

Srinagar
Sunday
August 16 | 2026
2 Rabi' al-Awwal 1448 AH
Issue No: 194
Volume: 16
Pages: 12
Price :Rs: 2/-

16TH
YEAR OF
PUBLICATION

HEADLINES TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



Social Security Net Reaches 100 Crore, India's Development Must Leave No One Behind : PM Modi

PM says welfare coverage has quadrupled in a decade, while startups, skills and new-age sectors open fresh opportunities for youth



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India's social security coverage has expanded from around 25 crore people before 2014 to nearly 100 crore within a decade, asserting that the vision of a developed India can be realised only when the benefits of growth reach the last person. Addressing the nation from the Red Fort on the 80th Independence Day, Modi highlighted Ayushman Bharat, Startup India, Skill India, Digital India and investments in emerging sectors as key drivers of inclusive welfare, entrepreneurship and employment.

SEE ON P-2

LG Sinha Calls for Integrity, Inclusion and Empowerment to Build a Stronger J&K

Stresses women and youth empowerment, jobs, environmental protection and accountable governance



HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday hoisted the National Flag at Lok Bhavan on the 80th Independence Day and called upon citizens to uphold the values for which the country's freedom fighters made the supreme sacrifice. Emphasising

SEE ON P-2

J&K's Journey From Fear to Freedom Marks New Era : Amit Shah

Home Minister highlights widespread Tiranga celebrations and growing public participation across the Union Territory

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday described Jammu and Kashmir's Independence Day celebrations as a symbol of the transformation witnessed by the region in recent years,

saying the Union Territory had "charted a journey from fear to freedom" under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Shah said areas where hoisting the Tricolour once invited threats were now witnessing Tiranga Yatras and large public participation, as J&K



observed the 80th Independence Day amid extensive celebrations.

SEE ON P-2

I-Day Platform Should Rise Above Politics : LoP Sunil Sharma

BJP leader criticises Omar Abdullah's address, says occasion should focus on martyrs, unity and J&K's future

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Sunil Sharma on Saturday criticised Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for raising political and constitutional issues in his Independence Day address, saying the national occasion should remain above partisan politics. Reacting to Omar's speech at Bakshi Stadium, Sharma said the platform should have focused on the sacrifices of freedom fighters and soldiers, national unity, development and the aspirations of Jammu and Kashmir's youth, while welcoming the singing of "Vande Mataram" at the venue.



Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Sunil Sharma on Saturday called Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's Independence Day speech "irresponsible", alleging that the occasion was used to raise political issues instead of focusing on national unity, martyrs and the future of Jammu and Kashmir.

Reacting to Chief Minister Omar's address at Bakshi Stadium, LoP Sharma, while talking to reporters, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the Independence Day platform should be above politics and should be used to honour the sacrifices of freedom fighters, soldiers and martyrs and celebrate the Tricolour. "I don't want to talk about politics, but I was very shocked when such a stage was used by the Chief Minister for political purposes," Sharma said. "This stage represents the glorious history of India."

SEE ON P-2

CM Omar Reaffirms Statehood Mission, Pledges New Era of Progress for J&K

Calls for stronger federalism, transparent governance and greater opportunities for youth

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday reaffirmed his government's commitment to restoring statehood and constitutional guarantees to Jammu and Kashmir, promising to take the region towards a new



era of development, prosperity and progress. Hoisting the National Flag at Bakshi Stadium on the 80th Independence Day, Omar said the occasion was one of celebration, remembrance and introspection, while stressing that democracy, federalism, transparent governance and employment opportunities must remain central to J&K's future. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah

today hoisted the National Flag at the 80th Independence Day function at Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar, and took the salute at the ceremonial parade and march-past. Opening his speech with the famous patriotic verse, "Sare Jahan Se Achha, Hindustan Hamara; Hum Bulbulein Hain Iski, Yeh Gulistan Hamara," the Chief Minister said the words beautifully capture the love, pride and emotional bond that people share with their country. He said Independence Day was an occasion to reflect on whether the India envisioned by those who made the supreme sacrifice had been fully realized and, if not, what more needed to be done.

"Today is a day of joy, a day of remembrance and a day of gratitude," he said, paying tribute to all those who sacrificed their lives for the

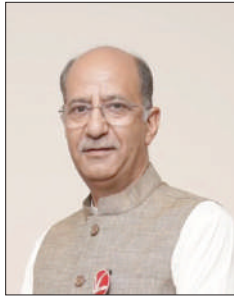
SEE ON P-2

Statehood Is About J&K's Dignity and Identity : Nasir Wani

CM's Advisor urges Centre to honour its commitment, calls for greater opportunities and empowerment of youth

HT NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA, AUGUST 15: Advisor to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Nasir Aslam Wani, on Saturday urged the Centre to restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir at the earliest, describing it as a genuine aspiration linked to the identity, dignity and representation of its people. Addressing an Independence Day function in Kupwara, Wani said the government would



SEE ON P-2

HT BOTTOM NEWS

Tricolour-Clad Ghanta Ghar Turns Lal Chowk Into I-Day Symbol of Unity

Tourists and locals gather around Srinagar landmark as Independence Day lends a festive yet unusually quiet character to the city centre

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: Srinagar's iconic Ghanta Ghar at Lal Chowk emerged as a striking Independence



Day attraction on Saturday as tourists and locals gathered around the Tricolour-wrapped landmark to witness the celebrations and capture photographs. With most commercial establishments closed for the holiday, the usually bustling city centre wore

a quieter look, while the historic Clock Tower became a meeting point for visitors experiencing the national celebrations in the heart of Srinagar. For many visitors, a trip to Kashmir

For many visitors, a trip to Kashmir

begins with its mountains, lakes and Mughal gardens. But for tourists who made their way to Srinagar's historic Lal Chowk on Independence Day, the memory of the Valley came with a different backdrop: the iconic Ghanta Ghar wrapped in Tricolour.

SEE ON P-2

15TH AUGUST

HAPPY

INDEPENDENCE DAY

ONE NATION ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY

Let us honour the heroes of our freedom struggle and pledge to build a stronger, united and prosperous India.

PROUD TO BE INDIAN

LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS

HEADLINES TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless

FOLLOW US ON: [Facebook] [Instagram] [Twitter]

Sakeena Itoo hoists Tricolour at Anantnag; highlights government initiatives, pays homage to nation,s martyrs

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, AUGUST 15: The 80th Independence Day was celebrated across Anantnag district with great patriotic fervour, enthusiasm and national spirit.

The main function of the day was organised at Shaheed Himayun Muzzamil Memorial Government Degree College, Khanabal, where a large gathering of people joined the celebrations to commemorate the historic occasion and honour the sacrifices of the freedom fighters who laid down their lives for the nation's independence.

Minister for Education, Higher Education, Health and Medical Education and Social Welfare Departments, Sakeena Itoo, was the chief guest at the main function. She hoisted the National Flag and took the salute from the impressive ceremonial parade presented by contingents of the Jammu and Kashmir Police and paramilitary forces. The parade also featured contingents of NCC cadets and school children, who marched with discipline and enthusiasm, adding to the patriotic spirit of the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Sakeena Itoo



extended warm greetings to the people of Anantnag and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir on the 80th Independence Day. She paid rich tributes to the freedom fighters, martyrs and national heroes whose courage, sacrifice and determination made the country's independence possible. She emphasised the importance of preserving the values of freedom,

democracy and unity of the nation.

The Minister highlighted the achievements of the government in various sectors and outlined the initiatives being undertaken for overall development, welfare and empowerment of the people. She said that sustained efforts are being made to strengthen the infrastructure, improve delivery of public services and ensure

that the benefits of development reach every section of society. Speaking about the healthcare sector, the Minister underscored the government's commitment to strengthen healthcare infrastructure, improve medical facilities and ensure better and more accessible healthcare services for the people especially women, children and poorer sections of the society. She also highlighted the importance being accorded to education and other key sectors for building a stronger, prosperous and self-reliant society. The Minister affirmed that development of infrastructure, promotion of education, strengthening of healthcare services, creation of employment opportunities and improvement in civic amenities remain among the key priorities of the government. She called upon all stakeholders, particularly the students and youth, to contribute actively towards the progress and development of the district and the nation at large. Stressing the importance of Self Employment Schemes, the Minister said that the youth should come forward and avail the benefits of various flagship schemes so they become prosperous entrepreneurs and job providers.

DC Ganderbal hoists National Flag at Mini Secretariat on Independence Day

■ HT News Network



GANDERBAL, AUGUST 15: As part of the 80th Independence Day celebrations, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore hoisted the National Flag at Mini Secretariat, Ganderbal today. The National Flag was hoisted in the presence of district officers and employees. A ceremonial Guard of Honour was presented on the occasion, marking the celebration of Independence Day with patriotic fervour and great zeal and enthusiasm. The flag hoisting ceremony at the Mini Secretariat was attended by officers and employees from various departments, who joined the celebrations and reaffirmed their commitment towards discharging their responsibilities with dedication and contributing to the development and welfare of the district. The Deputy Commissioner conveyed his greetings to the officers and employees on the occasion and called upon them to continue working with commitment, sincerity and a spirit of public service.

SKUAST-Kashmir celebrates 80th Independence Day with Patriotic Fervour

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) celebrated the 80th Independence Day with great patriotic fervour and enthusiasm at its Shalimar Campus today.

The National Flag was ceremonially hoisted by Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, in the presence of University officers, Deans, Directors, faculty members, staff and students. The ceremony was followed by the singing of the National Anthem.

Addressing the gathering, the Vice Chancellor, reaffirmed SKUAST-Kashmir's commitment to advancing agricultural development, empowering farmers and contributing to the



national vision of Viksit Bharat. He emphasised that agricultural universities have a vital role in strengthening food and nutritional security, promoting sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture, fostering innovation and taking scientific knowledge and technologies to farming communities.

He also called upon the students to become responsible citizens and active contributors to nation-building. Emphasising the importance of holistic education, he encouraged

students to broaden their intellectual horizons by engaging with the history, literature and diverse knowledge traditions of the country alongside their professional studies.

The enthusiastic participation of students added vibrancy and pride to the celebrations, reflecting their spirit of patriotism, unity and national commitment. Their participation made the occasion a memorable expression of love for the nation and hope for its future.

Directorate of FCS&CA celebrates 80th Independence Day

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: Directorate of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Kashmir celebrated the 80th Independence Day with patriotic fervour and enthusiasm here today. The national flag was hoisted by Director, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Kashmir, Nazim Zai Khan. Joint Director, Shaheena Khan; Financial Advisor/Chief Accounts Officer, Peerzada Ahtishamul Haq; Deputy Director, Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat; officers and officials of the department were also present. On the occasion, the Director extended his warm greetings and heartfelt congratulations to the nation and all employees of the Department on the auspicious occasion of Independence Day.

AECO of DIPR Conferred Prestigious Award of Excellence for Outstanding Work and Contribution

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: Assistant Exhibition & Cultural Officer (AECO) of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Syed Shakeel Andrabi, popularly known as Syed Shakeel Shan, was conferred with a prestigious Award of Excellence by the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Shri Omar Abdullah, on the occasion of the 80th Independence Day at the grand Independence Day function held at Bakhshi Stadium, Srinagar, in recognition of his outstanding work, professional excellence and multidimensional contribution to broadcasting, literature, culture and public communication.

The prestigious recognition acknowledges Shan's sustained dedication, creative excellence and significant contribution across diverse fields. Over the years, he has established a



distinctive identity through his versatility as a broadcaster, anchor, writer, poet, music composer and cultural activist, earning appreciation from administrative, literary, cultural and media circles.

Through his professional work with the Department of Information and Public Relations, Shan has played an important role in taking government initiatives, public-awareness campaigns and cultural programmes closer to the people. His distinctive voice, effective communication skills, creative expression and

dynamic stage presence have made him a familiar and respected face in Jammu & Kashmir's public and cultural landscape.

Besides his official responsibilities, Shan has remained actively associated with broadcasting, literature, music and cultural activities. His multidimensional abilities have enabled him to contribute to a wide range of programmes and public initiatives, where he has consistently used communication and the performing arts as effective mediums of public engagement.

Overwhelmed by the honour, Shan expressed his gratitude to the Chief Minister and the entire administration for recognising his work and contribution. He particularly thanked Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Shri Anshul Garg, for his constant encouragement, support and appreciation, which, he said,

Celebrations for 80th Independence Day held across District Courts of Kashmir

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: The celebrations for 80th Independence Day were today held across all the District Court Complexes of Kashmir, during which the respective Principal District and Session Judges (PD&SJs) hoisted the National flag and took salute at the march-past.

At Srinagar: District Judiciary Srinagar, in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar, celebrated the 80th Independence Day with grandeur and patriotic fervor at the District Court Complex, Moominabad, Srinagar.

The celebration not only marked the nation's historic journey of freedom but also the role of the judiciary and legal services institutions in safeguarding the constitutional values for which the freedom fighters had struggled.

The programme commenced with the playing of National Song followed by hoisting of the National Flag by Haq Nawaz Zargar, Principal District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar (Chairman, DLSA Srinagar), followed by the National Anthem.

On the occasion, the officers and officials of the District Judiciary and DLSA Srinagar paid tribute to the freedom fighters and recalled the values of liberty, justice, equality

and fraternity enshrined in the Constitution of India.

As a gesture of appreciation and respect towards the personnel safeguarding the nation and maintaining law and order, sweets were distributed among the band police personnel.

The celebration was graced by Principal District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar with an address, extending warm greetings to all officers, officials, police personnel and members of the District Judiciary and commitment towards upholding the ideals of the Constitution, strengthening access to justice and serving the people with dedication and sincerity.

The celebration concluded with the playing of National Song and National Anthem.

At Ganderbal: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Ganderbal, in collaboration with the District Judiciary, celebrated the 80th Independence Day with patriotic fervor and enthusiasm at the District Court Complex, Ganderbal.

The National Flag was hoisted by Abdul Nasir, Principal District & Sessions Judge (PD&SJ), Ganderbal and Chairman, DLSA Ganderbal, in the presence of Learned Judicial Officers, Fozia Paul, Additional District and Sessions Judge, Ganderbal; Nusrat Ali Hakak, Chief Judicial Magistrate, Ganderbal; Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary,

DLSA Ganderbal; Farah Bashir, Principal Magistrate, Juvenile Justice Board Ganderbal,



Mahoor, Munsiff, Ganderbal; Syed Faheem, New Judicial Officer, officers and officials of the District Judiciary; Officers and Officials of Prosecution, staff members of DLSA Ganderbal, Legal Aid Defence Counsels, Panel Lawyers, Para Legal Volunteers and other staff members.

The flag hoisting was followed by the singing of the National Anthem, creating a solemn and dignified atmosphere marked by patriotism, unity and a deep sense of commitment to the constitutional values

of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. The celebrations were held in the spirit

institutions of justice, to uphold the rule of law, constitutional values and the principles of access to justice for all.

The occasion also highlighted the pivotal role of the District Legal Services Authority in ensuring access to free and competent legal services, promoting legal awareness and extending legal assistance to weaker and marginalized sections of society.

The Independence Day celebrations were also held at Munsiff Court, Kangan, where the National Flag was unfurled by Moonis Wahid, Munsiff, Kangan (Chairman, Tehsil Legal Services Committee, Kangan) in the presence of staff members of Munsiff Court Kangan and TLSC Kangan, Advocates, Panel Lawyers and Para Legal Volunteers of the Tehsil Legal Services Committee, Kangan.

The celebrations at Kangan were marked by patriotic spirit and reaffirmed the commitment of the District Judiciary and Legal Services Institutions towards strengthening access to justice, legal awareness and effective public service delivery.

The celebrations at both the venues concluded with a revered commitment to uphold the Constitution, strengthen the rule of law and continue working towards a just, inclusive and equitable society.

At Anantnag: Independence Day was celebrated with great patriotic fervor and

enthusiasm today at the District Court Complex Anantnag.

To mark the momentous occasion, the Principal District and Sessions Judge (PD&SJ) Anantnag, Tahir Khurshid Raina, hoisted the National Flag.

The ceremonial program commenced with the PD&SJ hoisting the tricolor, which was immediately followed by a proud and unison rendition of the National Anthem. As part of the official proceedings, a ceremonial Guard of Honor was presented to the PDJ, adding to the solemnity and dignity of the event.

In his inspiring speech, Tahir Khurshid Raina paid rich tributes to the nation's freedom fighters, deeply recalling their supreme sacrifices and unrelenting struggles that paved the way for the country's independence. He further emphasized that the Judiciary shall play its part by ensuring access to justice whereby the bar and the bench shall play the role of two faces of a coin. He added that both, the bar and the bench, shall ensure speedy disposal of cases.

The patriotic event witnessed the attendance of a large gathering from the legal fraternity. The ceremony took place in the presence of all Judicial Officers posted at the District Court Complex, Anantnag. Furthermore, Prosecuting Officers, members of the Bar, court staff, Para legal Volunteers and Legal Aid Defence Counsels were also



80th Independence Day celebrated with patriotic fervour across J&K UT

HT EDITORIAL

From the Freedom We Inherited to the Future We Must Build

As India marks its 80th Independence Day, the occasion calls for more than patriotic celebration. It is a moment of national introspection—an opportunity to measure the distance travelled since 1947 and, more importantly, to consider the responsibilities that accompany the freedom inherited from generations that fought for it.

The India of today is vastly different from the nation that emerged from colonial rule. It has transformed into a major economy, built formidable technological and scientific capabilities, strengthened its defence preparedness and emerged with a growing voice in global affairs. Yet the journey towards a truly developed nation remains unfinished.

At the centre of that journey must be India's youth. The aspirations of a young population will determine the character of the country in the decades ahead. Education, employment, entrepreneurship, innovation, sports and technological skills must therefore remain at the heart of national development. Young Indians need not merely opportunities to seek employment; they need an ecosystem that enables them to create enterprises, pursue research, embrace innovation and participate meaningfully in nation-building.

Equally important is the pursuit of strategic self-reliance. Recent security challenges have demonstrated that national strength increasingly depends upon indigenous technological and defence capabilities. Progress in the domestic production of aircraft, warships, ammunition, weapons and air-defence systems, alongside advances in artificial intelligence, drones, space and cyber technologies, represents an important dimension of India's emerging capabilities.

But self-reliance should be understood as confidence rather than isolation. A strong India must remain open to global partnerships, knowledge, investment and technological cooperation while developing the capacity to protect its vital national interests.

The inclusion of Vande Mataram in the principal Independence Day programme, as the National Song completes 150 years, also provides an opportunity to revisit the deeper meaning of patriotism. National symbols carry their greatest significance when they inspire citizens to protect the values that give the Republic its character—democracy, constitutionalism, equality, justice and respect for diversity.

The aspiration of Viksit Bharat 2047 must similarly extend beyond economic statistics and infrastructure. A developed India must be economically strong and technologically advanced, but it must also ensure quality education, accessible healthcare, productive employment, social security, environmental sustainability and dignity of life for its citizens. Development that does not reach the ordinary citizen cannot fully represent national progress.

The military ceremonial grandeur of Independence Day will naturally inspire pride, but the most enduring expression of freedom lies elsewhere—in a child receiving a quality education, a young person finding a dignified livelihood, an entrepreneur building a successful enterprise, a scientist pursuing a breakthrough and a citizen being able to live with security, opportunity and dignity.

At 80, India is not merely celebrating the achievement of independence; it is inheriting a new responsibility. The generation that fought for freedom gave the nation its sovereignty. The generations of today must give that freedom greater meaning through institutions that work, opportunities that expand and a society that remains united despite its extraordinary diversity.

The real significance of Independence Day, therefore, lies not only in remembering the India that won its freedom, but in building the India worthy of that freedom.



Wani Arfat

Electricity is considered one of the most significant necessities in our lives. At present, apart from the lighting of our homes, electricity is essential for educational purposes, for healthcare, for business, for agriculture, and for almost every activity in modern times. With a constant supply of electricity, people are able to study, work, and live peacefully. But in case there are interruptions in the supply of electricity, it affects everybody.

Tral is a beautiful place where one can see greenery, diligent inhabitants, and intelligent youth. It has good potential in education, agriculture, and tourism. However, the major issue, which has been disturbing the lives of people in this place, is the erratic supply of electricity. Power cuts, low voltage, and power failures have become common occurrences in Tral in recent times.

Several years ago, smart meters were implemented in Tral by the Power Development Department (PDD). People were promised that this move would enhance the electricity services and that there will be fewer power outages, transparency of the electricity system, and stable electricity supply for the consumers. Therefore, people installed smart meters in their houses and started to pay their bills on time.

On the other hand, most people believe that such expected improvements have failed to take place. For example, in many regions, there is a lack of electricity which comes without warning. At times, the power is off for several hours. Another major problem that people encounter is low voltage of power that affects households, shops, and offices. Consequently, more and more people are now questioning

whether the introduction of smart meters for improving the system will bring about the expected benefits.

Students are some of the greatest victims. In the present era, education requires electricity. Students require electricity for lighting, studying, completing their assignments through computers, attending online classes, and preparing for examinations. Power cuts interfere with their

Residents of Tral have performed their duties very well. They have used smart meters, cleared electricity bills on time and cooperated with authorities. Now they expect proper and uninterrupted electricity. This cannot be called an unjustified demand because it is the right of every consumer.

On the other hand, it is also necessary to concentrate on the solutions for the problems.



studies, waste their time, and create difficulties for them.

The small business people suffer a great deal due to power cuts. There are many shopkeepers who depend on electricity for conducting their businesses including computer centers, photocopy centers, tailoring centers, welding centers, mobile repairing centers, and so forth.

There are various other sectors such as agriculture and horticulture that require electricity and help in supporting many families in Tral. The tourism industry is also dependent on various public services. While scenic beauty of mountains is an attraction point, reliable electricity and proper amenities are also required for development of the tourism sector.

The health sector is impacted as well. Many elderly, patients, children, and families who use electrical devices require electricity. Electricity is not a luxury but a necessity for many.

If there is an overload in the electricity grid, if transformers have to be replaced, or if there is a need for replacing old power lines, then such problems must be sorted out at the earliest. Improved maintenance, improved repair services, increased voltage, and advance notice of power cuts would solve most of the problems of the public.

It is also our hope that the Power Development Department (PDD), the Chief Engineer, Kashmir Power Distribution, Superintending Engineer, Executive Engineer, Electric Division Pulwama, Assistant Executive Engineer, Sub-Division Tral, and other concerned officials may take a look at the electricity infrastructure in Tral and take necessary measures.

The District Administration Pulwama has its own role to play in improving the situation. Coordination between different departments, prompt action upon public grievances, and

monitoring of essential services could make things better.

We also respectfully request the Hon'ble MLA of Tral, Mr. Rafiq Ahmad Naik to raise this vital issue in concern to the relevant authorities. The citizens of Tral believe in their elected member and hope that he would help bring about an end to this long-drawn problem.

The citizens of Tral do not ask for any special treatment. They simply want a good and efficient supply of electricity in return of their taxes. They wish that students could study without being distracted, the patients be treated properly, business operations go smoothly and families live without any fear of disruption in power supply.

Quality of development cannot be judged merely by the number of new projects. Quality of living can reflect the real picture of development and electricity plays a major part in it.

We sincerely hope that the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, the Power Development Department, the District Administration, and all concerned authorities will take into consideration the concerns of the people of Tral and work out effective and long-lasting measures for the betterment of the electricity system.

The people of Tral do not want any additional demands from the government. They simply wish for a future where everyone has their power supply, all students can study without any disturbances, all businesses can operate smoothly, and everyone lives without any worries. This is not only a public demand but an expectation and an essential step towards development.

(Mohammad Arfat Wani is a writer, social activist, and medical student from Kuchmulla, Tral. He writes on social issues, culture, and public concerns with the aim of raising awareness and inspiring positive change. Email: wania6817@gmail.com)

Premature Leaf Fall in Walnut Trees Raises Concern



Javaid Bhat

The premature shedding of leaves from walnut trees has raised concern among growers and environmentalists, with the phenomenon being observed at a time when walnut fruits are still immature and enclosed in green hulls.

Normally, walnut trees retain their foliage well into the later part of the growing season, allowing the developing nuts to continue receiving

nutrients through photosynthesis. However, the unusually early yellowing and falling of leaves this year has left many trees partially bare while the walnuts are still far from maturity.

The early leaf fall could potentially affect nut development, size and quality, besides raising questions about the overall health of walnut orchards. Experts say that several factors including prolonged dry spells, irregular rainfall, temperature fluctuations, nutrient deficiencies, fungal diseases and other



environmental stresses can contribute to premature defoliation. However, the exact cause needs to be established through proper field inspection rather than speculation.

For walnut growing communities, the development is particularly worrying as walnuts are an important horticultural crop and a source of

livelihood for many families. If the phenomenon is widespread, it could have implications for this season's production and potentially for the long-term health of the trees.



Farmers have urged the Department of Horticulture and agricultural experts to conduct field-level surveys and scientific investigations to determine the reasons behind the premature leaf fall and issue appropriate advisories.

The phenomenon also serves as a reminder that changing weather patterns and emerging environmental stresses may be quietly affecting traditional crops. A timely scientific assessment, growers believe, is essential to protect walnut orchards before the problem becomes more widespread.

Why are new employees appointed from 2022 to 2026 not transferred in Haryana?



Dr. Vijay Garg

The primary objective of the Haryana government's online transfer policy is to ensure transparency, equal opportunity, fairness, and administrative efficiency in transfers. The online system was implemented to minimize the potential for arbitrary administrative discretion, favoritism, and disparate treatment, and to provide eligible employees with the opportunity to participate in the transfer process and submit their preferences under clear rules. However, the success of any policy is determined not simply by the formulation of rules, but by their logical, consistent, and fair implementation. In this context, the issue of employees appointed between 2022 and 2026 demands serious consideration.

The most important question is: when all teachers appointed during this period are required to participate in the mandatory online transfer process, why are employees appointed during the same period in other departments being left behind? If teachers can be included in the policy's mandatory participation, there must also be a clear, objective, and rational basis for a separate arrangement for other eligible employees appointed during the same

period. The demand here is not for an employee to be transferred to a location of their choice, but for an equal opportunity to participate in the process if eligible, to exercise their options, and to be considered according to the rules.

In this context, provisions such as the cut-off date of May 23, 2025, the "notional category," and the "first online transfer drive for each cadre" used in the 2026 Model Online Transfer Policy become important. To understand these provisions, it is necessary to examine the actual administrative history of the respective cadre. If a cadre is conducting its first online transfer drive in 2026, its situation may be different from that of a cadre that has been conducting online transfer drives since 2017. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the actual policy history of all cadres before applying the same cut-off to all cadres.

The question of equality isn't limited to teachers and other departments. The situation of employees being allocated offline positions despite the implementation of an online transfer policy and the conduct of online transfer campaigns in some departments also warrants serious consideration. The example of Haryana's Animal Husbandry Department is significant in this context. The department has implemented an online transfer policy for the VLDA cadre since 2020, and two online transfer campaigns have already been conducted under it. According to departmental information, approximately 50 percent of VLDA cadre employees appointed after 2020 were allocated offline positions. If this figure is corroborated by departmental records, the government should clarify

the basis for such widespread offline station allocation despite the already existing online transfer policy and campaigns.

The issue becomes even more serious when such employees' appointment letters or station allocation documents stipulate that they must participate in the next online transfer campaign. If the government itself stipulated that employees must participate in the next online transfer process when assigning them offline stations, then excluding the same employee from the online campaign based on a new interpretation or order later raises serious questions of administrative justice and legitimate expectation.

If an employee accepted such a condition and assumed charge at an offline station, it was a natural expectation that he or she would be required to participate in the next online transfer process. If the same employee is subsequently excluded from that process, it becomes not merely a matter of transfer, but a question of policy consistency and administrative credibility. Clarity is essential between the condition initially set by the government and its subsequent interpretation.

In particular, the status of employees who have previously participated in online transfer campaigns should be seriously considered. They followed the government's prescribed procedures, provided options, and participated in the online system. If employees appointed between 2022 and 2026 are not compulsorily included in the current campaign, the choices and opportunities of employees who have already participated in the online process will certainly be affected. In such a situation, it is natural to question what significance their previous participation will have in the current process. Making an employee a part of the online system first and then limiting their options in the next process under the same system raises questions about policy continuity.

India at 80 : Freedom Is Not a Memory, It Is a Responsibility

As the nation celebrates its 80th Independence Day, the real measure of freedom lies in how deeply we protect dignity, equality, democracy and opportunity for every citizen.



By Bisma Ashraf

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15: As India celebrates its 80th Independence Day, the occasion offers more than an opportunity to remember the sacrifices of the freedom struggle. It is also a moment to ask a more demanding question: what have we done with the freedom we inherited, and what kind of country are we leaving for the generations to come?

On August 15, 1947, India emerged from colonial rule amid extraordinary hope but also the immense tragedy of Partition. Millions were displaced, families separated and countless lives disrupted. The new nation began its journey not as a finished idea, but as a promise—to build a democratic, inclusive and just society founded on citizenship, equality and dignity.

Seventy-nine years later, India has travelled a remarkable distance. It has built strong institutions, expanded its economy, advanced in science and technology, strengthened its global presence and transformed millions of lives. Yet independence was never meant to be a destination reached once and for all. Political freedom was only the beginning; social, economic and intellectual freedom remain an unfinished national project.

The tricolour that rises every Independence Day therefore represents more than national pride. It carries a responsibility to ensure that freedom is experienced in the everyday lives of citizens.

A country cannot claim the full meaning of freedom when poverty denies opportunity, when discrimination limits dignity, when unemployment destroys aspirations or when access to education and healthcare remains unequal. A child may possess the constitutional right to education, yet still be deprived of a quality school. A young person may have talent but lack meaningful employment. A farmer may feed the nation while confronting debt,

climate uncertainty and unstable incomes.

This is why patriotism must go beyond slogans and ceremonies. It is reflected in the teacher who refuses to give up on a struggling student, the doctor who serves a remote community, the journalist who asks difficult questions, the citizen who rejects corruption and the neighbour who respects another person's dignity.

A mature democracy should not fear criticism. Responsible questioning of institutions and policies is not an act of disloyalty; it can be an expression of concern for the country. Democracy becomes stronger when disagreement is possible without hatred, when institutions command respect and when citizens can distinguish information from manipulation.

A Young India Facing a New Reality

India's young population is often described as its greatest strength, but demographics alone cannot create prosperity. Young Indians need quality education, meaningful employment, healthcare, digital access and the freedom to imagine a future beyond mere survival.

The young Indian of 2026 lives simultaneously in two worlds. There is the physical world of family, community, education and employment, and the digital world of social media, artificial intelligence, online learning and an endless stream of information.

Technology has opened extraordinary opportunities, but it has also created new challenges. Artificial intelligence can transform healthcare, education, research and industry, while raising serious questions about privacy, employment, accountability and ethics.

India's technological progress must therefore remain people-centred. A digitally advanced nation must also be socially responsible. Technology should make life safer, healthier and more accessible—not reduce citizens merely to data.

The India of the future cannot be measured only by highways, satellites, skyscrapers or digital transactions. Its real progress must also be measured by whether a child in a remote village can dream freely, whether an elderly person can obtain healthcare with dignity and whether persons with disabilities can participate fully in society.

Kashmir and the Meaning of Belonging

In Kashmir, Independence Day carries a particularly complex emotional resonance. Patriotism here is intertwined with landscape, memory, conflict, migration, grief, hope and the ordinary aspiration for a peaceful and secure life.

Kashmir's contribution to India's story cannot be reduced to its scenic beauty or ceremonial references. Its people are an integral part of the country's cultural, intellectual and democratic fabric. Its poets, artisans, students, farmers, teachers, soldiers, entrepreneurs and families share aspirations that are universal—education, employment, security, dignity and hope for the future.

For many people in the region, freedom is also experienced through everyday opportunities: the

freedom to study, work, travel, speak, create, gather and hope.

A peaceful future requires listening to people with patience and acknowledging their experiences. National unity becomes stronger when dignity is protected and differences are accommodated.

Unity does not require uniformity. India's strength

increasingly be shaped by climate change. Heatwaves, floods, water scarcity, pollution, unpredictable rainfall and shrinking green spaces are no longer distant environmental concerns. They directly affect food security, health, employment and livelihoods.

Protecting India means protecting its rivers, forests, soil, wetlands, biodiversity and fragile mountain

Remembering the Struggle, Building the Future
India's freedom struggle was never the story of a single leader or a single movement. It included mass movements, revolutionary resistance, constitutional debates, workers' struggles, farmers' movements, women's participation, literary awakening and countless acts of courage by ordinary people.

Many of those who contributed remain unnamed. Their stories survive through family memories, letters, photographs and local histories.

Remembering them should not mean living permanently in the past. It should remind every generation that freedom and democracy require vigilance and responsibility.

The India of 2047 is already being shaped today. Its future will depend on whether the country invests in education, strengthens institutions, protects the environment, encourages curiosity and creates opportunities for all.

It will also depend on how Indians speak about one another. If fellow citizens are constantly treated as rivals or threats, the national imagination becomes smaller. If they are regarded as partners in a shared future, India's possibilities become greater.

The Freedom We Must Practise

When the tricolour rises today, the ceremony will honour the sacrifices of the past. But its deeper meaning will be determined by what citizens do after the speeches end.

Independence asks us to defend truth when falsehood is convenient, protect the vulnerable when indifference is easier and remain compassionate in an age increasingly dominated by anger.

It asks the educated to share knowledge, the powerful to accept accountability and the fortunate to remember those who remain excluded.

Most importantly, it reminds us that citizenship is not a spectator sport. Every decision, every action, every word and even every silence contributes to the kind of India we create.

The tricolour offers a simple but profound lesson: countless threads hold it together. No single thread can become a flag on its own. India's diversity works in much the same way. Its strength lies not in uniformity but in the ability of different people to remain connected through a shared national purpose.

As India marks 80 years of independence, the challenge is not simply to become more powerful or prosperous. It is to become more just, peaceful, inclusive and humane.

The freedom won in 1947 must continue to evolve in 2026 and beyond.

Because independence is not merely the freedom India achieved once. It is the freedom every generation must deepen, protect and make more meaningful for the next.

— Bisma Ashraf is a regular contributor to Headlines Today



lies in its extraordinary diversity and its ability to create a shared national future without erasing different histories and identities.

The Republic Is Built Every Day

The republic is not built only in Parliament, courts and government offices. It is also built in classrooms, hospitals, workplaces, streets and homes.

It is built when a teacher opens a book for a child, when a citizen protects a public space, when someone helps another person access a government service, when a blood donor saves a life and when parents encourage their daughter to pursue education.

Responsible citizenship also means following rules when nobody is watching, paying taxes honestly, respecting workers, protecting public property, verifying information before sharing it and caring for the environment.

The strength of democracy depends not only on elected representatives but also on the conduct of citizens. A society dominated by anger, suspicion and permanent outrage risks weakening the very freedoms it claims to defend.

Freedom Must Include a Healthy Environment

The next chapter of India's development will

ecosystems. Economic growth cannot remain sustainable if the natural systems supporting life are destroyed.

Climate responsibility must therefore become an essential part of national development. Solar energy, efficient public transport, water conservation, climate-resilient agriculture and responsible urban planning are investments not only in the environment but also in India's long-term security and wellbeing.

The Work of Equality Remains Unfinished

Independence gave India the freedom to govern itself, while the Constitution provided a framework of rights, justice and democratic citizenship. But constitutional ideals become meaningful only when citizens experience them in their everyday lives.

Caste discrimination, gender inequality, prejudice, violence against women, exploitation of workers and exclusion of persons with disabilities remain reminders that freedom is incomplete when dignity is unequal.

Equality cannot be viewed as charity. It is a democratic necessity. Every citizen denied education, employment, healthcare or justice represents a loss not only to an individual but to the nation as a whole.

Independence Day Musings on Viksit Bharat



Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee

Independence Day is never merely a date on the national calendar. It is a moment of collective remembrance, reflection and renewed resolve. Every year, when the tricolour rises against the morning sky and the familiar strains of the national anthem fill the air, India pauses to remember the long journey from colonial subjugation to freedom. Yet Independence Day also asks us a more difficult question: What are we going to do with the freedom we inherited? The answer to that question increasingly finds expression in the idea of Viksit Bharat—a developed India that seeks not merely economic prosperity but a more equitable, educated, technologically advanced, environmentally sustainable and morally responsible society. On Independence Day, therefore, the most meaningful question is not simply, "How far have we come?" It is also, "What kind of India do we wish to build?" The answer must be an India where development reaches the last person, where opportunity is not determined by birth, where knowledge is respected, where diversity becomes a source of strength, where nature is protected, and where freedom is accompanied by responsibility. That would be the finest tribute to India's freedom fighters. That would be the true spirit of Independence Day. And that would make Viksit Bharat not merely a vision for 2047, but a continuing promise of a better India. The dream of a developed India is not entirely new. It can be traced to the aspirations of the freedom movement itself. The leaders of India's independence struggle did not fight simply to replace one set of rulers with another. They imagined a country in which poverty would be reduced, education would spread, social inequalities would diminish and ordinary citizens would acquire dignity and opportunity. Mahatma Gandhi spoke of an India in which the weakest would have a meaningful place; Rabindranath Tagore dreamt of a country where the mind was without fear and knowledge was free; Jawaharlal Nehru envisioned a modern, scientific India; Dr B. R. Ambedkar insisted that political democracy could not survive without social and economic democracy. These diverse visions continue to illuminate the contemporary idea of Viksit Bharat.

A developed nation cannot be measured by the height of its buildings alone. Skyscrapers, expressways, airports and digital networks are visible symbols of progress, but development must ultimately be measured by the quality of human life. A truly Viksit Bharat must be a country where a child in a remote village receives quality education comparable to that available in a metropolitan city; where healthcare does not become a privilege of wealth; where women can move freely and participate equally in economic and public life; where farmers enjoy dignity and economic security; where young people can find meaningful

employment; and where no citizen feels excluded because of poverty, geography, language, caste or social background.

India's economic transformation provides grounds for optimism. The country has emerged as one of the world's major economies and has developed significant capabilities in information technology, pharmaceuticals, space science, digital services, manufacturing and entrepreneurship. The expansion of digital public infrastructure has transformed the everyday lives of millions. Digital payments, online banking, electronic identification and direct benefit transfers have brought the state closer to citizens. The growth of start-ups has demonstrated that innovation is no longer confined to a handful of traditional industrial centres. A young population, if properly educated and skilled, can become one of India's greatest assets. But demographic strength can become a challenge if employment opportunities do not keep pace with aspirations. India's youth are ambitious, connected and increasingly conscious of global possibilities. They do not merely seek jobs; they seek dignity, creativity and participation. Viksit Bharat therefore requires an education system that goes beyond examination-oriented learning. Universities and colleges must become centres of critical thinking, research, creativity and innovation. Students must learn not only what to think but how to think. The future belongs to those who can combine technological competence with imagination, ethical judgment and human sensitivity. The relationship between education and national development deserves particular attention. India has one of the world's largest higher-education systems, yet the quality of education remains uneven. There is a need to bridge the gap between privileged institutions and ordinary colleges, between urban and rural education, and between academic knowledge and employable skills. Mother-tongue education and India's extraordinary linguistic diversity must also be respected. A developed India should not mean an India that abandons its languages and cultural traditions in imitation of the West. Rather, it should be an India confident enough to modernise without becoming culturally rootless. Technology will undoubtedly play a decisive role in the making of Viksit Bharat. Artificial intelligence, robotics, biotechnology, quantum computing, renewable energy and space technology are reshaping the global economy. India has already demonstrated remarkable achievements in space exploration and digital innovation. The challenge now is to ensure that technological progress remains inclusive. Artificial intelligence should create opportunities rather than deepen unemployment and inequality. Digitalisation should empower citizens rather than exclude those without digital literacy. Technology must remain a means of human development, not an end in itself.

The idea of Viksit Bharat must also include rural India. The village cannot remain a romantic symbol of tradition while economic opportunities remain concentrated in cities. Rural development must include modern infrastructure, reliable electricity, internet connectivity, irrigation, healthcare, schools, storage facilities, transportation and access to markets. Agriculture itself



needs technological and institutional transformation. Farmers should have access to modern knowledge, climate-resilient crops, better irrigation, efficient supply chains and fair markets. The future Indian village should be connected to the world without losing its social and cultural vitality.

Women will be central to India's development story. No country can become genuinely developed if half of its population is prevented from realising its full potential. Women's participation in education, science, business, politics, administration, agriculture and the professions must increase. Financial independence and safety are equally important. India's progress in women's entrepreneurship, self-help groups, education and political representation offers hope, but much remains to be done. Viksit Bharat must be a nation in which a daughter's aspirations are not considered extraordinary but entirely normal. Equally important is the question of social harmony. India's greatest strength is its diversity, but diversity requires mutual respect. A developed nation cannot be permanently divided by suspicion and hostility. India's Constitution provides the ethical and legal framework for coexistence—justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. These are not merely constitutional words; they are the foundations of national development. Economic growth without social peace is fragile. Scientific advancement without ethical responsibility can become dangerous. Political freedom without respect for others can degenerate into conflict. The environmental dimension of Viksit Bharat is perhaps one of the greatest challenges of our time. India cannot repeat the environmentally destructive path followed by some industrialised countries. Climate change, floods, droughts, heatwaves, air pollution, water scarcity, deforestation and biodiversity loss already affect millions. Recent environmental disasters have reminded us that development must be sustainable. India's future cities

must be cleaner, greener and more resilient. Renewable energy, public transportation, water conservation, responsible consumption and sustainable agriculture must become integral components of national planning.

At the same time, India's cities need a new imagination. Urbanisation is inevitable, but uncontrolled urban growth produces congestion, pollution, inequality and alienation. The cities of Viksit Bharat should be designed around people rather than merely around vehicles and concrete. Public spaces, parks, affordable housing, efficient public transport and accessible civic services are essential. Technology can make cities smarter, but smartness should be measured by how comfortably and safely ordinary citizens live. Healthcare is another essential pillar. The experience of the pandemic demonstrated both the vulnerabilities and the capabilities of India's health system. A developed India must strengthen primary healthcare, preventive medicine, rural healthcare and public health infrastructure. Medical technology and advanced hospitals are important, but so are nutrition, sanitation, clean drinking water and awareness. The health of a nation cannot be reduced to the number of hospitals it possesses; it must be reflected in the well-being and life expectancy of its people.

Viksit Bharat also requires ethical citizenship. Development cannot be the responsibility of governments alone. Citizens have a role in preserving public property, following laws, paying taxes honestly, protecting the environment, rejecting corruption and respecting the dignity of others. The quality of a democracy depends not only on the quality of its institutions but also on the character of its citizens. Independence Day therefore provides an opportunity to ask not only what the nation can give us but also what we can contribute to the nation. The concept of patriotism itself deserves thoughtful reconsideration. Genuine patriotism is not merely emotional

celebration. It is visible in everyday responsibility. A teacher who inspires a disadvantaged child, a doctor who serves in a remote area, a scientist who pursues research, a farmer who feeds the country, a worker who performs an honest day's labour, a student who studies sincerely and a citizen who helps a neighbour—all participate in nation-building. The flag belongs equally to all of them. India's global role is also changing. A Viksit Bharat will increasingly be expected to contribute to global peace, sustainable development, technological cooperation and humanitarian causes. India's civilisational tradition has long emphasised the interconnectedness of humanity.

The Sanskrit expression Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam—the world is one family—acquired renewed resonance in contemporary diplomacy. A developed India should be economically strong but also compassionate; technologically advanced but ethically grounded; strategically confident but committed to peace.

The road to 2047, the centenary of India's independence, should therefore be viewed not simply as a race for economic numbers but as a national transformation. GDP matters, infrastructure matters, industrial production matters and technological capacity matters. But alongside these measurable achievements, India must cultivate trust, justice, knowledge, compassion and civic responsibility. The real meaning of Viksit Bharat lies in combining material progress with human progress. Independence Day is thus a bridge between memory and aspiration. We remember the sacrifices of those who secured freedom, but remembrance becomes meaningful only when it inspires responsibility. The generation of freedom fighters inherited a colonised country and gave us political independence. The present generation inherits a free but unfinished nation and must give future generations a more prosperous, peaceful and humane India.

As the tricolour rises this Independence Day, the dream of Viksit Bharat should therefore become more than a governmental slogan. It should become a shared national ethic. It should live in our classrooms, laboratories, farms, offices, factories, homes and public institutions. It should inspire the young, empower women, strengthen villages, modernise cities, protect nature, encourage scientific inquiry and defend constitutional values. India's journey has never been easy. Yet its extraordinary diversity, youthful energy, democratic tradition, civilisational depth and growing technological capacity provide reasons for hope. The India of 2047 will be created not in a single spectacular moment but through millions of daily decisions and acts of responsibility.

**International Tagore Awardee
multilingual writer Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee
is a former Affiliate Faculty of English
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond and President of Kolkata Indian
American Society India. He can be reached at
profratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com**



The Best Oils for Managing Cholesterol, According to a Dietitian

1. Extra-Virgin Olive Oil

Extra-virgin olive oil is rich in monounsaturated fats that promote heart health. “Oils rich in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats can help increase high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol while lowering LDL cholesterol,” cardiologist Brett Sealove, MD, FACC, FAHA, told HEALTH.1

It also contains antioxidant polyphenols that help protect blood vessels and reduce inflammation. These compounds may also help prevent the oil from breaking down when heated.2

Despite common belief, extra-virgin olive oil can be used for most home cooking. Typical stovetop temperatures fall within its smoke point range of about 350-410 degrees Fahrenheit.2

Best uses:
Salad dressings
Drizzling over vegetables
Sautéing
Grilling

2. Avocado Oil

Like olive oil, avocado oil contains heart-healthy monounsaturated fats that support cholesterol balance and reduce LDL levels. Its mild flavor and high smoke point make it one of the most versatile heart-healthy oils.

“Oils with higher smoke points help prevent oxidation and the formation of harmful byproducts during cooking,” Michelle Routhenstein, MS, RD, CDCES, CDN, a preventive cardiology dietitian, told HEALTH.

With a smoke point of up to about 520 degrees Fahrenheit, avocado oil is a reliable option for higher-heat cooking.3

Best uses:
Roasting vegetables
Sautéing meats
Grilling and high-heat cooking



3. Canola Oil

Canola oil is low in saturated fat and contains a mix of monounsaturated fats and plant-based omega-3 fats that support heart health.4

Research shows that replacing saturated fats with oils like canola may help reduce LDL cholesterol and the risk of heart disease.5 Sealove recommends versatile oils like canola for everyday cooking because of their neutral flavor and moderate smoke point.

Best uses:
Sautéing
Baking
Everyday cooking

4. Soybean Oil

Soybean oil is one of the most affordable and widely used cooking oils. It contains polyunsaturated fats along with alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), a plant-based omega-3 fat.

“Soybean oil is one of the few commonly used and



affordable oils that contains a significant amount of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), an essential fatty acid that can be converted to heart-healthy, omega-3 fatty acids in the body,” Joan Salge Blake, EDD, RDN, LDN, FAND, a dietitian and nutrition professor at Boston University, told HEALTH.

Evidence suggests that consuming about 1.5 tablespoons of soybean oil daily may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.6

Best uses:
Stir-frying
Baking
Everyday cooking

5. Walnut Oil

Walnut oil provides alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), an omega-3 fatty acid that supports heart health. Some studies suggest it may help lower inflammation and could offer protective effects against certain cancers.7

Because walnut oil oxidizes easily when heated, it's best used in cold or low-heat applications.8

Best uses:
Salad dressings
Drizzling over cooked vegetables
In dips

How Do Cooking Oils Affect Your Cholesterol?

The type of fat in cooking oil can play a key role in cholesterol levels and heart health.

Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats help lower LDL cholesterol

Omega-3 fats support heart health and reduce inflammation

Saturated fats can raise LDL cholesterol

Trans fats raise LDL and lower HDL cholesterol

“Saturated fats and trans fats have the opposite effect of healthy oils, raising LDL cholesterol and, in the case of trans fats, lowering protective HDL,” Sealove said.

Which Oils Should You Limit for Your Cholesterol?

Some oils may raise LDL cholesterol when used frequently because they are high in saturated or trans fats:5

Coconut oil
Palm oil
Butter
Beef tallow

Partially Hydrogenated Oils (Trans Fats)

What Common Mistakes Should You Watch For?

According to Salge Blake, one common misconception is that all plant-based oils are heart-healthy. “They are not. Coconut oil has the highest percentage of artery-clogging saturated fat, as compared to other oils, even though it is sometimes touted on social media for being good for you,” she said.

Sealove said another mistake is using the same oil



for every cooking method without considering its smoke point. He explained that unrefined oils like extra-virgin olive oil are best for dressings and finishing, while refined oils are better suited for high-heat cooking.

“Using one oil for every cooking method or overheating it beyond its smoke point can destroy nutrients and create harmful compounds,” Sealove said. “Storing oil in places with too much light or heat can also degrade its quality and health benefits,” he added.

For everyday cooking, Sealove recommends choosing oils with less than 4 grams of saturated fat per tablespoon and avoiding partially hydrogenated oils. Keeping a few healthy oils on hand helps match cooking methods and flavor needs.

Health.com

Can Microneedling Your Scalp Actually Help Regrow Your Hair?

If you've searched for hair loss treatments lately, you've probably come across scalp microneedling. By creating tiny injuries in the skin, it's thought to stimulate hair follicles and improve the effectiveness of topical treatments. But it's not a magic fix, and it doesn't work for every type of hair loss.

How Does Scalp Microneedling Help Hair Loss?

Microneedling is primarily used to treat hair loss caused by androgenetic alopecia. It may also help treat some hair loss associated with alopecia areata, an autoimmune condition that affects the hair follicles.

Microneedling may not be an effective treatment for everyone experiencing hair loss.1

Microneedling the scalp creates microscopic punctures in the skin that trigger a healing response and help reduce dihydrotestosterone (DHT) levels—the hormone that causes androgenetic alopecia.

As the skin on your scalp tries to heal itself, it may also promote hair growth in several ways:23

Stimulates hair follicles: Microneedling stimulates cells at the base of your hair follicles, creating more proteins that help regulate the hair growth cycle, reduce DHT, and reactivate dormant hair follicles.

Boosts collagen: As your skin heals from microneedling, it stimulates collagen production. Collagen may help improve the health and structure of your hair follicles, potentially leading to thicker hair and less breakage.4

Increases absorption of topical hair loss treatments: The small punctures left by microneedling may help hair loss treatments—like minoxidil and platelet-rich plasma (PRP)—penetrate deeper into the skin.2

Improves blood circulation: Microneedling can increase blood flow to the scalp, helping deliver more oxygen and nutrients to hair follicles. Healthier hair follicles may help promote hair growth.

Most research on microneedling for hair loss includes trials that combine microneedling with topical treatments.5 Microneedling is likely more effective in treating hair loss when used with minoxidil or PRP.6

How Does It Work?



Microneedling devices are motorized, pen-shaped devices that have a removable cartridge of needles at the tip. The needles can range from 0.5 to 1.5 millimeters in length.

These devices are considered medical devices and should only be used by a trained healthcare professional, like a dermatologist (a doctor specializing in skin, hair, and nail conditions).3

The needles vibrate and penetrate the skin. As it hits your skin, the needles puncture the outer layer (the epidermis) and leave tiny wounds. These wounds trigger your body's healing process, causing an increase in collagen and other proteins that help heal the hair follicles and stimulate hair growth.3

There are no standardized procedures or protocols for microneedling

treatments for hair loss. However, here's what you may expect during a hair loss microneedling treatment:73

Topical anesthetic cream is applied to the scalp 15-45 minutes before treatment to help numb the skin.

Your skin is cleansed with a topical antiseptic, like alcohol or povidone-iodine, to help prevent infection.

The dermatologist will glide the microneedling device over your skin in various directions for 15-20 minutes. You may notice light pressure or a scratching sensation.

As tiny wounds form on your skin, pinpoint bleeding and some redness will appear.

The dermatologist will wash away any remaining blood on the skin and apply an antibiotic cream to help prevent infection.

If combining with topical hair loss treatments, your dermatologist will apply minoxidil to the scalp or inject PRP into the affected area.

Can You Do Microneedling At Home?

Microneedling at home is typically done with a derma roller. This small device has a cylinder covered in tiny needles that you roll across the skin.

Unlike medical-grade derma rollers, this device has shorter needles and can't penetrate deep into the skin to stimulate hair follicles. Instead, it mainly helps exfoliate the skin by removing dead skin cells.

For hair loss, this effect may enhance the absorption of topical hair treatments such as minoxidil.3

Using a derma roller at home is a more affordable microneedling option. However, you can put yourself at a higher risk of infection and scarring. Here are a few tips for safely using a derma roller:

Disinfect your derma roller before and after each use with 70% isopropyl alcohol.8

Cleanse your skin before using a derma roller.7

Never share your device with other people.7

Apply gentle pressure when rolling. The derma roller punctures skin at different angles, making it more likely to tear your skin.3

Is It Safe?

The side effects of microneedling are usually minor and go away within a few days or weeks.

Microneedling done incorrectly can damage your skin or cause infections. Practitioners should always use new, clean microneedling cartridges to avoid spreading infections.7

Health.com

