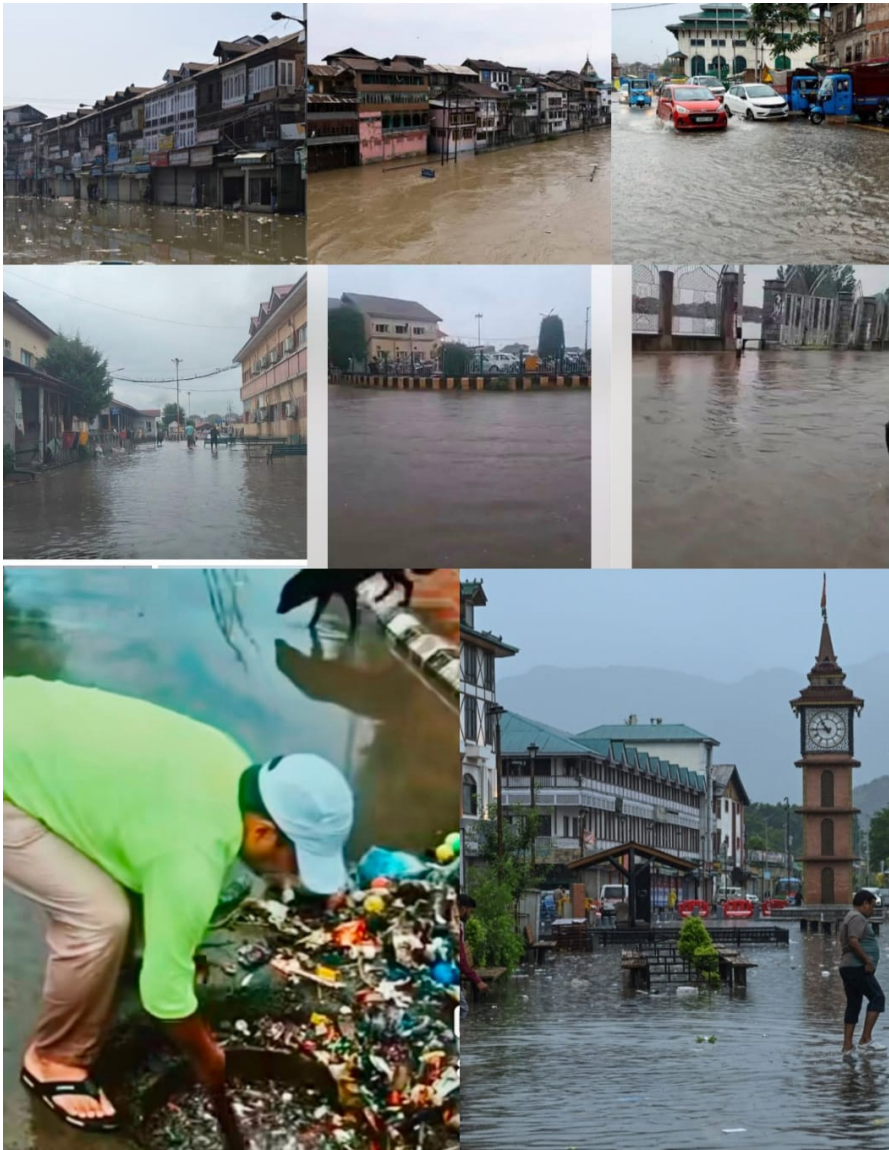
first responsibility of any city is not beautification but functionality. Roads must remain accessible, drains must work and hospitals must function during ordinary rainfall. Without these basics, "smart" becomes little more than a slogan.

Healthcare teaches us to keep asking "Why?" until we reach the root cause. Srinagar's flooding deserves the same discipline. Roads flooded because storm water could not drain. The drains failed because of inadequate capacity, poor gradients, blocked channels and disconnected outfalls—well-known engineering failures with well-known engineering solutions. Engineers have long identified the same weaknesses: poor gradients, undersized drains, incomplete connectivity, silt and construction debris reducing carrying capacity, road geometry preventing runoff from entering drains, and poorly designed outfalls causing backflow. None of these problems is new; all have established engineering solutions.

Urban drainage should be managed with the same discipline as patient safety. Every major flooding event should trigger an independent technical audit of design, construction quality, hydraulic capacity, maintenance and institutional coordination—not to find scapegoats, but to prevent recurrence. Engineering alone, however, cannot solve what has become a governance challenge. Good infrastructure does not end with construction; it depends on maintenance, monitoring and accountability. To its credit, Director Skims, the SMC mobilised desilting teams, deployed dewatering pumps and responded quickly after the recent flooding. Such efforts deserve acknowledgement. But emergency pumping is not a drainage policy. It treats the symptoms after failure has already occurred. Effective governance means preventing predictable flooding through sound engineering, routine maintenance, independent technical audits and long-term planning—not annual firefighting after every spell of rain.

Urban drainage should be managed with the same discipline that modern hospitals apply to patient safety. Hospitals routinely audit adverse events, analyse root causes and modify systems to prevent recurrence. Cities should do the same. Every significant flooding event should trigger an independent technical audit examining design standards, construction quality, hydraulic capacity, maintenance practices, connectivity of drains, performance of pumping stations and institutional coordination. The objective should never be to find scapegoats but to ensure that every episode becomes an opportunity to learn and improve.

Equally important is coordination. Drainage cannot be planned in isolation. Road engineers, urban planners, municipal authorities, Smart City agencies, irrigation and flood-control departments, environmental experts and disaster-



management teams must work from a common blueprint rather than in administrative silos. Roads influence drainage gradients; wetlands determine flood storage; land-use planning dictates runoff; and emergency response depends upon all of them functioning together. Cities succeed when institutions work as one system.

A truly Smart City uses smart drainage. GIS mapping, hydraulic modelling, real-time rainfall monitoring and sensor-based surveillance can identify flood-prone areas before roads disappear under water. Predictive maintenance, not reactive or emergency pumping—should define a truly Smart City's hallmark of resilient urban governance. Intelligence must reside beneath the roads as much as above them.

Yet governments alone cannot keep drains flowing. Waterlogging often begins long before the first raindrop falls. Every plastic bottle, polythene bag, food wrapper, discarded mattress or disposable diaper thrown into a roadside drain reduces its carrying capacity. Open drains become dumping grounds, manholes are blocked by household waste and construction debris is casually left along

drainage channels. Civic responsibility begins with each of us. Governments build drains, but citizens must not convert them into dustbins. Clean drains protect homes, businesses and, at times, save lives. Schools, resident welfare associations, traders' bodies, religious institutions and civil society organisations all have a role in nurturing this civic culture. Public awareness campaigns before every monsoon should become as routine as vaccination drives or road-safety campaigns. Urban resilience is built not only with concrete and machinery but also with responsible citizenship.

This piece is not intended to assign blame to any individual officer, department or government. Srinagar's drainage challenges have accumulated over decades of changing land use, expanding urbanisation, ageing infrastructure and fragmented institutional responsibilities. The city possesses capable engineers, experienced planners and committed administrators. The knowledge to solve these problems already exists. What is needed is the political will to prioritise invisible infrastructure over visible ornamentation, to insist on scientific planning over short-term expediency, and to insti-

tutionalise accountability without politicising it. Schools, traders, resident associations and civil society should promote pre-monsoon awareness campaigns. Urban resilience depends as much on responsible citizenship as on concrete and machinery. The solution is neither mysterious nor unaffordable. The solutions are straightforward: restore wetlands, modernise storm-water drains, enforce engineering supervision, audit gradients and outfalls, institutionalise routine desilting, integrate drainage with road planning and use data-driven engineering to guide future investments. Maintenance must become a core public service, not an afterthought.

The Verdict: Nature's Fury or Organisational Gaps? The next monsoon is inevitable; whether it again becomes a civic disaster depends on us. Srinagar's flooding is not simply nature's fury but a reflection of organisational gaps, non-visionary or weak planning and neglected infrastructure. A truly smart city is defined not by beautification but by functioning drains, resilient roads and uninterrupted essential services. Emergency pumps and temporary fixes cannot substitute for scientific drainage design, preventive maintenance and institutional accountability. We must protect wetlands, modernise storm-water systems and foster civic responsibility. The real test is not whether it rains, but whether the city has learned enough to keep its people safe when it does.

Every flood is an audit of urban governance. Nature merely exposes weaknesses that planning and administration leave behind. Srinagar needs scientifically designed drainage, protected wetlands, disciplined urban planning, preventive maintenance and shared accountability—not another season of pumps and temporary repairs. The next shower is inevitable. Whether it becomes another civic disaster depends entirely on the choices we make today. A truly smart city is not one that never faces heavy rain, but one that learns, adapts and ensures that its hospitals remain open, its schools accessible and its streets passable. That is the Srinagar its citizens deserve.

The legendary Satisar reminds us that water has always shaped Kashmir's history. We cannot defeat it, nor should we attempt to. Wise cities learn to live with water by understanding its behaviour and respecting its natural pathways. The challenge before Srinagar is therefore not to wage war against rain but to plan intelligently for its inevitable arrival.

**Author, senior surgeon and healthcare quality expert. A concerned citizen, he writes frequently on public policy, healthcare, urban governance, environmental sustainability, and civic accountability drfiazfazili@gmail.com**

## THE READING HABIT IN DIGITAL ERA



■ SURINDERPAL SINGH

In an age of smartphones, social media and endless digital entertainment, the simple habit of reading is gradually losing its place in our daily lives. Yet, reading remains one of the most powerful habits a person can develop. It is not merely a way to gain information; it is a lifelong companion that shapes our thinking, enriches our imagination, strengthens our character and prepares us for success in every sphere of life.

Reading is the process of exploring ideas, experiences and knowledge through books, newspapers, magazines, journals and digital resources. Every page we read opens a new window to the world. It allows us to learn from the achievements and mis-

takes of others without having to experience everything ourselves. As the famous saying goes, A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies, while a non-reader lives only one."

The importance of reading extends far beyond the classroom. Students who read regularly perform better in academics because reading improves vocabulary, grammar, comprehension and writing skills. It also develops concentration, memory and critical thinking. Instead of memorizing facts, regular readers learn how to analyze information, solve problems and make better decisions.

Reading also plays a significant role in personality development. Books introduce us to different cultures, traditions and viewpoints. They teach us empathy by helping us understand the emotions and struggles of others. Reading biographies of great leaders, scientists, writers and social reformers inspires us to develop qualities such as perseverance, honesty, courage and discipline. It broadens our minds and reduces prejudice by encouraging open-mindedness and tolerance.

Scientific research has shown that reading

benefits the brain in many ways. It strengthens neural connections, improves cognitive abilities and delays age-related mental decline. Reading also reduces stress by calming the mind and providing a healthy escape from daily pressures. Unlike excessive screen time, reading promotes deep focus and improves mental well-being.

The reading habit has a lasting impact on professional success. Every profession requires continuous learning because knowledge is constantly evolving. Doctors, engineers, teachers, lawyers, scientists, entrepreneurs and administrators all depend on reading to update their skills. Individuals who read regularly are usually more confident communicators, better leaders and more creative thinkers. In today's knowledge-driven economy, reading is one of the most valuable investments in personal and professional growth.

Unfortunately, the reading habit is declining among many young people. Social media notifications, short videos, and online distractions have reduced our attention span. Many people spend hours scrolling through screens but find it difficult to read even a few pages of a book. This

habit limits deep thinking and meaningful learning. Digital technology is useful, but it should complement reading rather than replace it.

Developing a reading habit does not require extraordinary effort. It begins with small, consistent steps. Reading for just 20 to 30 minutes every day can make a remarkable difference over time. Choosing books that match one's interests, maintaining a small personal library, visiting public libraries, participating in book clubs and discussing books with friends can make reading enjoyable. Parents and teachers also have a vital role in encouraging children by reading with them and creating a reading-friendly environment at home and in schools.

Libraries deserve special recognition as centres of knowledge and lifelong learning. A well-equipped library provides equal opportunities for everyone to access books, newspapers, journals and digital resources. It nurtures curiosity, independent learning, and intellectual growth. Every educational institution should cultivate a strong reading culture by organizing reading campaigns, book fairs, literary competi-

tions and author interactions.

Reading is not simply a hobby; it is a foundation for lifelong learning. It helps us understand ourselves, appreciate others and contribute positively to society. A society that reads becomes more informed, innovative, responsible and democratic. In contrast, a society that neglects reading risks becoming vulnerable to misinformation, ignorance and superficial thinking.

In conclusion, the reading habit is one of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves. It enriches the mind, strengthens character, expands knowledge and opens countless opportunities for personal and professional success. Every book we read adds a new dimension to our life and prepares us to face the challenges of the future with wisdom and confidence. If we wish to build a knowledgeable, compassionate and progressive society, we must revive the culture of reading. The pages of a good book have the power to transform not only an individual but also an entire nation.

**THE AUTHOR IS A FACULTY IN SCIENCE DEPARTMENT SRI AMRITSAR SAHIB PUNJAB.**

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



## Scientists Create Instant 'Golden Turmeric Milk' with Health Benefits

**G**olden turmeric milk has become quite popular in recent years and has many health benefits, so scientists created an instant version that maintains all these advantages while having a longer shelf life.

As swearing off coffee in favor of caffeine-free beverages continues to grow in popularity, many are looking for replacements that provide the same cozy experience while also offering increased health benefits.

Some have turned to matcha, a Japanese green tea powder that has been shown to decrease stress while improving cognitive function, while others have added golden turmeric milk into their daily routine.

Although the beverage has become trendy recently, it's based on a traditional Indian drink called haldi doodh, which has been consumed as a cold remedy for generations.

The beverage typically consists of milk, spices, and turmeric — a spice that contains the bioactive compound curcumin, a polyphenol that has been shown to have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects.

However, according to researchers, curcumin is difficult to separate from turmeric. It usually requires complicated extraction techniques that involve organic solvents, multiple days, and lots of energy. The compound also tends to break down over time, giving it a short shelf life.

As a result, scientists with the American Chemical Society set out to create an instant version that could be stored within plant-based milk while maintaining the same health benefits and an extended shelf life.

6

To do this, scientists added turmeric powder to an alkaline solution. Compared with plain water, the high pH of the solution made the curcumin more soluble and easier to extract. Researchers then added this solution to soy milk — chosen for its high amino acid content — before bringing the pH down to neutral, around seven. To create an instant powder, the researchers then removed the water from the solution through a freeze-drying process.

9

The researchers found this to be the most effective method of extracting curcumin from turmeric. They were also able to encapsulate the curcumin in oil droplets within the soy milk. This allows the body to recognize and digest it as fat, making its benefits more available.

This method also protects the curcumin from air and water which helps to extend its shelf life.

While the scientists used soy milk in their experiment, they said the same method could be used with other plant-based milks. The extraction method can also be used with different plant compounds. Blueberries, for example, are rich in anthocyanins, another water-soluble polyphenol.

"When we use the same method, within around a minute we can extract the polyphenols," said researcher Hualu Zhou, Ph.D., in a news release. "We want to try and use it to upcycle by-products and reduce the food waste from fruit and vegetable farming here in Georgia."

The researchers presented their results at the fall meeting of the ACS.

While more research is needed before this instant, plant-based golden turmeric milk is available on shelves, researchers said the results are promising — and they taste good, too.

Courtesy Healthline



## Keto High

### Is It Real and Why Does It Happen?

**S**ome Reddit users who started a ketogenic diet report experiencing a "keto high," defined as improved thinking and the feeling of euphoria. Experts say there may be several explanations, but a keto diet is not healthy long-term.

ketones called BHB, which is closely related to GHB, also known as the prescription drug Xyrem.

The drug is commonly used to treat narcolepsy by providing a boost of energy and can also be used for the treatment of alcohol and opioid dependence. Due to its ability to produce

intense euphoria, Xyrem is also used as a party drug known as liquid ecstasy.

Moody tells Healthnews, "Some researchers believe that the similar properties of the compound GHB and the ketone body BHB may produce similar feelings of happiness."



A ketogenic or keto diet is an increasingly popular eating pattern, followed by about 7% of Americans, according to 2022 data.

In the keto diet, 70–80% of calorie intake comes from fat, 10–20% from protein, and 5–10%. The diet focuses on animal products like meat, poultry, fish, and eggs, as well as leafy greens, cucumber, and celery. Low-carbohydrate and non-starchy vegetables are also allowed.

People on a keto diet normally experience ketosis, the process in which the body burns stored fat for energy instead of blood sugar. Ketosis can be accompanied by weight loss and so-called keto flu, which includes symptoms like constipation, headache, fatigue, and brain fog.

However, some Reddit users report opposite experiences after going into ketosis, which they dubbed "keto high." One Redditor even compared the experience to feeling like a "god."

"I remember realizing my brain was working properly for the first time in my life, my ADHD symptoms went away. I was energetic, no brain fog. I had better memory. I wouldn't freeze in conversations anymore, words would come out of my brain faster," the user explained.

Another user remembered the urge to run back to the office after lunch despite wearing business attire at the beginning of going into ketosis.

One Redditor said they felt "absolutely amazing" during the first few months on a diet and had some of the best performances in years. However, the alleged "keto high" seemed to fade after the first few months.

In fact, most Redditors reporting "keto high" said it eventually went away and didn't return.

What causes the keto high?

Destini Moody, a registered nutritionist at Top Nutrition Coaching says that there is no solid scientific evidence on the cause of a "keto high."

However, a common hypothesis suggests that in ketosis, the energy is provided by one of the

People on a keto diet normally experience ketosis, the process in which the body burns stored fat for energy instead of blood sugar. Ketosis can be accompanied by weight loss and so-called keto flu, which includes symptoms like constipation, headache, fatigue, and brain fog.

Moody explains that it is also possible that people who started the keto diet could have begun adding more fruits and vegetables to their eating pattern as well as cutting out refined grains and added sugars that could kick them out of ketosis.

She adds, "This sudden shift to a more nutrient-rich diet could give an individual more energy and less brain fog."

Is the keto diet safe?

Moody says there has been no research that has shown that the keto diet is inherently more effective for weight loss or health improvement than a traditional, balanced diet that includes all food groups.

While the keto diet may be easier for some people to stick to than a traditional diet, they should pursue the journey under the supervision of a nutrition professional to reduce excess consumption of saturated fats and ensure they are getting all of the nutrients they need safely, according to Moody.

The keto diet is often praised for weight loss, which is attributed to accelerated calorie burning. However, a recent study suggests that the actual reason why people on a keto diet lose weight is because it normally involves reduced caloric intake.

According to a 2021 review article, the benefits of a keto diet may include lowered blood glucose, although its efficacy typically wanes within the first few months.

At the same time, the diet may raise cholesterol levels and increase the risk of chronic kidney disease, cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer's disease. Women who follow a ketogenic diet during pregnancy are more likely to have a child with a neural tube defect.

Some people on a keto diet may indeed experience increased energy and improved focus. However, a traditional diet emphasizing fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provide more substantial health benefits long-term.

EMJ





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

Subject: Application of LAL UD DIN GOJAR DEADER S/O NOOR MOHD GOJER DEADER for the issuance of ST ( SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujjar and Bakerwal )in favour of LAL UD DIN GOJAR DEADER,SAFEER AHMAD GOJER DEADER , TANVEER AHMAD GOJER DEADER , YASIR AHMAD GOJER DEADER & RIFAT ARA

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village BANDI BALLA and belongs to the ST caste and GOJAR DEADER community, having annual income is 97000 /PA the details of the family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..LAL UD DIN GOJAR DEADER self 55 years
- 2.... TANVEER AHMAD GOJER DEADER Son 18 years //
- 3..FAREEDA BEGUM wife 50 Years //
- 4..YASIR AHMAD GOJER DEADER son 17 Years //
- 5...SAFEER AHMAD GOJER DEADER 16 years //
- 6....REFAT ARA daughter 26 years //

The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST ( SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujjar & Bakerwal ) certificate in favour of Self

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

**NAIB TEHSILDAR KALANTRA**

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

Subject: Application of BASHIR AHMAD GOJER DEADER S/O SARDAR GOJER DEADER for the issuance of ST ( SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujjar and Bakerwal )in favour of BASHIR AHMAD GOJAR DEADER,SALEHA BASHIR GOJER DEADER & AALIYA BASHIR

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village BANDI BALLA and belongs to the ST caste and GOJAR DEADER community, having annual income is 963656 /PA the details of the family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..BASHIR AHMAD GOJAR DEADER self 42 years GOVT TEACHER
- 2.... DILSHADA BEGUM wife 40 years Home Maker
- 3...SALIYA BASHIR daughter 10 Years student
- 4..SALEHA BASHIR daughter 08 Years student
- 5...SHAKIYA BEGUM mother 60 years Home Maker

The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST ( SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujjar & Bakerwal ) certificate in favour of Self

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

**NAIB TEHSILDAR KALANTRA**

**NOTICE OF NO OBJECTION FOR ESTABLISHING  
RETAIL SALE OF FERTILIZERS AND PESTICIDES**

This is to inform the general public that Shaheena Akhter D/O Mohd Yousuf Bhat, W/O Latif Ahmad Lone, located at Newa Malawari Pulwama, intends to establish a retail outlet for the sale of fertilizers and pesticides under Name & Style "M/S AF-TEE PESTICIDES" at the aforementioned location. In compliance with regulations, we hereby invite any objections from individuals or organizations who may have concerns regarding the proposed establishment.

Any objections must be submitted in writing to the office of Chief Agricultural Office Pulwama J&K within seven days from the date of this notice.

Failure to raise any objections within the specified period will be considered as consent for the proposed establishment.

GOVERNMENT OF UNION OF UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
MECHANICAL AND HOSPITALS DIVISION HANDWARA**

E-mail, id, xenmhd-handwara@jk.gov.in

**TENDER NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

**E-NIT NO: MHDH/TS/2026-27/ENIT/32 | DATE: 17.07.2026**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited from OEM/ authorized dealers of OEMs or registered/reputed/ experienced firms with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the below mentioned work:

| S.No | Name of Work                                                                                                     | Est. Cost (In Rs.) | T.D Cost (In Rs) | E/M (In Rs) |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| 01   | Annual Operation and Comprehensive Maintenance of Oxygen Generation Plants at DH Bandipora for the year 2026-27. | 32.82              | 2000             | 65600       |

**Time of Completion: 365 days**

**AA: Accorded**

**Technical Sanction: Accorded**

**Note:**

Position of funds: - Available with intending Department.

1. Downloading of Bids: The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from 16/07/2026 (18.00 hrs)and can be downloaded from 16/07/2026 (18.00 hrs).

2. Uploading: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site 17/07/ 2026 (10:00 hrs) to 29/07/2026 (14:00hrs) in two (02) covers.

3. Opening of Bids: - The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on 29/07/2026 at 14.00hrs

**No: MHDH/TS/1003-10**

**Dated: 16-07-2026**

**Sd/ Executive Engineer, M&HD, Handwara**

**DIPK: 3537/26 | Dated: 21-07-2026**

GOVERNMENT OF UNION OF UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
MACHINERY DIVISION KASHMIR**

**Mechanical & Hospital Engineering Department, Kashmir**

Fax No: 0194-2497093 | website: www.medkashmir.org

**GIST OF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

**E-NIT NO: MDSK/TS /2026-27/18 | DATE: 21.07.2026**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders are invited on percentage (%) basis from Registered/Reputed firms for the below mentioned work:

| Name of the Work                                                                                                                                     | Cost of Tender Doc. (In Rs.) | Ceiling Cost (In Rs.) | Earnest Money (In Rs) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Rate contract on account of spare parts and repair works for various road construction machinery of Machinery Division Kashmir for the year 2026-27. | 200/-                        | 2,75,000/-            | 5,500/-               |

Position of AA: Works programme approved by CE vide order No. M&HED/K/Acctt/26 of 2026-27 Dt.30.04.2026.

Position of TS: TS accorded by CE vide No. MHED/K/TS/14 Dt. 02.06.2026.

The bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

|    |                                              |                        |
|----|----------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 01 | Publish date                                 | 21-07-2026 (18:00hrs)  |
| 02 | Date of start of downloading of bid document | 21-07-2026 (18:30 hrs) |
| 03 | Bid submission start date                    | 21-07-2026 (18:55hrs)  |
| 04 | Bid submission end date                      | 07-08-2026 (18:55 hrs) |
| 05 | Date and time of opening of bids (online)    | 08-08-2026 (14:00 hrs) |

**No: MDSK/ TS/1586-89**

**Dated: 21-07-2026**

**Sd/ Executive Engineer,  
Machinery Division, Srinagar**

**DIPK: 3504/26 | Dated: 21-07-2026**

GOVERNMENT OF UNION OF UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
MACHINERY DIVISION KASHMIR**

**Mechanical & Hospital Engineering Department, Kashmir**

Fax No: 0194-2497093 | website: www.medkashmir.org

**GIST OF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

**MDSK/TS /2026-27/17 | DATE: 21.07.2026**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders are invited on percentage (%) basis from eligible contractors for the below mentioned work

| Name of the Work                                                                                                           | Cost of Tender Doc. (In Rs.) | Estimated Cost (In Rs.) | Earnest Money (In Rs) | Class of contract    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Repairs and maintenance of Executive Engineer quarter (Snow Clearance) and allied works at MHED complex Shalteng Srinagar. | 300/-                        | 2,47,420/-              | 4,950/-               | "D" class civil card |

Position of AA: AA accorded by CE vide order No. MHED/K/TS/05 Dt.17.07.2026.

Position of TS: TS accorded by CE vide No. MHED/K/TS/50 Dt.17.07.2026.

The bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

|    |                                              |                          |
|----|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 01 | Publish date                                 | 21-07-2026 (18:00hrs)    |
| 02 | Date of start of downloading of bid document | 21-07-2026 (18:30 hrs)   |
| 03 | Bid submission start date                    | 21-07-2026 (18:55hrs)    |
| 04 | Bid submission end date                      | 30 - 07-2026 (18:55 hrs) |
| 05 | Date and time of opening of bids (online)    | 31 - 07-2026 (14:00 hrs) |

**No: MDSK/ TS/1582-85 | Dated: 21-07-2026**

**Sd/ Executive Engineer, Machinery Division, Srinagar**

**DIPK: 3505/26 | Dated: 21-07-2026**

**Laptop Care House**

Wholesale Dealer Of New And Pre Used Laptops

**DEALS IN ALL KINDS OF LAPTOPS AND ACCESSORIES**

**REPAIRING OF: ALL TYPES OF LAPTOPS & DESKTOPS**

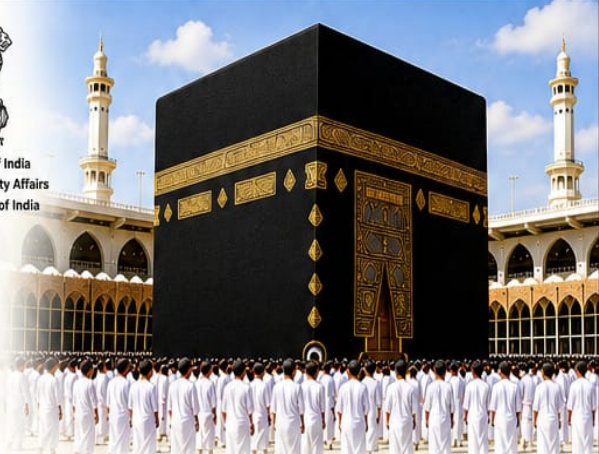


**7006083461**

**JKSHC**  
JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE HAJ COMMITTEE

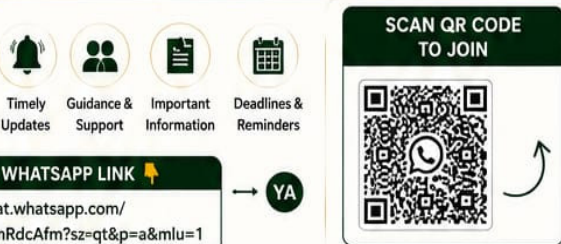
**HAJ 2027 (1448 H)**  
**IMPORTANT GUIDELINES**

- PASSPORT VALIDITY**
  - Passport must be valid till **31 December 2027**.
  - Passport must be valid on the date of application.
- COVER / GROUP**
  - A group can have maximum **5 members**.
  - Minimum age – **18 years** on the date of application.
- COVER HEAD**
  - Cover Head must be a **male member**.
  - Minimum age – **18 years** on the date of application.
- MOBILE NUMBER & WHATSAPP**
  - Cover Head must use his own mobile number.
  - WhatsApp must be active on the same number.
- FORM SUBMISSION**
  - Fill the form yourself.
  - Do not let anyone else fill the form using your mobile number.
  - Do not share your OTP with anyone.
- NOMINEE**
  - Nominee: Son / Daughter / Parents / Spouse (**Legal heir preferred**)
  - Add only one nominee who will perform Hajj in your place.
- BANK DETAILS (ACCOUNT HOLDER MUST BE COVER HEAD)**
  - Account must be in the name of the Cover Head.
  - Provide correct & active bank account details.
  - Account must be active.



**ANNOUNCEMENT FOR HAJ – 2027 (1448 H)**

- The Haj Committee of India invites applications from eligible intending pilgrims for Haj – 2027 through the online Haj Application Form available at <https://www.hajcommittee.gov.in> or HAJ SUVIDHA mobile app.
- The application window shall remain open from **22.06.2026 to 20.07.2026** (up to 11:59 PM). After Qurbah (Digital Random Selection) process to be conducted in the last week of July, each provisionally selected pilgrim shall be required to deposit an advance amount of **₹1,52,300/-** on or before **10.08.2026**. No relaxation or extension in these timelines shall be feasible.
- Applicants must carefully read the Guidelines and Undertakings to ensure their eligibility and upload scanned copies (not photographs) of the following:
  - Front and back pages of machine-readable Indian Passport (1200 × 800 px, JPG/JPEG, 100–500 KB), issued on or before the application closing date and valid up to at least 31.12.2027;
  - Passport-size photo with white background (480 × 640 px, JPG/JPEG, 5–20 KB);
  - Bank passbook or cancelled cheque (590 × 750 px, JPG/JPEG, 80–250 KB); and
  - Address proof (590 × 750 px, JPG/JPEG, 80–250 KB).
- Cancellation of a Haj seat is strongly discouraged, as it causes operational difficulties. Accordingly, cancellation shall attract substantial penalties in accordance with the Guidelines for Haj 2027. Intending pilgrims are advised to apply only after careful consideration of their preparedness and firm commitment to undertake the pilgrimage.



**JOIN OUR OFFICIAL WHATSAPP GROUP**  
For Haj 2027 Updates

Bait-ul-Hujaj (Haj House), Bemina,  
Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, India - 190017

+91 194 249 5365  
<https://www.jkshc.org/>

Aapki Tayyari – Aapka Aaram – Hamari Zimmedari



**Space Devoted by Headlines Today, Purely in Public Interest**



## ADC Handwara reviews Revenue Matters, stresses timely disposal of pending cases

Also reviews flood preparedness measures

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**HANDWARA, JULY 21:** Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting with all Tehsildars of Sub-Division Handwara to assess the progress of key revenue matters and ensure the effective implementation of various government initiatives.

During the meeting, the ADC conducted a detailed review of several important revenue-related issues, including the digitization of Jamabandis, rectification of Jamabandi errors, disposal of backlog mutations, grievance redressal, digitization and authentication of revenue maps, issuance of SVAMITVA Property Cards, Kahcharai and State Land matters, Section 27 cases, RCCM court cases, Jal Shakti assets, land acquisition cases, grievances received through JK Samadhan, CPGRAMS and Migrant Grievance Portals, besides cases under the Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA).

The ADC emphasized the need for timely disposal of all pending revenue cases, strict adherence to timelines, and greater accountability in the implementation of government programmes. He directed the Tehsildars to ensure



regular monitoring of all revenue matters, improve public service delivery, and maintain transparency and efficiency in revenue administration.

In view of the prevailing weather conditions and the possibility of heavy rainfall, the ADC also reviewed flood preparedness measures and issued necessary directions to all Tehsildars. He

instructed that Tehsil-level Control Rooms be activated immediately and asked the field functionaries to identify vulnerable mollahas and houses located along nallahs and in landslide-prone areas, ensuring that timely alerts are issued through Lambardars and other field-level staff.

The ADC further directed that three-hourly situation reports

from every Tehsil be submitted to the District Control Room. He also called for the immediate activation of field response teams comprising officers and officials of the Irrigation & Flood Control Department, Rural Development Department, Public Works Department, Public Health Engineering Department, Border Roads Organisation (BRO), Power Development Department, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department, and Health Department to ensure swift response in case of any emergency.

He also instructed all Tehsildars to keep relief shelters identified and ready for activation on a Tehsil-wise basis, wherever required, so that prompt assistance can be provided to the affected population in the event of any exigency.

The meeting also focused on strengthening the monitoring mechanism, expediting the resolution of public grievances, and enhancing coordination among field officers to achieve better governance outcomes across the Sub-Division.

All Tehsildars of Sub-Division Handwara attended the meeting and presented agenda-wise progress reports and updates on the matters under their respective jurisdictions.

## RCFC NR-II, NMPB organises Training-cum-Awareness Programme at Shopian

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, JULY 21:** Regional Cum Facilitation Centre, Northern Region-II (RCFC NR-II) National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, SKUAST-K, organized a Training-cum-Awareness Programme on "Opportunities in Cultivation of Medicinal Plants of Kashmir Valley" at Kri-shi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Shopian.

The programme focused on promoting conservation, scientific cultivation and entrepreneurship development in medicinal plant sector, aiming to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for farmers, youth, and aspiring entrepreneurs of the region.

Addressing the participants, Dr. Zafar Afroz Badri, Head, KVK Shopian, emphasized the growing economic importance of medicinal plants and highlighted the initiatives undertaken by RCFC NR-II for the conservation and promotion of medicinal plants in the valley.

He encouraged stakeholders to adopt medicinal plant cultivation as a means of livelihood diversification and income generation. Dr. Sofi Imtiyaz Ali, Project Manager, RCFC NR-II, delivered a detailed lecture on conservation strategies, package of practices, post-harvest management, value addition of commercially important medicinal plants, thereby stressing the importance of quality and standardization to meet market demand.

A special emphasis was laid on Rheum emodi (locally known as Pambei Tchalana) a high-value Himalayan medicinal spe-



cies, with a caution against its unsustainable extraction from the wild.

Stakeholders were encouraged to adopt its scientific cultivation to promote conservation while enhancing income opportunities. The session also covered economics and emerging opportunities in herbal-based enterprises. The programme witnessed active participation from farmers, youth, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders, along with scientists and technical staff of KVK Shopian and RCFC NR-II team.

The event concluded with a strong call to adopt scientific cultivation practices, reduce dependency on wild collection, explore entrepreneurship avenues in medicinal plant sector, and effectively utilize the technical guidance and institutional support provided by RCFC NR-II for building sustainable livelihoods.

## Resident Commission organizes awareness programme on Dogra tradition 'Rutt Raahde' at New Delhi

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI, JULY 21:** The Jammu and Kashmir Resident Commission, New Delhi, organized an awareness programme on the forgotten Dogra tradition 'Rutt Raahde' in collaboration with the Dogra Welfare Association, Delhi-NCR and J&K Bank Limited, to promote awareness about the region's rich cultural heritage and encourage its



preservation among the posterity.

The programme was attended by members of the Dogra community, cultural enthusiasts and officials. It aimed to revive awareness about the forgotten Dogra tradition Rutt Raahde and highlight its cultural, environmental and social significance, particularly among the younger generation.

Speaking on the occasion, Anil Sharma, Additional Resident Commissioner, said that Rutt Raahde is not merely a seasonal tradition but a reflection of the scientific wisdom and practical knowledge of earlier generations, promoting harmony with nature, environmental consciousness and community bonding. He emphasized that preserving such traditions strengthens the cultural identity, fosters inter-generational learning and social cohesion. It immensely contributes towards mental and emotional well-being by keeping people connected to their roots, he asserted.

The Resident Commission reiterated its commitment to preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. It expressed gratitude to the Dogra Welfare Association, Delhi-NCR, Jammu and Kashmir Bank Limited and all the participants for their support in making the programme a success.

## Managing Director JPDCL reviews flood restoration works in Rajouri, Poonch; directs expeditious restoration of power supply

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAJOURI/POONCH, JULY 21:** Managing Director JPDCL Gupral Singh conducted an extensive inspection of flood-affected areas in the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch to assess the damage caused to the power infrastructure due to the heavy rainfall and flash floods during the intervening night of 18-19 July 2026.

The inspection commenced with a visit to the restoration site of the 33 KV Doongi-Keri, where restoration works are being carried out on a war footing. The Managing Director reviewed the progress of works and instructed the field officers to expedite restoration while adhering to prescribed safety standards.

The team also visited Dhan-gri, where the 33 KV Bypass Line and the dedicated 11 KV PHE feeder were extensively damaged in the flash floods. Officers informed the Managing Director that power supply to the area had been restored through the existing 33 KV network as an interim arrangement. Appreci-

ating the prompt response of the field staff, he directed that permanent restoration works be completed at the earliest.

During the visit to Badala Mang, Panjpeer and Salani Bridge, the Managing Director inspected the ongoing restoration of the 33 KV and 11 KV Manjakote lines and reviewed the challenges being faced at various locations. At Bela Bus Stand, Rajouri, he assessed the extensive damage caused to the 33 KV and 11 KV network, distribution transformers and associated infrastructure and directed the officers to mobilise all available resources for early restoration.

The inspection team later proceeded towards Thanaman-di via Fatehpura, where unloading of poles and restoration materials was in progress. The Managing Director also visited locations where severe damage had occurred to the 132 KV transmission tower line of JKPTCL, resulting in disruption of power supply to Poonch district. He reviewed the restoration being implemented by the corporation concerned.



In Poonch district, the MD inspected the flood-affected areas of Mankote, Potha, Mehrote and Lassana, where restoration work of the damaged 33 KV and 11 KV network is in full swing. He reviewed the progress of restoration works at each location and directed the field officers to expedite the restoration of power supply. The Managing Director also visited the NTPC Store at Poonch to assess the availability of materials and in-

structed that all available materials, including those at the NTPC Store, be utilised for emergency restoration so that works are not delayed for want of equipment.

Reviewing the overall situation, Gupral Singh directed all field formations to work in close coordination and restore the damaged power infrastructure at the earliest so that power supply is restored to all affected consumers in the shortest pos-

sible time.

The Managing Director also chaired a review meeting at Surankote with senior officers of the Corporation, during which the progress of restoration works, availability of materials and deployment of manpower were reviewed. He instructed the officers to maintain round-the-clock monitoring of restoration activities and ensure optimum utilisation of available resources.

The Managing Director was accompanied by Chief Engineer (Distribution) Jammu Arshad Hussain Reshi, Superintending Engineer (O&M Circle) Rajouri, Executive Engineer (STD) Kala-kote, Executive Engineers of Electric Divisions Rajouri and Poonch and other senior officers of the Corporation.

JPDCL has already mobilised substantial quantities of emergency restoration material to the affected areas.

The material dispatched includes ACSR conductor, poles and distribution transformers, enabling field teams to undertake restoration works without interruption.

## DC Rajouri addresses press conference, assures full support to flash flood-affected families

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAJOURI, JULY 21:** Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today addressed a press conference and briefed the media on the losses caused by the recent flash floods, ongoing rescue and relief operations and measures being taken for the rehabilitation of affected families.

The Deputy Commissioner informed that four persons were initially reported missing. Of these, three bodies have been recovered, while search operations are continuing to trace the remaining missing person. Multi-agency rescue operations involving the SDRF, NDRF, Police, Indian Army and other departments are being carried out in close coordination.

He said that nearly 230 people have been rescued and evacuated from the affected areas. Around 450 people are currently staying at relief centres, where the administration is providing food, drinking water, bedding, healthcare and other essential facilities.

Expressing grief over the loss of lives, the Deputy Commissioner said the administration stands firmly with the bereaved families. Immediate admissible relief has already been provided and every possible assistance will continue



to be extended. He appealed to the public to strictly follow weather advisories, avoid venturing near rivers, streams and other vulnerable areas and urged parents to ensure that children do not enter flood-prone locations during adverse weather conditions.

For emergency assistance, citizens have been advised to contact the District Control Room at 01962-295895. He said all departments remain on high alert and are prepared to respond to any emergency.

Restoration of roads, power and water supply is being undertaken on a war footing. Detailed assessment of damage to private property and public infrastructure will be carried out and assistance will be provided as per the prescribed norms.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with media persons and sought their feedback to ensure comprehensive coverage of all affected areas.

## Joint inspection of pesticide dealers conducted in Jammu district to strengthen regulatory compliance

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JULY 21:** Acting on the directions of Director Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Department Jammu Anil Gupta, a joint inspection of pesticide dealers was conducted to ensure strict enforcement of the Fertilizer (Control) Order, 1985, the Insecticides Act, 1968 and the Insecticides Rules, 1971.

The inspection was carried out by Plant Protection Officer Jammu Raju Mahajan, along with Assistant Director Law Enforcement Jammu Kuldeep Singh. The joint team visited the premises of M/s Akhil India Pvt. Ltd., Jammu, M/s Jammu Agri Inputs and M/s Vivek Enterprises to verify compliance with the statutory provisions governing the sale and distribution of pesticides and fertilizers.

The team conducted a detailed verification of pesticide stocks available at the establishments. Licences, Principal Certificates, validity of authorisations, stock registers and other statutory records were thoroughly examined to ensure that the stocking, marketing and sale of insecticides and fertilizers were being carried out strictly in accordance with the prescribed rules and regulations.

The dealers were categorically instructed to stock, market and sell only those insecticide products covered under

valid Principal Certificates and relevant licences and were directed to ensure complete adherence to all statutory provisions governing the storage, sale and distribution of insecticides and fertilizers. The inspection team also reviewed the progress of implementation of the Integrated Pesticide Management System (IPMS) Portal, a nationwide digital platform introduced by the Government of India for streamlining licensing and monitoring of pesticide trade. The dealers were informed that uploading of insecticide products on the IPMS Portal is mandatory for all manufacturers, dealers and retailers and were further directed to ensure that all retailers operating under their Principal Certificates are onboarded onto the portal with their accounts made fully functional without delay.

The joint team directed dealers to maintain complete statutory records, comply with the conditions of licences and Principal Certificates and strictly follow the provisions of the Fertilizer (Control) Order, 1985, the Insecticides Act, 1968 and the Insecticides Rules, 1971. The dealers were cautioned that any violation of the statutory provisions or licensing conditions would invite appropriate legal action under the relevant Acts and Rules.



# CCPA cracks down on 41 restaurants over default service charges

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JUL 21:** The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has initiated action against at least 41 restaurants across the country for allegedly adding service charges to customer bills without obtaining explicit consent, following a series of complaints received through the National Consumer Helpline (NCH).

Among the establishments that have come under the consumer watchdog's scanner are Chaayos, Fiesta Barbeque Nation, L'Opera French Bakery, China Gate Restaurant Pvt. Ltd., FOO Ahmedabad Restaurant, Cafe Blue Bottle in Patna, and Zorro – The Luxury Night Club.

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs said the action was based on complaints from customers who submitted invoices showing that service charges had been added to their bills automatically.

After examining the complaints, the CCPA concluded that the practice of levying service charges by default amounts to an unfair trade



practice under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, as consumers have the right to decide whether or not they wish to pay such charges.

The authority also cited the Delhi High Court's March 28, 2025 judgment, which upheld the validity of the CCPA's guidelines on service charges. The court ruled that restaurants cannot make service charges mandatory and directed them to comply with the consumer protection norms.

In one of the final orders, the CCPA imposed a penalty of Rs 50,000 on Sunshine Teahouse Pvt.

Ltd., which operates the Chaayos chain.

The company has been directed to refund the service charge collected from the complainant and modify its billing software across all outlets to ensure that service charges, or any similar fee, are not automatically included in customer bills.

It has also been instructed to ensure that future invoices fully comply with the consumer protection guidelines.

The consumer watchdog has also issued final orders against Fiesta Barbeque Nation, China Gate Restaurant Pvt. Ltd., L'Opera

French Bakery Pvt. Ltd., FOO Ahmedabad Restaurant, Cafe Blue Bottle, and Zorro – The Luxury Night Club. Proceedings against the remaining restaurants are still in progress.

The CCPA reiterated that service charges are entirely voluntary and cannot be imposed as a mandatory component of a customer's bill. Under its 2022 guidelines applicable to hotels and restaurants, businesses are prohibited from automatically adding service charges to food bills or recovering them under any other name.

Customers must be clearly informed that payment of a service charge is optional, and restaurants cannot refuse entry or deny services to those who choose not to pay it. The guidelines also specify that service charges should not be clubbed with the food bill in a manner that attracts Goods and Services Tax (GST).

The authority advised consumers to ask restaurants to remove any service charge that has been added without their consent before making payment. UNI

## Midwest Energy's 1.2 GW BESS capacity fully booked

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**BENGALURU, JULY 21:** Signalling robust demand for battery energy storage systems (BESS) in India, Midwest Energy on Monday said its entire 1.2 GW annual manufacturing capacity has already been booked even before its newly inaugurated facility becomes fully operational, as the company unveiled ambitious plans to build an integrated clean-energy value chain spanning critical materials, rare earth magnets and advanced battery systems.

CEO and Director K Soumya said the production line would be fully commissioned by next month, with confirmed orders already covering the plant's entire annual manufacturing capacity.

"The 1.2 GW capacity has already been booked. The line will be fully operational by next month," she told UNI here.

Riding on the strong order book, the company plans to expand capacity from 1.2 GW to 2 GW through automation of the existing facility before scaling it up to 6 GW over the next three years by adding parallel production lines.

The company has invested around Rs. 100 crore in the plant, excluding land cost, and expects to recover the investment within one-and-a-half to two years. At full utilisation, the facility is projected to generate annual revenues of about Rs. 800 crore with profit margins of around 10 per cent, Soumya said.

Midwest Energy is targeting renewable energy developers, industries transitioning to green power and data centres, sectors expected to drive rising demand for battery storage as India expands renewable energy capacity.

Speaking at the inauguration, Krishnamurthy Balasubramanian, mentor to Midwest Energy and a materials scientist associated with several national clean-energy missions, said the company was created with the vision of building indigenous capabilities across the clean-energy ecosystem rather than remaining dependent on imports.

"Midwest, which started as a mining group, diversified into the decarbonisation space by creating focused businesses in advanced materials, energy devices and related technologies. The objective has always been to move from materials to products and ultimately to globally competitive businesses," he



said.

He said the company's strategy was to develop the entire value chain—from critical minerals and rare earth magnets to advanced battery systems—supporting India's decarbonisation goals and the Make in India initiative.

"Our aim is not only to reduce imports but to build technologies in India. We do not want to leave any gap in the value chain—from ores and materials to the final energy device," he said.

Calling the commissioning of the 1.2 GW facility a major milestone, Dr Balasubramanian said the company had progressed from pilot-scale production to gigawatt-scale manufacturing.

"We have now entered the gigawatt era. Crossing the 1,000 MW mark is a significant milestone for any technology-driven company," he said.

On localisation, Soumya said battery cells are currently imported, but most other components, including racks and manufacturing systems, are made in India. Domestic value addition stands at 30-40 per cent and is expected to increase to around 70 per cent through backward integration.

He said Midwest's in-house Battery Management System (BMS), Energy Management System (EMS) and research and development capabilities enable it to compete with Chinese manufacturers.

Dr Balasubramanian also outlined the company's broader technology roadmap, including rare earth magnets, electric drives, motors, robotics, drones and hydrogen technologies, stressing that future energy systems would depend on smart grids capable of integrating multiple renewable energy sources.

Besides the BESS business, Midwest Energy is also establishing a rare earth magnet manufacturing facility in Hyderabad as part of its integrated clean-energy strategy. UNI

## India ships first frozen French fries consignment to Iraq, boosting processed food exports

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JULY 21:** India exported 24 Metric Tonnes (MT) of Frozen French Fries to Iraq marking a significant milestone in promoting value-added agricultural exports while strengthening India's processed food export basket.

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, has facilitated the first export of 24 Metric Tonnes (MT) of Frozen French Fries from Kashipur in Udham Singh Nagar district of Uttarakhand to Iraq. Exported by Virun Global Trade Pvt. Ltd., Ministry of Commerce & Industry said in a statement.

Abhishek Dev, Chairman, APEDA, said that logistics costs continue to influence the competitiveness of exports from landlocked states such as Uttarakhand.

APEDA is working closely with the Government of Uttarakhand on the formulation and implementation of the State Agri Export Policy, including provisions for transport assistance to improve export competitiveness and facilitate greater market access for exporters, he said.

India continues to strengthen its position as a global supplier of processed agricultural products.

During 2025-26, India's exports of processed vegetables reached USD 932.25 million, comprising 7,26,874.70 MT. Of this, value-added potato products accounted for exports of 277,108.51 MT valued at USD 289.40 million. Processed fruits and vegetables together contributed nearly 10 per cent of APEDA's scheduled exports during the year.

The expanding processed food industry in Uttarakhand is creating stronger market opportunities across the agricultural value chain by generating sustained demand for quality raw produce, promoting value addition at source and encouraging greater participation in export-oriented supply chains.

Such initiatives are expected to enhance farmers' incomes through improved market access while boosting the state's processed food exports. UNI

## IHCL signs Tree of Life Kanadukathan in Chettinad, TN

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**CHENNAI, JULY 21:** Hospitality firm the Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) on Monday announced the signing of Tree of Life Kanadukathan in Chettinad, Tamil Nadu.

The brownfield project involves the conversion of an existing heritage-style Chettiar property into a hotel, a IHCL statement said.

Located at Karaikudi in Sivaganga district, Kanadukathan is the crown jewel of the Chettinad region in Tamil Nadu, famed for its palatial Chettiar mansions, rich culture, and authentic cuisine.

Ms. Suma Venkatesh, Executive Vice President – Real Estate & Development,

IHCL, said, "Chettinad's rich architecture and cultural legacy continues to attract travellers seeking immersive experiences. Anchored in authenticity and a deep sense of place, Tree of Life brings its distinctive, experience-led approach to this setting. This signing presents an opportunity to pioneer a new destination and establish presence in an emerging heritage market. We are delighted to continue our partnership with AMPA Group for this project."

Located in Kanadukathan, Chettinad, the 20-key Tree of Life Kanadukathan reflects the architectural character of the region. The hotel houses an all-day dining restaurant and lounge. To unwind, guests can explore the swimming pool, spa and fully-equipped gym.

## Apple surpasses Nvidia to become world's most valuable company

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JULY 21:** Apple has overtaken Nvidia to become the world's most valuable listed company, marking a significant shift in how investors are viewing the technology sector and the future of artificial intelligence. The change comes after Nvidia's shares fell 3.5% on Friday, allowing Apple to move ahead in market value.

Apple's valuation stood at \$4.88 trillion, while Nvidia was valued at about \$4.86 trillion, news agency Reuters reported.

The development signals that investors are no longer focusing only on companies building the infrastructure behind AI. Increasingly, attention is also turning to businesses seen as better placed to generate long-term revenue from AI-powered products and services.

The latest ranking puts

Apple back at the top for the first time since April last year. Nvidia had dominated the list for nearly a year after becoming the first company to cross a \$5 trillion market valuation in October, driven by surging demand for its AI chips.

While the latest change reshuffles the rankings, it does not necessarily indicate a permanent shift. Nvidia continues to be one of the biggest beneficiaries of AI spending, with its graphics processors powering much of the generative AI boom.

Analysts reportedly say Apple's rise reflects changing expectations around artificial intelligence rather than a sudden change in its business.

"Apple was seen as a laggard in the AI race because it wasn't spending to develop models, but now sentiment has changed," Toni Meadows, head of investment at BRI Wealth Management



was quoted as saying by news agency Reuters.

The shift suggests investors are placing greater value on

companies that can turn AI into sustainable earnings rather than relying solely on heavy infrastructure spending.

## L&T bags orders worth Rs 10,000 Cr from Public Sector Units

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**MUMBAI, JUL 21:** Larsen & Toubro's (L&T) officially informed the stock exchanges here through a regulatory filing on Monday that the metals and minerals vertical of the company has bagged multiple orders from government-owned public sector companies.

The company has classified this order in "mega" category, which is used to describe orders in the range between Rs 10,000-15,000 crore.

According to the company statement, these orders include a contract from the public sector company NMDC Limited, which is India's largest iron ore producer. As part of its expansion programme to achieve 100 MTPA of iron ore production capacity by 2030, the NMDC Limited, has awarded 'Package #BE-01C' of its 18 MTPA iron ore handling plant in Chhattisgarh. The scope of the project includes design and engineering, procure-

ment, installation and commissioning of downhill conveyor system, screening plant, stockpile, yard equipment, Rapid Wagon Loading System (RWLS) and associated auxiliaries. The second order is from another public sector Navratna company for the expansion of a steel plant in West Bengal, from 2.5 MTPA to 7.1 MTPA. The company also secured an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) order for a zinc processing plant. The scope of the order comprises design and engineering, procurement, installation, commissioning and associated site services, reaffirming L&T's expertise in delivering complex non-ferrous metallurgical projects.

Commenting on the development, L&T Chairman & Managing Director S N Subrahmanyam said, "This reaffirms L&T's enduring leadership in the minerals and metals EPC sector and reflects the deep trust customers place in our ability to deliver projects of exceptional scale.

## Stock markets end lower led by heavy selling in private banking stocks

**NEW DELHI, JUL 21:** Indian stock markets on Monday ended lower led by heavy selling in private banking stocks after their June-quarter earnings and weak global cues.

At close, the Sensex was down 442.93 points or 0.57 per cent at 77,708.52, and the Nifty was down 95.80 points or 0.39 per cent at 24,238.50. Nifty midcap index added 0.6 per cent and smallcap index ended marginally in the green.

Among the sectors, Nifty PSU Bank emerged as the top performer, gaining 2.8%. It was followed by Nifty Pharma up by 1.4%, Nifty Media up by 1%, Nifty Energy up by 1%, Nifty Metal up 0.86%, Nifty Oil & Gas up by 0.62%, Nifty Infrastructure gained 0.7%, Nifty FMCG 0.6% and Nifty Consumer



Durables up by 0.72%.

The sectoral losers were Nifty Private Bank falling 2.2%, followed by Nifty Bank 1%, while Nifty Auto and Realty ended with marginal losses.

On the Nifty, the key gainers were Trent, Cipla, Power Grid Corporation, Bharti Airtel, JSW Steel. On the losing side were Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, Maruti Suzuki, Kotak Mahindra Bank, and Jio Financial

Services.

Over 100 stocks touched their 52-week high on the BSE. These included Gabriel India, Shyam Metals, Himadri Speciality Chemical, Navin Fluorine International, Aegis Logistics, Gujarat Fluorochemicals, Solar Industries India, Zydus Wellness, Lloyds Metals & Energy, Radico Khaitan, Divi's Laboratories, Sona BLW Precision Forgings, Federal Bank, and Exide Industries, among others.

Among the private banks, YES Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank ended lower declining 3% and 2%, respectively.

Swiggy emerged as the worst performer, plunging 2.3%. Groww, Pine Labs, and Honasa Consumer also declined more than 2% each. UNI





CMYK

15TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

HEADLINES  
TODAY  
Voice To The Voiceless

Srinagar, Wednesday

22-July-2026



@HEADLINESTODA17



@headlinestodaydaily



@headlinestoday



@headlinestodaynews

HT - NEWS

12

# No noise, no fun: Rohit shrugs off retirement chatter after Lord's 138



## UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI:** Rohit Sharma put the speculation around his future in international cricket down to "noise" which he said "doesn't really matter too much" following his century in the third ODI against England at Lord's. Rohit scored a 110-ball 138 but India failed to chase down 388, and lost the third ODI and the series in England.

"Look, my job is with the bat. Come and play, represent my country, represent the team," Rohit told bcci.tv after the game. "That's what I've been told to do since I made my debut. So that's what I'm going to do. You know, the noise since I made my debut was there. And till the time I'm going to stay here, it's always going to be there. So it doesn't really matter too much."

"What matters is what I do on the field: try and contribute to the success of the team. That's all my focus is right now. And let the noise be there. You know, [if] there's no noise, there's no fun. My job is inside, their job is outside. So that's how I look at it."

The talk about Rohit's possible retirement began on Thursday, midway through the second ODI in Cardiff, where he made 26 off 47 balls. In the first ODI at Edgbaston, Rohit had made 11 off 21. BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia quickly dismissed the chatter, telling PTL, "I want to firmly assert

that there has been no such discussion that Rohit will be playing his last match at Lord's on Sunday."

Rohit, now 39, that they would be providing opportunities to younger openers going forward with an eye on the 2027 ODI World Cup. Following the match on Sunday, Shubman Gill, India's Test and ODI captain, also dismissed talks about Rohit's retirement from ODIs, the only format he plays after having retired from Tests and T20Is.

"He has not told us anything," Gill said at the press conference. "I think it is all out in the media. But there's not been any discussion like that in the team."

While he might not have played his last game in India colours, Rohit has played his last game for India in England. It was also the 400th time Rohit had played a game with Virat Kohli internationally, and the two shared a 113-run stand in 86 balls for the second wicket, Rohit very much the dominant partner with 71 in 48 balls to Kohli's run-a-ball 38.

"We played our entire career together. So, you know, it was nice to have him in the middle," Rohit said. "You know, we've had a lot of partnerships. It's always fun batting together. We understand each other so much. And yeah, it's always nice in the middle, bouncing off ideas, try and see what we can do. So there was a lot of conversation that was going around in between when we were batting."

## Gill puts spotlight on India's fitness record

### UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**LONDON:** India captain Shubman Gill has said the team cannot afford to have players getting injured every few matches if they want to stay a strong contender at the 2027 ODI World Cup. That was one of his takeaways after India lost the deciding match against England at Lord's on Sunday. Gill said that India "as a group", which includes both players and the BCCI medical team, need to pay attention to "improving fitness" going forward. India could not field their best XI at Lord's because of several players from the original 15-man squad being unavailable. Missing on Sunday were Jasprit Bumrah (out due to an impact injury sustained during Cardiff ODI), Washington Sundar (hamstring injury in Cardiff), Harshit Rana (hamstring during England T20I series) and Nitish Kumar Reddy who did not arrive in UK after suffering a quadriceps injury while playing the ODI series at home against Afghanistan in June. Gill said that the injuries forced the Indian think tank to change the team combination, on occasions at the last minute.

## Jangoo: West Indies 'don't deserve' to be in World Cup qualifiers

### UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**BARBADOS:** West Indies batter Amir Jangoo believes they "don't deserve" to be heading to another ODI World Cup qualifier, but admitted the team's batting struggles - they have failed to see out 50 overs in the last three matches against New Zealand - had proved costly.

While West Indies were likely heading to the 2027 qualifiers prior to facing New Zealand, the three consecutive defeats which have decided the series - capped by the agonising one-wicket loss in Barbados on Sunday - have made it all-but certain they will have to earn the right to reach the ODI World Cup for the third consecutive time.

They managed to secure a spot at the 2019 World Cup but missed out on the 2023 event and now face



the high-stakes prospect of another qualifying event early next year, then potentially featuring in

the three-team Super Series at the start of the World Cup itself to have a chance of progressing further.

"The kind of quality that this team has, I think we don't deserve to be going to the qualifiers,"

Jangoo said. "It's just that's the position that we're in. But we know the quality that we have in our dressing room... all the bowlers, even young Vitel Lawes that we see making a breakthrough in this series here. So it's great signs to see. Going forward now, we have to play the right cricket and get those wins on the board for West Indies."

Jangoo returned to the side in Barbados having been left out of the third game in Guyana and top-scored for West Indies with 51 off 73 balls to lift them to 188. That nearly proved enough as Gudakesh Motie claimed 5 for 47 before Mitchell Santner carried the visitors over the line after a late chance had gone to ground for West Indies. However, being bowled out in 44.1 overs followed innings of just 36 and 37.1 overs in the previous two matches.

**MARUTI SUZUKI**

**NEXA**

**Go Bold. Go Further.**

Experience refined comfort and an impressive mileage of 22.94km/l\* in the Bold Baleno.

**EFFECTIVE STARTING PRICE ₹ 5.54 LAKH\***

**BALENO**

\*As per ARAI

IN A MONTH

0% FINANCE

UP TO 100% WAIVER ON CAR INSURANCE PROCESSING FEE\*\*

GOING GREEN! CO2 EMISSIONS 100g/km

**LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS**

ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL PRINTING NEEDS

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

**9999038812**  
**9419008414**

**Radio Colony,  
Gund Hassibhat, Lawaipora Srinagar-190017**

**HEADLINES TODAY INVITES CONTRIBUTIONS**

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

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

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

Send your contributions to:

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

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

**LEGAL DISCLAIMER:** The views and Opinions Expressed in Articles, Opinion Pieces, Columns, Interviews, or Other Content Published in Headlines Today are those of the Respective Authors or Contributors and do not Necessarily Reflect the Views or Editorial Policy of Headlines Today, its Publisher, or Management. Headlines Today is not Responsible for the Accuracy, Completeness, or Reliability of Content Sourced or Reproduced from News Agencies, Press Releases, Advertisers, or Other Third-Party Sources. Publication of Such Material Does not Imply Endorsement. Advertisements, Sponsored Content, Paid Features, or Promotional Materials Displayed on this Website or Disseminated Through Affiliated Digital Platforms are Commercial Communications and Shall Not be Construed as Editorial Content or Endorsement by Headlines Today. All Content is Published in Good Faith for Informational Purposes Only. Readers are Advised to Exercise Discretion and Independently Verify Information. © Headlines Today. All Rights Reserved.

Content is Protected Under the Copyright Act, 1957. Unauthorized Use is Prohibited. All disputes shall be subject to the Exclusive Jurisdiction of the Competent Courts in J&K.



CMYK

CMYK

CMYK

CMYK

CMYK

CMYK