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HEADLINES

TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



DDC Shopian convenes
review meeting to assess
status of approved Projects

P:4

Motorcyclist dies in Baramulla truck collision

HT NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA, AUG 21 :A motorcyclist was killed after his motorcycle collided with a truck in the Kanispora area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Friday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the rider sustained injuries in the accident and was shifted to a hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead on arrival.

The deceased was identified as Mudasar Rasool Ganai, son of Ghulam Rasool Ganai, a resident of Dangarpora, Sopore.

Meanwhile, police have taken up an investigation into the incident—(KNO)

Man, 42, found dead in Sgr's Dughwan Forest

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, AUG 21: The body of a 42-year-old man was recovered from the Dughwan forest area on the outskirts of Srinagar early Friday morning, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the man's body was found in the Dughwan forest area and was taken to PHC Harwan, where doctors declared him brought dead.

He said the body was later shifted to SMHS Hospital for further medical examination. The deceased was identified as Mohammad Lateef (42), son of Mohammad Aalam, a resident of Thugla in Rajouri district.

Meanwhile, an investigation has been initiated and further proceedings in the matter are underway—(KNO)

Teenager drowns in Kangan s Nallah Sindh

HT NEWS NETWORK

KANGAN, AUG 21: An 18-year-old youth drowned in Nallah Sindh near Kangan in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district while taking a bath on Friday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the youth drowned in Nallah Sindh near Dumping Park in the Kijpara area of Kangan.

He said that soon after the incident, police, along with local residents and the SDRF, rushed to the spot and launched a search operation to trace the missing youth.

The deceased was later identified as Danish (18), a resident of Rangpora Soura, Srinagar. Meanwhile, an investigation has been initiated, while the rescue operation is underway—(KNO)

Lady rider died, pillion critical in Ramban tanker crash

HT NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN, AUG 21 :A lady riding a scooter was killed while her pillion rider was injured after their two-wheeler was hit by an unidentified tanker on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway in Ramban district on Friday.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the accident took place in the Seri area when the tanker, travelling from Srinagar towards

SEE ON P-2

We Should Work to Make India as Global Hub for Space Innovation : PM Modi Meets Space Startups

PM urges startups to expand applications, attract global talent and investment, and make space technology useful for everyday life

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 21: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday interacted with CEOs and founders of 20 Indian space startups and called for greater innovation, cross-sector collaboration and global outreach as India seeks to strengthen its position in the

international space industry. The startup leaders highlighted rapid advances in areas including rockets, satellites, propulsion, space intelligence, debris removal, AI-powered weather services and other emerging technologies, while appreciating the government's decision to open the space sector to private participation. Modi encouraged

companies to develop applications that improve everyday life and collaborate with sectors such as agriculture and environment, while urging the creation of an ecosystem that makes India a global destination for space talent, companies and investment.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi interacted with CEOs and Founders of 20 Space Startups at Seva Teerth, earlier today. CEOs of leading companies in the space sector working in diverse fields ranging from building rockets and reusable semi-cryogenic launch vehicles, avionics, satellites, advanced propulsion system, space and defence intelligence, removing space debris, AI-powered hyperlocal weather and climate intelligence, among others, participated in the interaction. They highlighted the rapid progress being made by India's private space industry and shared their vision for the sector's future. They shared that they have put in significant time and effort in building their capabilities and required

SEE ON P-2

Agriculture Emerging as Jammu Kashmir's Next Startup Frontier: LG Manoj Sinha

LG urges youth to turn local challenges into enterprises and calls for stronger participation of women in entrepreneurship

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, AUGUST 21: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday inaugurated new infrastructure at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and

Technology (SKUAST)-Jammu and launched a Startup Outreach Programme, calling agriculture and allied sectors the next major frontier for youth-led innovation and entrepreneurship. Sinha urged young people to develop solutions tailored to Jammu Kashmir's own farming, climate and market challenges rather than simply copying foreign models, while emphasising cold chains, value addition, branding and digital marketplaces as emerging opportunities. He said more than 150 students had been selected for idea incubation

SEE ON P-2

Drug peddler arrested in Shopian; Contraband substances recovered: Police

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, AUG 21 :Continuing its sustained efforts to eradicate the menace of drug abuse from society, J&K Police arrested a drug peddler in Shopian and recovered contraband substances from his possession.

According to a statement issued to the news

Artists, Filmmakers Seek Revival of Cultural Institutions in J&K

Delegation urges stronger financial support, sustainable cultural policy and revival of Doordarshan and AIR Srinagar

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: A delegation of artists and filmmakers met Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir

SEE ON P-2

Omar Abdullah Defends Rahul Gandhi's Opposition Role, Urges Political Restraint on Faith Issues

J&K CM says questioning the government is the Opposition's constitutional responsibility and calls for protection of public sentiment

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday backed Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, saying questioning the government and holding it accountable were fundamental responsibilities of the Opposition. Abdullah said Gandhi was performing the role expected of an Opposition leader and should continue raising issues before the government, while also urging

political leaders to exercise restraint on sensitive

SEE ON P-2

HT BOTTOM NEWS

Jitendra Singh Calls for Accessible, Trusted and Sustainable Innovation at BRICS Meet

India pushes deeper cooperation in frontier technologies, research, startups and scientific talent under its 2026 BRICS Presidency

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

CHENNAI, AUGUST 21: Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh on

growing scientific and technological outreach under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Singh said India's BRICS Presidency was focused on building resilience, innovation,

innovation financing, talent mobility, research infrastructure, startup partnerships and capacity building to build a future-ready innovation ecosystem responsive to global challenges. The 14th BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Ministerial Meeting began here with an inaugural address by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, who defined India's growing global outreach in science, technology and innovation under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Welcoming the delegations from BRICS member countries, Dr. Jitendra Singh said India has chosen "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability" as the theme of its BRICS Presidency in 2026.

Thursdays called for stronger international cooperation to ensure that emerging technologies remain accessible, affordable, trusted and sustainable as he addressed the 14th BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation Ministerial Meeting in Chennai. Highlighting India's

cooperation and sustainability, with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum technology, biotechnology, advanced materials and geospatial systems creating new opportunities. He invited BRICS partners to deepen cooperation in frontier research,

SEE ON P-2

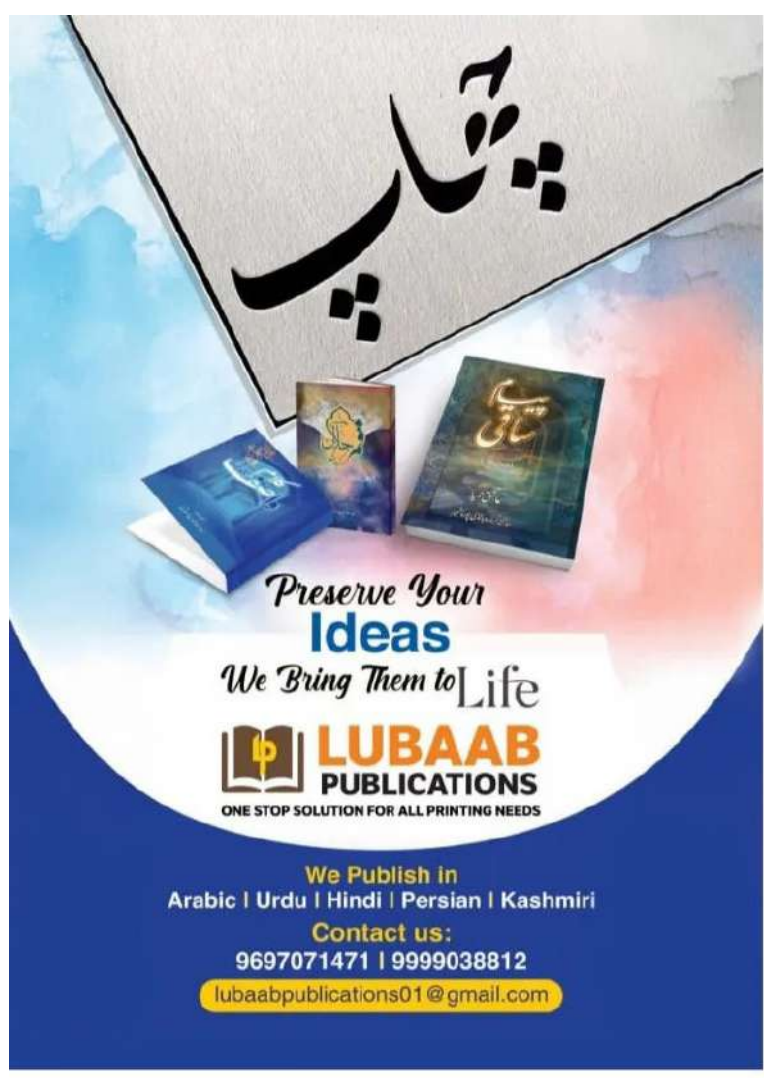
Altaf Bukhari Welcomes US Envoy's J&K Remarks, Seeks Greater American Engagement

Apni Party chief says comments could encourage a review of the travel advisory and calls for US technology support to boost J&K sectors

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari has welcomed US Ambassador to India Sergio Goro's remarks describing Jammu and Kashmir as an "important part of India" and an "incredibly beautiful place", saying the comments could encourage greater international engagement with the region. Bukhari said the Ambassador's indication that the US could review its travel advisory for

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Meanwhile, an investigation has been initiated and efforts are underway to trace and identify the vehicle and its driver—(KNO)

Model Recruitment Rules for GMCs to be notified by 30th September

Sakeena Itoo reviews progress on formulation of MRRs

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: The Model Recruitment Rules (MRRs) for Non-Gazetted cadre in all GMCs of Jammu and Kashmir will be notified by the 30th September, 2026.

This decision was taken during a meeting chaired by Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today at Civil Secretariat here in the backdrop of protests by employees of newly established Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) of Jammu and Kashmir regarding non-availability of recruitment rules.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary ARI and Trainings, Shabnam Kamili; Special Secretary, ARI, Narinder Khajuria; Director Health, Riyaz Ahmad; Additional Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Anil Kumar; Deputy Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Murtaza Rashid, as well as representatives of the protesting employees from GMCs of Anantnag and Baramulla.

The meeting held detailed discussions on the proposed recruitment framework aimed at ensuring a transparent, uniform and



streamlined mechanism for filling various Non-Gazetted positions required for the effective functioning of the newly established medical colleges and their associated institutions.

Addressing the officers during the meeting, the Minister emphasised that the recruitment rules should be comprehensive, practical and aligned with the functional requirements of

the newly established GMCs. She called for close coordination among the concerned departments and directed that the exercise be completed within a stipulated timeframe so that the recruitment process for the required Non-Gazetted manpower can be taken forward without unnecessary delay.

The Minister directed the ARI Trainings

and health department to notify the recruitment rules by 30th September to ensure career progression of employees working in these prestigious medical institutions.

She stressed the need to maintain uniformity across institutions while ensuring that the rules adequately address the specific manpower requirements of different departments and services.

Sakeena Itoo directed the concerned officers to undertake a thorough examination of the existing recruitment rules and relevant provisions before finalising the Model Recruitment Rules. She called for incorporating clear provisions regarding eligibility criteria, qualifications, experience, recruitment methodology, promotional avenues and other service-related matters.

The Minister underscored that a well-defined recruitment framework is essential for strengthening institutional capacity and ensuring availability of adequate human resources in the newly established medical colleges. She called for expediting the process while maintaining due diligence and adherence to prescribed procedures.

District-Level NCORD meeting held in Budgam

■ HT News Network



BUDGAM, AUGUST 21: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today chaired the 50th District-Level NCORD meeting at the Conference Hall, Budgam, along with SSP Budgam, Hariprasad KK, to review the measures being taken to curb drug abuse in the district.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed enforcement measures, awareness programmes, treatment and rehabilitation facilities, and directed all concerned departments to further strengthen their coordinated efforts against the menace.

Stressing the importance of awareness and prevention, the Deputy Commissioner directed intensified Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, particularly among youth, students, families and vulnerable sections of society.

He also instructed for strict vigil around educational institutions and other vulnerable areas and stringent action against those involved in drug peddling and trafficking.

He directed concerned departments to ensure timely identification, treatment, counselling, rehabilitation and follow-up care of persons affected by drug abuse, with the objective of ensuring that no affected individual is left without necessary support.

Javid Dar reviews arrangements for kisan mela, foundation stone laying of mandi at Wusan Bangil Tangmarg

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today chaired a meeting of Heads of Departments (HoDs) of Agriculture and allied departments to review and finalise arrangements for the upcoming Kisan Mela and foundation stone laying ceremony of the Mandi at Wusan Bangil, Tangmarg in Baramulla district.

MLA Gulmarg, Farooq Ahmad Shah, HoDs of Agriculture, Horticulture and concerned officers were present in the meeting.

The Minister had detailed deliberations on preparations being put in place by different departments for the mega kisan mela.



He instructed all the concerned HoDs to ensure seamless inter-departmental coordination, meticulous planning and timely completion of all arrangements for successful conduct of the programme. He stressed that every department should contribute its best towards making the event impactful, well-organised and beneficial for the farming community.

The meeting also discussed the detailed programme

schedule and participation of various Agriculture and allied departments in the event.

Javid Dar directed the departments to establish informative and professionally designed stalls showcasing their schemes, flagship programmes, achievements, innovative initiatives, modern technologies and farmer-centric interventions. He emphasised that the Kisan Mela should provide farmers with a meaningful platform to interact directly with the departmental officers, agricultural scientists, technical experts and other stakeholders. The event will help in familiarising the farmers with modern agricultural practices, government schemes and available support mechanisms.

The Minister advocated for effective dissemination of information regarding various farmer-oriented initiatives.

Speaker visits Buzgoo, Nilnag; emphasizes faster tourism development, improved connectivity

■ HT News Network

BUDGAM, AUGUST 21: Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Charar-i-Sharief, Abdul Rahim Rather, today visited Buzgoo and Nilnag areas of the Charar-i-Sharief Assembly Constituency in Budgam district and interacted with the local residents to take stock of their developmental needs and concerns.

The development of Nilnag Lake was also discussed, with emphasis on developing the destination on the latest and sustainable model of tourism.

The Speaker stressed for adequate tourist facilities and related infrastructure so as to make Nilnag an attractive destination for the visitors while also benefiting the local population. He said that the region



has immense potential to emerge as a major tourist destination and a source of sustainable livelihood and income generation for the local population.

He said that an amount of Rs 71 lakh is proposed to be spent during the current year for creation of tourism-related infrastructure, including parks, fencing, gates and walkways. The proposed works are aimed at improving the overall infrastructure and visitor experience in the area, he added.

The Speaker said that efforts

would be made to improve the connectivity between prominent tourist destinations, including through the development of the Barinibal Road connecting Yusmarg and Nilnag, enabling the tourists to conveniently visit and enjoy both destinations.

He said that a comprehensive development plan would be pursued for Nilnag and the entire adjoining tourism belt to ensure planned infrastructure development and enhanced facilities for the visitors.

Director HP&M chairs meeting to explore Railway Transportation of Kashmir Apple to Markets across India

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: A meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Director, Horticulture Planning & Marketing, Ghulam Jeelani Zargar to explore and identify modalities for transportation of apple fruit from Kashmir to different parts of the country through the railway network.

Representatives from Railway authorities headed by Kapil Sharma, Chief Area manager, Jaswant Singh, ACM Railways and Presidents of various F&V markets of Kashmir participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the feasibility of transporting apples by rail, with particular focus on developing an efficient, economical and time-bound transportation mechanism for the horticulture sector.

The initiative is aimed at providing apple growers and traders with an additional reliable mode of transportation, especially during the peak harvesting season.

Bashir Ahmad Bashir, All Valley President of Fruit Growers and Traders Association deliberated on various issues and Challenges associated with rail transportation of Apple.

Committee on Petitions reviews grievances of Khimber Hazratbal residents



■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: The Committee on Petitions of J&K Legislative Assembly today met under the Chairmanship of Pirzada Farooq Ahmad Shah to examine the long-pending grievance of residents of Khimber Hazratbal regarding illegal occupation of their traditional grazing land.

The meeting was attended by Members of the Committee including Javid Riyaz (Bedar), Dr. Sajjad Shafi, Javid Iqbal Choudhary and Shagun Parihar.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo; SDM East Srinagar, other concerned officers, besides officers of the Assembly

Secretariat were also present in the meeting. During the meeting, the Chairman observed that Government land belongs to the people and must not be allowed to fall into the hands of a few. He assured that the Committee will not allow such injustices to continue and will take every possible step to restore the rights of the common man, safeguard public property for future generations. The Chairman directed that strict action be taken against all those found involved in the illegal encroachment of Government land. He instructed the District Administration to identify and take to task the land mafia and other elements involved, and to retrieve the illegally occupied land immediately.

Labour Commissioner reviews functioning of Labour Department Kashmir Directs officers to accelerate disposal of Quasi-Judicial Cases, Labour Code implementation and improve Service Delivery

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 20: Minister for AgSRINAGAR, AUGUST 18: Continuing with the review of the functioning of the Labour Department across the divisions, the Labour Commissioner, J&K, S. Charandeep Singh, today conducted a detailed review of the functioning of the Labour Department, Kashmir Division, during a meeting held with the Deputy Labour Commissioner, Kashmir, and Assistant Labour Commissioners of Kashmir Division in his office chamber at Batamalo, Srinagar. The meeting was also attended by Deputy Labour Commissioner (Central), Deputy Director Planning & Statistics and Assistant Labour Commissioner (Central). The meeting focused on assessing the progress of various departmental initiatives, with particular emphasis on implementation of the Labour Codes, enrolment under the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (PMSYM), grievance redressal, disposal of court (quasi-judicial) cases, delivery of services under the Public Services Guarantee Act and clearance of pending official communications.



Interacting individually with the field officers, the Labour Commissioner took stock of the ground-level progress and directed the officers to adopt a result-oriented and measurable approach towards implementation of the Labour Codes. He

stressed the need for intensified awareness and outreach among workers and establishments and called for preparation of comprehensive work plans/master files to facilitate systematic monitoring of targets, activities and outcomes.

The Chair also underscored the importance of capacity building of field functionaries, directing that structured training and orientation programmes be undertaken to equip officers with the requisite knowledge and skills for effective implementation of the new labour regime.

Reviewing the progress under PMSYM, the Labour Commissioner called for greater field-level mobilization and directed the officers to devise area-specific strategies for improving enrolment against prescribed targets. He stressed continuous monitoring, identification of uncovered worker groups and effective facilitation to ensure that eligible workers derive the intended benefits of the scheme. On grievance redressal, the Chair directed that all grievances received through SAMADHAN as well as offline channels be monitored from receipt to final disposal, with officers ensuring prompt and effective resolution. He further called for strict adherence to the timelines prescribed under the Public Services Guarantee Act so that citizens receive departmental services within the stipulated period.

DC Bandipora reviews progress of Swachhta 50-50 Campaign, stresses effective implementation, public participation

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, AUGUST 21: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib today chaired a review meeting to assess the progress achieved so far under the district-wide Swachhta 50-50 campaign and reviewed measures for its effective implementation across the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the targets achieved under the campaign and took feedback from the concerned officers on the ongoing field-level activities. The meeting focused on strengthening implementation of the initiative, ensuring wider public participation and achieving the desired behavioural change with regard to cleanliness and scientific waste management.

The meeting discussed measures for ensuring that awareness and implementation activities reach every household. It was informed that information/awareness sheets would be pasted in all households to sensitise residents about proper waste management practices and their responsibilities under the Swachhta 50-50 initiative.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed upon the concerned officers and field



functionaries to intensify awareness activities, promote source segregation, home composting and responsible disposal of waste, and ensure effective monitoring at the grassroots level.

The role of Eco Clubs, teachers, Anganwadi Centres and other field-level functionaries in spreading awareness and encouraging community participation

was also emphasised during the meeting.

The meeting further discussed enforcement measures under the campaign. The Deputy Commissioner directed that violations observed in the public domain would invite punishment and fines under the relevant Acts and applicable sections, with enforcement measures to be intensified from

September 15.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasised that Swachhta 50-50 is based on the principle of equal participation of the Government and the public and called for sustained efforts from all stakeholders to make cleanliness and scientific waste management a collective responsibility.

It was informed that, with effect from 01 September, wet waste shall not be collected and residents shall ensure its proper management at source.

Further, any person found polluting the environment or violating waste-management norms shall be penalised as per the provisions of the Jammu & Kashmir Non-Biodegradable Material (Management, Handling & Disposal) Act, 2007. At the same time, individuals and groups making commendable contribution towards waste management and environmental protection shall be suitably recognised and awarded to encourage greater public participation.

The meeting was attended by Programme Officer ICDS, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, and other concerned officers. Block Development Officers, Child Development Project Officers and other field functionaries participated in the meeting virtually.

DC Kulgam reviews 'Class of Joy' programme across schools of District

Calls for effective implementation and better learning outcomes



■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, AUGUST 21: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today chaired a meeting to review the implementation and progress of the 'Class of Joy' initiative across schools in District Kulgam.

The meeting focused on strengthening the implementation of the programme, addressing identified gaps, improving monitoring, and ensuring better learning outcomes for students.

During the meeting, representatives of Pratham NGO presented a detailed status report on the programme, covering various key indicators, including school awareness, monitoring status, implementation at the school level, regular conduct of Classes of Joy, availability and effective utilisation of TLMs, student grouping, and maintenance of assessment records.

It was informed that the Class of Joy programme is currently being implemented in eligible Primary, Middle and High Schools across District Kulgam for students of Classes 3rd, 4th and 5th.

While appreciating the efforts of the CEO Kulgam and the concerned teams, the DC directed that monitoring reports of schools should be formally shared with the concerned schools. He further directed that appropriate action must be taken on the observations recorded during monitoring.

Emphasising that education remains one of the top priorities of the district administration, the DC informed that 60 schools have been selected for renovation during the current year. He further stated that water coolers will be provided to 160 schools this year to improve basic facilities for students.

The DC stressed that proper planning is the cornerstone of development and directed the

Education Department to prepare and submit school-related development projects for approval. He emphasised that the projects should be conceptualised in a manner that ensures maximum benefit to students.

He further highlighted the importance of a conducive school environment for effective teaching and learning, stating that infrastructure development and quality education must go hand in hand. He informed that all 36 schools in Aspirational Block Manzgam will also be taken up for renovation.

While reviewing the performance indicators of the Class of Joy programme, the DC directed that performance should exceed 90 per cent across all indicators. He called for immediate identification and filling of gaps and directed that Zonal-level training programmes be organised wherever required to strengthen implementation.

The DC further informed that the endline assessment will be conducted on October 2, 2026. He directed that the performance of teachers responsible for 'Classes of Joy' be appropriately reflected in their Annual Performance Reports (APRs). He also announced that the best-performing schools and teachers will be suitably rewarded in recognition of their commitment, performance and contribution towards improving learning outcomes.

While thanking the participating officers, coordinators and Pratham NGO representatives, the DC emphasised that the collective objective must be to prepare children for the future through quality education, effective teaching practices and a supportive learning environment.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer, Malik Suheel, CEO Kulgam Fayaz Ahmad Mir, ZEOs of all six educational zones of Kulgam, District Coordinators, Zonal Coordinators, and representatives of Pratham NGO.

DC Kulgam chairs District Level Aadhaar Monitoring Committee Meeting

■ Farooq Rather



KULGAM, AUGUST 21: A meeting of the District Level Aadhaar Monitoring Committee (DLAMC) was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, to review Aadhaar saturation, functioning of enrolment centres, the Mandatory Biometric Update (MBU) campaign, and pending applications on the State Verification Portal.

It was informed that overall Aadhaar saturation in the district stands at 96.87%, though saturation among children aged 0-5 years remains at 53.10%. It was further apprised that 9,865 Mandatory Biometric Update cases remain pending among students.

The Chair directed all concerned to expedite enrolment of left-out children, operationalize non-functional Aadhaar centres, complete pending biometric updates in schools, and dispose of pending applications on the State Verification Portal at the earliest, with compliance reports to be submitted to the District Administration.

The meeting was attended by the ADC Kulgam Vikar Ahmad Giri, ACR Kulgam Reyaz Ahmad Shah, CPO Kulgam Malik Suheel, Chief Education Officer Fayaz Ahmad Mir, District Social Welfare Officer, District Statistics and Evaluation Officer, District Lead Bank Manager, Post Master Kulgam, Project Manager UIDAI, and other concerned officers.

DDC Shopian convenes review meeting to assess status of approved Projects

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, AUGUST 21: District Development Commissioner (DDC), Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a review meeting in his office chambers to evaluate the implementation and current progress of various ongoing and approved development projects across the district.

During the meeting, threadbare discussions were held on the progress and issuance of necessary approvals for projects pertaining to Urban Development, Tourism, Health, Culture and other sectors.

The DDC stressed upon the concerned officers to ensure



timely completion of all requisite formalities, speedy execution of works and strict adherence to prescribed timelines.

Emphasizing the importance of timely delivery of developmental works, the DDC called for focused efforts,

effective monitoring and accountability at every level to ensure that the benefits of various projects reach the people at the earliest. He directed the Additional District Development Commissioner to closely monitor the progress of all projects, ensure regular follow-up with the concerned departments and facilitate timely completion of the works.

Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone, Chief Executive Officer, Shopian Dubjan Peer Ki Gali Development Authority, Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs) and other concerned were present.

ADDC Bandipora visits Ahamshareef; reviews Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) arrangements

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, AUGUST 21: On the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Additional District Development Commissioner Bandipora, Nazir Ahmad Mir, today conducted a thorough inspection of the Ahamshareef Shrine to review the arrangements and ensure adequate facilities for devotees ahead of the observance of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW).

During the visit, the ADC assessed various aspects of the preparations and facilities being put in place for the devotees. He emphasised the importance of coordinated efforts among



all concerned departments to ensure a smooth, peaceful and serene observance of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW).

The ADC also stressed upon the concerned stakeholders to ensure that all necessary arrangements and essential amenities are put in

place well in advance for the convenience, comfort and safety of the devotees.

The ADC also interacted with members of the Aaqaf Committee and discussed the arrangements for the auspicious occasion. He listened to their suggestions and assured that all necessary measures would be taken to ensure a smooth and comfortable experience for the devotees.

The ADC was accompanied by DySP Headquarters Bandipora, Executive Engineer PHE Bandipora, Executive Engineer, PDD Bandipora and other concerned officials.

DC Budgam takes stock of arrangements for annual Hawan at Shiv Mandir Dainag

■ HT News Network

BUDGAM, AUGUST 21: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today visited Shiv Mandir Dainag in Budgam to take stock of arrangements for the observance of the annual Hawan programme.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner assessed the facilities being put in place for devotees and reviewed arrangements to ensure the smooth and peaceful conduct of the religious programme.

The Deputy Commissioner interacted with members of the local Kashmiri Pandit community, devotees and local residents, and enquired about the facilities and arrangements at the religious site. He directed the concerned officers to ensure uninterrupted

essential services, including electricity and potable water supply, for the convenience of devotees.

He appreciated the efforts of the local community in making refreshment arrangements and extending support and hospitality to visiting devotees. Members of the Kashmiri Pandit community also lauded the initiative and appreciated the cooperation and support extended by the local community during the religious programme.

The Deputy Commissioner assured the devotees and organisers of all necessary support from the District Administration for the smooth, seamless and peaceful observance of the annual Hawan and other religious functions.

Ajeet Sahu reviews progress of ADP, PMDDKY and PM SHRI in Baramulla

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, AUGUST 21: Ajeet Kumar Sahu, Union Joint Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, who is also serving as the Central Prabhari Officer for the Aspirational District Programme (ADP) for Baramulla today presided a meeting to review the implementation and progress of ADP, Prime Minister Dhan-Dhanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) and PM SHRI School at Dak Bungalow, Baramulla.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, S.F. Hamid, Principal Government Medical College Baramulla, Chief Planning Officer (CPO), Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) and sector officers from concerned departments.

At the outset, the CPO Baramulla

presented a comprehensive overview of the district's performance under 5 key indicators of the ADP, including Health and Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Water Resources, Financial Inclusion and Skill Development, and Infrastructure.

During the meeting, the Central Prabhari Officer undertook a detailed review of the progress achieved under the Aspirational District/Block Programme, with particular focus on key indicators, developmental outcomes and the interventions being undertaken to improve the socio-economic conditions of the identified areas.

Ajeet Kumar Sahu stressed the importance of outcome-oriented planning, inter-departmental convergence and regular monitoring to ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach the

intended beneficiaries in a timely and effective manner.

Meanwhile, the meeting reviewed the implementation of the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhanya Krishi Yojana, aimed at strengthening agricultural productivity, improving access to agricultural infrastructure and services, promoting diversification and enhancing the overall income farmers.

The Joint Secretary directed the concerned officers to promote the adoption of high-yielding and improved crop varieties, particularly in the horticulture sector and other high-value cash crops, to enhance productivity, farm incomes and overall agricultural output in the district.

Earlier, the Prabhari Officer reviewed the functioning of PM SHRI Schools where he assessed the



progress of infrastructure development, availability of basic amenities, academic and co-curricular initiatives and other interventions aimed at transforming selected schools into model institutions.

During the review, the Head of the Institutions (Hols) of PM SHRI Schools were directed to undertake a comprehensive analysis of their respective institutions, including student enrolment trends, year-wise growth, retention and other relevant parameters.

Emphasising the importance of active parental participation in the education of children, the Prabhari Officer called upon the schools to ensure greater participation of parents in Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTMs).

During the meeting, DC Baramulla, S.F. Hamid, highlighted certain key gaps and bottlenecks

affecting the effective implementation of various developmental initiatives in the district and brought them to the attention of the Joint Secretary for appropriate intervention at the central level.

He sought necessary support and facilitation to address the identified shortcomings, particularly those requiring coordination and action beyond the district administration, so as to ensure timely resolution and improve the overall outcomes of the concerned programmes. He sought necessary support and facilitation to address the identified shortcomings, particularly those requiring coordination and action beyond the district administration, so as to ensure timely resolution and improve the overall outcomes of the concerned programmes.



Div Com Kashmir reviews arrangements for 18th Harmuk Gangbal Yatra

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg today reviewed the arrangements for the 18th annual Harmuk Gangbal Yatra in a meeting, here.

The three-day yatra is being organised by the Harmuk Ganga Gangbal Trust (HGGT), with around 150-200 pilgrims expected to participate.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Jitin Kishore, SSP Traffic Rural, Chief Engineers of the Roads & Buildings (R&B) and Public Health Engineering (PHE) departments, SDM, officials from the Archaeological Survey of India, Traffic Police, Wildlife Department, Forest Health Department and KPDC, besides HGGT General Secretary Vinod Pandit.

Pandit briefed the meeting about the religious rituals scheduled during the three-day pilgrimage, including Charri Puja at Naraan Nag Temple and Puja, Pind Daan and Shradha at Harmuk Ganga.



Chairing the meeting, the Div Com directed the concerned departments to ensure advance arrangements for tents, bedding and other essential facilities for



ensure advance arrangements for tents, bedding and other essential facilities for

the pilgrims. He also called for uninterrupted electricity through gensets and adequate water supply throughout the yatra.

The meeting was informed that food and langar arrangements for the pilgrims would be made by the HGGT.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the Health Department to deploy a medical team equipped with the necessary logistics, instruments and medicines to meet any medical requirements during the pilgrimage. He also instructed officials to earmark a entire area within the fencing of temple exclusively for yatri.

The Floriculture Department was directed to arrange flowers for puja and temple decorations while RDD was directed to provide pre-fab toilet facilities during the yatra.

Garg further directed the deployment of SDRF and Civil Defence personnel during the yatra and called upon the concerned security agencies to ensure foolproof security arrangements for the smooth and safe conduct of the pilgrimage.

Handicrafts Dept urges artisans to enroll kin in Craft MBA course at CDI

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21
The Department of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, has urged the artisans and weavers to encourage their wards to apply for admission in two-year MBA course in the Craft Management & Entrepreneurship Programme at Craft Development Institute (CDI), Srinagar, affiliated with the University of Kashmir.

The Department stated that the specialised postgraduate programme aims to create a new generation of professionally trained craft entrepreneurs



capable of taking Kashmir's world-famous handicrafts and handloom traditions to the national and international markets. The course integrates craft, design, technology, management and entrepreneurship, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the craft economy and its emerging opportunities.

In a press statement issued here today, a spokesman of the

Department stated that the programme would provide a strong edifice for craft entrepreneurship and enterprise development in Jammu & Kashmir. "We particularly urge the children and wards of artisans and weavers to avail this programme. Our traditional crafts possess enormous economic and export potential and a professionally trained young generation can play a decisive role in converting this heritage into sustainable enterprises, creating employment opportunities and globally competitive brands," the spokesman added.

GDC Kathua organises symposium-cum-road safety awareness programme

■ **HT News Network**

KATHUA, AUGUST 21: Government Degree College (GDC) Kathua, in collaboration with the Motor Vehicles Department Kathua, today organised a Symposium-cum-Road Safety Awareness Programme to sensitise students about responsible road behaviour, traffic discipline and safe mobility practices.

Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma was the chief guest. RTO Surinder Paul Sharma was the patron, while ARTO Kapil Deol and Chief Planning Officer Ranjeet Thakur were also present.

The programme was organised under the guidance of Principal Government Degree College Kathua

Dr Manohar Lal. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised that road safety is a collective responsibility and called for greater awareness, discipline and active participation from all sections of society. He urged students to adopt responsible road behaviour and act as ambassadors of road safety in their families and communities. Earlier, the RTO highlighted the importance of strict adherence to traffic rules, while the ARTO elaborated on responsible driving, traffic regulations and the role of youth in promoting a culture of safe mobility. As part of the symposium, 12 students spoke on different aspects of road safety, including adherence to traffic rules, use of helmets and seat belts, prevention of accidents.

Sheema Farooqi to Oversee Media and Communication of J&K Muslim Personal Law Board

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, Aug 21: The Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Personal Law Board has announced the association of Sheema Farooqi to oversee its media and communication management.

In her new role, Farooqi will focus on strengthening the Board's communication architecture, refining institutional messaging and enhancing its engagement with the media. She will also work towards ensuring greater clarity, consistency and wider reach of the Board's communication across public platforms. The announcement was made by the Advisor to the Grand Mufti of Jammu and Kashmir and Chief Spokesperson of the Muslim Personal Law Board, J&K. [KNT]



Renowned Kashmiri Writer Ghulam Nabi Adfar's Autobiography "Me, My Treasure" Released at Charar-i-Sharief

■ **Reyaz Badana**

Cardiff School, Charar-i-Sharief, in collaboration with Kashmir Markaz-i-Adab wa Saqafat, organised a dignified literary function to mark the release of renowned Kashmiri writer Ghulam Nabi Adfar's autobiography, "Me, My Treasure: The Light and Shadows of My Life." The event was attended by prominent literary, educational and social personalities. Mirwaiz of Khanqah Faiz Panah, Charar-i-Sharief, Maulvi Amir-ud-Din, SOI IGP Tahir Saleem, along with several other notable personalities, participated in the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, the participants appreciated Ghulam Nabi Adfar's literary efforts and



valuable contribution to the field of literature. They described his newly released autobiography as an important addition to his literary journey, reflecting his experiences, observations and different dimensions of life. The speakers highlighted Adfar's dedication to literature and his efforts to preserve and promote

the region's rich literary and cultural heritage. They said that literary gatherings of this nature play an important role in encouraging writers and poets while inspiring the younger generation towards reading, creativity and literary expression. The programme also featured poetry recitations by several poets, adding a vibrant

literary character to the gathering. The poets' presentations were warmly appreciated by the audience.

The literary and educational personalities present on the occasion congratulated Ghulam Nabi Adfar on the publication of his autobiography and expressed their best wishes for his continued literary journey. They hoped that he would continue his efforts towards the promotion of literature, culture and research. Ghulam Nabi Adfar is a noted Kashmiri writer, researcher, poet and literary figure from Jammu and Kashmir. He has remained associated with Kashmir Markaz-i-Adab wa Saqafat, Charar-i-Sharief, and various literary and cultural activities. He is particularly known for his research.

Play 'Coffee House' Receives Appreciation at Tagore Hall Srinagar

■ **GULFAM BARJI**

Srinagar/August:21 The Kashmiri stage play "Coffee House" presented by the Young Dramatists Society "YDS" Srinagar at Tagore Hall Srinagar received an enthusiastic response from the audience with theatre lover's appreciating the performance and applauding the artists.

The play was staged under the Guru-Shishya Parampara (Repertory Grant 2025-26) with the support of the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India New Delhi and the National School of Drama (NSD)

Written by renowned broadcaster and writer Dr. Sohan Lal Koul the play was directed by Altaf Hussain. The production was presented under the supervision of Mushtaq Baqal and Syed Javed Geelani while the music was composed by Imran Latif. "Coffee House" explores various aspects of everyday life, human emotions, thoughts, conversations and social behaviour through an engaging theatrical presentation. The production also aimed at providing young theatre artists with a platform to showcase their talent and contribute towards



the development of Kashmiri theatre. The Young Dramatists Society Srinagar has been actively working for the promotion of theatre and the training of young artists. The audience and members of the theatre fraternity appreciated the initiative, observing that such programmes provide fresh opportunities for local artists and play an important role in promoting Kashmiri language, culture and theatre.

NGO Helping Hands Care Foundation J&K Pays Heartfelt Tribute to Founder on His 2nd Death Anniversary



■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, August 20, 2026: The NGO Helping Hands Care Foundation J&K paid heartfelt and emotional tributes to its Founder, Late Ali Mohammad Bhat, on his 2nd death anniversary observed on August 20, 2026.

On the solemn occasion, members, volunteers, well-wishers and residents of the locality remembered the departed Founder with deep respect and affection. A large number of residents from Wadi Mohalla, Harwan, attended the function and participated in paying tributes and offering prayers in his memory.

As part of the solemn remembrance programme, various Zakireen delivered religious discourses and recited Marsiya and verses in the remembrance of Imam Hussain (A.S.), highlighting the eternal message of sacrifice, patience, humanity and devotion associated with the tragedy of Karbala. The recitations were presented with deep emotion and devotion for the Isal-e-Sawab (Ahsaal-e-Sawab) of the departed soul of Late Ali Mohammad Bhat.

The recitation of Marsiya and the remembrance of Imam Hussain (A.S.) created a deeply spiritual and emotional atmosphere, with participants praying for the Maghfirot

of the departed soul and for his elevation in the hereafter.

Late Ali Mohammad Bhat was remembered for his valuable contribution towards humanitarian service, social welfare and extending help to the needy, poor and underprivileged sections of society. He was remembered as a dedicated, compassionate and selfless individual who believed in serving humanity without any discrimination. His commitment towards social service and concern for people in need continue to inspire the members and volunteers of Helping Hands Care Foundation J&K. The Foundation said that his ideals, values and spirit of service remain an integral part of its humanitarian mission. The Foundation offered prayers for the departed soul and prayed to Almighty Allah to grant him the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous, shower His mercy upon him and bless him with eternal peace. Speaking on the occasion, members of the Foundation said that although two years have passed since his departure, his ideals, values and spirit of service continue to remain alive among them. They said that his vision of serving humanity will continue to guide the Foundation in its future activities.

Ali Emran and the New Chapter of Kashmiri Cinema

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, August 21: At a time when Kashmiri cinema is witnessing renewed interest and experimentation, filmmaker, writer and poet Ali Emran has emerged as a distinctive voice seeking to give the region's indigenous cinema a stronger artistic and cultural identity. With nearly two decades of work across cinema, theatre, literature and the performing arts, Emran's films have explored Kashmir beyond its conventional scenic imagery. His work focuses on cultural memory, spiritual traditions, social change and disappearing artistic practices, while placing Kashmiri language and indigenous narratives at the heart of contemporary storytelling. Emran's cinematic journey began with The Ninth Act in 2006, an

experimental film examining the impact of globalisation on downtown Srinagar. His subsequent works, including Know Me, Baand-e-Jashn and Tasavuf, continued his engagement with Kashmir's social, cultural and spiritual heritage.

His feature-film journey gained momentum with Ibtida: The Beginning, an Urdu-language film inspired by Ayn Rand's The Fountainhead. Emran served as writer, director, editor and cinematographer. The film received the Best Feature Film award from the Jammu & Kashmir region at the International Film Festival of Kashmir in 2015.

A major milestone in his career came with Qouluf: The Ensorcelled, a Kashmiri-language feature centred on spirituality, enlightenment and Kashmir's Rishi-Sufi heritage. Released



theatrically at INOX Srinagar on October 4, 2024, the film drew upon traditions associated with figures such as Sheikh Nur-ud-din Wali and Lal Ded.

Qouluf subsequently travelled to film festivals outside Kashmir, including the Kolkata International Film Festival and India Habitat Film Festival. Its digital release also attracted significant viewership, reportedly generating

5.4 crore watch minutes. Emran continued his exploration of Kashmiri heritage with Baand, a Kashmiri-language feature centred on the traditional folk theatre form Baand-e-Pather. The film follows folk theatre artist Gani Bhagat and his son Akhtar, examining generational change and the struggle to preserve traditional art in a rapidly changing society. Released at INOX Srinagar in April 2026, Baand seeks to use cinema as a cultural archive, bringing an important but declining performing-art tradition to contemporary audiences. His upcoming and experimental projects, including Yaqza: The Awakening, further explore spirituality, consciousness and the philosophical dimensions of Kashmiri thought. Documentaries such as Jesus & Kashmir and End Time Priest-King also reflect his

continuing interest in history, mythology and cultural identity. Beyond cinema, Emran's artistic foundation includes extensive theatre work and Urdu and English poetry. His theatre productions have been staged at venues including Kamani Auditorium, Stein Auditorium and Sathya Sai Auditorium in New Delhi. His literary works include Urdu poetry collections such as Lafz, Aks, Aab and Unwaan, alongside the English poetry collection The Unseen Voice. His experience across theatre, literature and cinema has shaped a filmmaking style that relies on symbolism, atmosphere, performance and philosophical reflection. Across his body of work, Kashmir is presented not merely as a location but as a subject of cultural and artistic inquiry. Emran's journey reflects a broader possibility for Kashmiri cinema—

NATIONAL SCHOOL OF DRAMA
(An Autonomous Institution of Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India)
THEATRE IN EDUCATION CENTRE, SRINAGAR
In collaboration with
J&K ACADEMY OF ART, CULTURE & LANGUAGES
ORGANISES

15 DAY WRITING WORKSHOP
FROM 3RD Sep.2026

The National School of Drama, Theatre in Education Centre, Srinagar in collaboration with J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages is going to organize 15-day writing workshop in Srinagar. The workshop aims to develop the core writing skills, writing process, craft of creative writing and enhance the play writing techniques under the guidance of NSD experts.

Interested aspirants may collect the application forms from NSD, TIE Centre, Cultural Academy Campus, Lal Mandi, Srinagar from 18th August to 31st August 2026 between 11:00am to 4:00pm.

Register your name before the workshop begins

- Admissions is free on the first cum first serve basis.
- After the completion of workshop certificates will be awarded to all the participants.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED:

1. Copy of Aadhar Card,
2. Passport size photograph.
3. Credentials in support of writing experiences.

For further information contact 9419059895

Space devoted by Headlines Today in public interest..

Director
National School of Drama

HT EDITORIAL

Rail Lifeline for Kashmir Apples...

The move to explore railway transportation for Kashmir apples is a timely and practical step towards strengthening the Valley's horticulture economy. With thousands of growers depending on the timely movement of their produce to markets across the country, a reliable and cost-effective transport system is essential for protecting both farm incomes and market access.

The proposal gains added significance from the repeated disruptions on the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway. Last year, landslides and prolonged road closures during the fruit season left large quantities of apples stranded, causing losses running into crores of rupees for growers and traders. For a perishable commodity, every day of delay can mean deterioration in quality, lower prices and higher financial losses.

Rail transportation could provide an important alternative, particularly during periods when road connectivity is affected. However, its success will depend on proper planning. Availability of freight services, suitable loading and unloading facilities, packaging, handling of perishable produce, scheduling and last-mile connectivity must all be addressed before the system is introduced on a wider scale.

The authorities should involve growers, traders, transporters, railway officials and major buyers in designing a practical mechanism. Seasonal dedicated freight services and efficient loading facilities at appropriate locations could make rail a viable and economical option.

The objective should not be to replace road transport but to supplement it with a dependable alternative. Kashmir's horticulture sector cannot afford to remain vulnerable to disruptions on a single highway. A well-coordinated road-and-rail network would provide greater resilience to the fruit supply chain and help ensure that the hard work of growers does not translate into losses simply because of transportation delays.

The initiative deserves sustained attention and timely implementation. For Kashmir's apple industry, better connectivity is ultimately an investment in the security of thousands of livelihoods.

My Living Incident Why She Is A Burden?



BY-MOOL RAJ

I am not a think tank but simply a regular columnist and freelance writer from Doda Dist. I would like to express my own living incident that took place two weeks ago when I am proceeding to my duty. I met a woman on my way from Village Bhagota to Govt PM Shri Higher Secondary School Khellani Doda.

She may be difficult, demanding, or even unfair at times—whatever she may be, whatever her faults, she is still a mother.

She may be difficult, demanding, or even unfair at times—whatever she may be, whatever her faults, she is still a mother.

The Moul Mouj toll-free number received a call from an elderly woman asking if someone could come and see her at home. There was nothing dramatic in her voice. No emergency. No complaint of severe pain. Just a quiet request:

"I think I need to speak to a doctor. Can you come home?" I went.

She was a widow. A retired woman with her own pension. The house was hers. The property was in her name. She had two sons, both living under the same roof, but in separate portions of the house. She had everything that, on paper, should have given her security. Except, perhaps, the feeling that she belonged there.

She spoke slowly. Not angrily. Not accusingly. Almost apologetically. Her medicines had not been reviewed for a long time. No one had taken her for a proper follow-up. She did not know which medicines she should continue and which needed review. When she needed medicines, she would telephone the local chemist, who would send them to her.

Her sons were busy. That was the explanation. Busy with work. Busy with their own families. Busy with life. One son had not spoken to her properly for months. I listened.

Sometimes, during a home visit, the most important thing you can do is not examine the patient immediately. You sit down. You allow silence. You let the person tell you what has been happening behind the closed doors.

After sometime, she looked at me and asked a question that was far more painful than any medical complaint: "Writer Mool Raj, am I becoming a burden?" I did not have an immediate answer. Because she wasn't asking about her medicines. She was asking whether she still mattered.

The illness that does not appear in a prescription

Emotional abuse and neglect of older persons do not always look dramatic. There may be no shouting. No physical injury. No obvious violence. Sometimes it is simply the repeated ignoring of an elderly person's needs. Not taking them for follow-up. Not knowing what medicines they are taking. Not asking whether they have eaten. Not speaking to them. Making them feel that their needs are inconvenient. Leaving them alone because everyone is "busy". Over time, this can become a form of emotional abuse and neglect. And its effects can be devastating.

An older person who feels unwanted may stop asking for help. They may hide symptoms. They may become withdrawn, anxious or depressed. They may lose interest in food, medicines and activities. Existing illnesses can

become poorly controlled. Sleep may suffer. So may mobility, confidence and even cognitive functioning.

Perhaps the most damaging effect is something that cannot be measured with a blood pressure machine: the gradual loss of self-worth.

But she has everything, doesn't she?

This is where we often misunderstand elder neglect. We look at the house. We look at the pension. We look at the fact that the children are living with her. And we conclude that the elderly parent is being looked after.

But material security is not the same as emotional security. A mother may have money in her account and still feel helpless. She may own the house and still feel like a unwanted person in it. She may have children living only a few rooms away and still feel completely alone.

And there is another uncomfortable truth. Parents are not always easy. They can be stubborn. They can be demanding. They can interfere. They can have expectations that their children find unreasonable. They can make mistakes. They can sometimes be unfair. But none of this makes neglect acceptable.

Renewable Energy The Power Of A Sustainable Future



Surinderpal Singh

The modern world is passing through a period of rapid economic, technological and environmental change. Energy lies at the centre of this transformation. Homes, schools, hospitals, industries, transport systems and digital technologies all depend on a reliable supply of energy. For more than a century, much of this energy has come from coal, petroleum and natural gas. Although these conventional sources have supported economic development, they have also created serious problems such as air pollution, greenhouse-gas emissions, climate change and the gradual depletion of natural resources.

In this situation, renewable energy has emerged as one of the most promising solutions for the future. Renewable energy is obtained from naturally replenishing sources such as sunlight, wind, flowing water, biomass and geothermal heat. Unlike fossil fuels, these sources are not exhausted by ordinary human use. Solar panels can convert sunlight into electricity, wind turbines can generate power from moving air, and hydropower plants can use flowing water to produce electricity.

The greatest advantage of renewable energy is that it can help reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Coal and petroleum release large quantities of carbon dioxide and other pollutants when burned. Renewable sources generally produce far fewer greenhouse-gas emissions during operation. Their wider use can therefore contribute to cleaner air and help countries address climate change.

Renewable energy can also improve energy security. Countries that depend heavily on imported oil, gas or coal can become vulnerable to international price fluctuations and supply disruptions. Sunlight and wind, however, are available locally in many regions. Developing domestic renewable-energy resources can reduce dependence on energy imports and strengthen national energy security.

Another important advantage is the creation of employment. The renewable-energy sector requires engineers, technicians, construction workers, researchers, electricians, maintenance staff and many other professionals. As solar and wind projects expand, they can create new economic opportunities, particularly

in rural and developing areas.

Renewable energy can also bring electricity to remote communities. In places where extending conventional electricity networks is difficult or expensive, solar panels, batteries and small renewable-energy systems can provide useful local power. This can support education, healthcare, communication, agriculture and small businesses.

Despite its enormous potential, renewable energy has not expanded as quickly or as smoothly as many people expect. Several obstacles continue to stand in its path.

First, the initial cost can be high. Solar panels, wind turbines, batteries, transmission systems and other infrastructure require considerable investment. Although the long-term operating costs can be attractive, the initial financial burden may discourage individuals, small businesses and poorer communities.

Second, renewable energy is sometimes intermittent. The sun does not shine at night and may be weaker during cloudy or rainy weather. Wind speed also changes. This means that solar and wind power cannot always produce electricity exactly when consumers need it. Energy storage systems, especially batteries, are therefore becoming increasingly important.

Third, storage remains a major challenge. A modern electricity system needs power to be available continuously. Large-scale batteries and other storage technologies are improving, but they can still be expensive and require significant amounts of materials and infrastructure. Developing affordable, safe and environmentally responsible storage technologies is essential for the large-scale expansion of renewable energy.

Fourth, transmission infrastructure can be inadequate. Renewable resources are not always located close to centres of population and industry. A region may have excellent solar or wind potential but lack the transmission lines necessary to deliver electricity to distant consumers. Building modern electricity grids is therefore as important as installing renewable-energy projects.

Fifth, land and environmental concerns cannot be ignored. Large solar farms and wind projects require land. Poorly planned projects can affect agriculture, wildlife habitats or local ecosystems. Renewable energy is cleaner than fossil fuels, but it is not completely free from environmental impacts. Proper planning, environmental assessment and community participation are necessary.

Sixth, policy uncertainty can slow investment. Investors need clear and stable rules. Frequent changes in subsidies, taxes, regulations or electricity-purchasing policies can make renewable-energy projects financially uncertain. Long-term and predictable

government policies can encourage greater private investment.

Seventh, lack of awareness and technical skills is another barrier. Many people still do not understand the long-term economic benefits of renewable energy. In some areas, there may also be a shortage of trained technicians who can install, operate and maintain renewable-energy systems. Education and skill development must therefore accompany technological development.

The transition to renewable energy does not mean that every conventional energy source can disappear overnight. Electricity demand is increasing rapidly because of urbanisation, digital technology, electric vehicles, industries and modern lifestyles. A successful transition requires careful planning.

Governments should encourage renewable energy through stable policies, easier financing, research support and appropriate incentives. Educational institutions should introduce students to renewable-energy technologies and environmental responsibility. Industries should invest in cleaner production and energy efficiency. Citizens can contribute by using electricity responsibly, adopting energy-efficient appliances and considering rooftop solar where practical.

At the same time, renewable-energy development must be socially fair. The benefits of clean energy should not be limited to wealthy households or large corporations. Poor families, rural communities and small businesses should also have opportunities to participate in the renewable-energy revolution.

Fortunately, technology is developing rapidly. Solar panels are becoming more efficient, battery technology is improving, smart electricity grids are becoming more sophisticated, and new methods of energy storage are being explored. Artificial intelligence and digital monitoring can also help electricity systems predict demand, manage renewable generation and reduce wastage.

The future energy system is likely to be more decentralised and intelligent. Instead of relying only on a few large power plants, millions of homes, farms, schools and businesses could generate some of their own electricity. They could store surplus energy and share electricity through increasingly sophisticated grids.

Surinderpal Singh
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My Fountain Pen ,My Dream

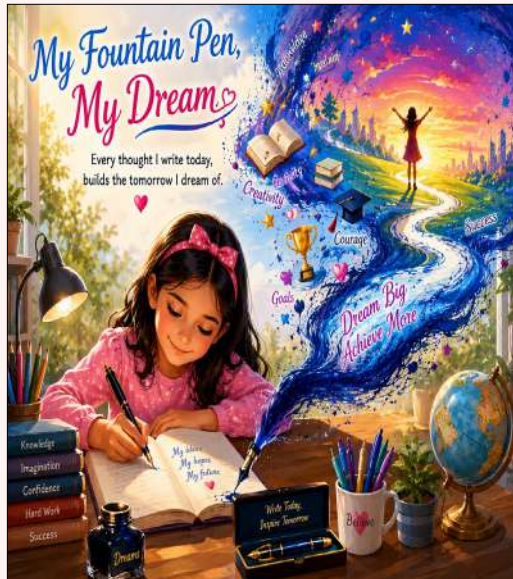


Dr.Ratan Bhattacharjee

Cervantes is my favourite writer and more so for his great love of the pen. "The pen" he said "is the tongue of the soul" and it is exactly so with me. One time handwriting was a matter of pride. Tagore's handwriting is now regarded as art. Shakespeare wrote all his immortal dramas with his pen and all that he wrote was the final copy without any draft while Victor Hugo made draft after draft of the same novel with his pen. The euphoria is over nowadays. We do not expect pen as a gift any more on our birthday. It is now either iPad, or Mobile or any digital gadget. Who wants a pen these days—surely no child. Handwriting is just despised. Any handwritten application for Job or CV in plain handwriting are not given much importance in spite of its authenticity. With a pen you create while with a sword you can destroy and so pen is mightier than sword as Edward Bulwer Lytton remarked long ago. A golden Parker pen stirs my imagination that even my beloved too cannot provide nowadays. Malala Yousafzai too had pen in her mind while she was dreaming of a new world: "Let us remember," she said, "one book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world. It is true that few teachers nowadays use pen for writing and they type all in their mobile notepad. When I will no longer be there in this world, many may write wrong things or imagined things about me. It is better if I leave a write up with my pen to leave for them an authentic document."

Autobiography written with pen is genuine record of the soul but if typed there may be chance of adulteration of water in milk. The unwritten literature of the Dalits in the farthest region of the country still did not reach us simply because the people there cannot use their pen. Others take tape recorder and take their oral account for writing the best seller. Thank God

Valmiki wrote his autobiographical novel Jhootan with his pen to give a voice to the voiceless millions. The magic of the pen lies in the concentration of your thoughts upon one object. You may build with brick and mortars or iron ore. It is a big game of construction which may not exist after an earthquake. But the poems that Shakespeare wrote for immortalising his Fair Friend will overcome the onslaughts of time and Death will not brag to take his Fair Friend to visit the dark shades of the grave. Ars longa vita brevis. Art is long and if you choose a pen you can play the



biggest game of construction that will be perennial. I love my golden Parker pen gifted to me by my friend on my birthday.

When my dad at the age of 74 lost his vision and memory I gave him in his hand his loving V-Pilot pen with which he used to write his poems. He suddenly got back his memory partially. A pen can do miracles. John Adams was right when he said "A pen is certainly an excellent instrument to fix a man's attention and to inflame his ambition. Many do not know that the fountain pen was invented by Petrarche Poenaru while the improved ball pen was invented by Laszlo Biro in 1938. John J. Loud patented the first ball point pen on May 25, 1888 but Biro improved the design

in 1938. I preferred fountain pen and on Sunday washing the inside tube and the nib were my favourite pastime. Bygone are those days. Now from the beginning of the dawn children are busy with tabs and playing online games and the grown ups engaged in typing in chat boxes like chatterbox. Recently there was a campaign named 'Fight for Your Write' to 'save handwriting'. My father saved one photo of my childhood where my palms and face all were smeared with blue ink. That time we were engaged in hot discussion on the blue and black ink. Some argued that only teachers have the prerogative to use black and red ink. Students can use only blue ink. Ball point pen is safer but when it leaks silently in the pocket of a white shirt then life seems to be nasty and dirty that time. The ballpoint is relatively cheap and the use and throw brand is quite easy to use. Ball point has now a big influence on handwriting. Earlier it was not allowed in examination. But now it is regarded as safer in use than the ink pens which may smudge the sheet.

From handwriting Sherlock Holmes could guess the nature of the person. In Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice Darcy writes slowly with his fountain pen. It shows his patience and his even lines reflect his serenity. I am not so serene when I pen Oleaner poems as they take me to a world of imagination. My pen becomes my winged horse and like Shelley's Skylark I become the scorpion of the ground and my pen becomes a sword when I come down to earth to write serious articles against divisive policies of the government or against violence against women and children and the senior citizens. Winston Churchill used the pen that bears his name Montblanc. Stephen King wrote his book with Waterman cartridge fountain pen. Mark Twain expressed the virtues of self-filling Conklin Pen which he himself used. Parker 51 fountain pen is famous for Dylan Thomas who photographed with his pen in one hand and a cigarette in the other. John Steinbeck wrote with Blackwing Pencil and never used pen for writing The Grapes of Wrath. Arthur Conan Doyle was fond of Parker Duofold. While Einstein used Pelikan 100N for writing on Theory of Relativity. One model of Montegrappa was very much used by Ernest Hemingway. I have my V-Pilot pen till today when I write my articles for AT.

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A smile is a powerful universal tool



By M S Nazki

Don't leave footprints that you will be ashamed of one day!

-Leaders don't hide good news from their followers. As long as they discover knowledge, they share knowledge. They leave part of them with people they meet; hence they are hardly missed when they are gone.....

-Leaders don't leave people empty handed. They give them part of themselves through knowledge sharing and influence creation.....

-The world is full of footprints. If you think that the greatest question is which footprint to follow, then you are wrong, because the greatest question is how to create your own beautiful footprints!.....

-You don't miss great leaders because their impacts and footprints are always staring at you in the face.

-The best but the most difficult way to save humanity is to delete footprints that go nowhere other than stupidity and primitiveness so that no one can follow such paths!

-A viral internet story tells of a deployed soldier who visited an ATM every single night to withdraw just 100, smiling whenever a curious security guard asked why.

-The soldier explained that the small transaction triggered an automatic SMS to his wife back home, serving as a silent, daily sign that he was safe.

-The Meaning Behind the Smile The Routine: Every night at the same hour, the soldier made the minor withdrawal.

-The Distance: Stationed in a remote area where phone network signals failed or calls were risky, direct communication was nearly impossible.

-The Message: The bank text notification became a code of reassurance. Seeing the withdrawal meant his wife could sleep without fear, knowing he was alive and secure.

-The Lesson Quiet Love: Real devotion does not always require grand gestures or long words. Inner Strength: A simple, consistent action can carry a massive emotional weight and protect the peace of mind of someone far away.....

-A smile is a powerful, universal tool that can disarm anger, bridge divides, and de-escalate conflict without a single word.

-Why a Smile Calms Conflict Triggers Mirror Neurons: Smiling prompts others to mimic the expression, which naturally lowers their defenses.

-Signals Non-Threat: It communicates safety, peace, and goodwill across all cultures.

-Changes Brain Chemistry: Smiling releases endorphins, reducing stress for both you and the observer.

-Breaks Psychological Momentum: A positive reaction to hostility catches opponents off guard and disrupts their negative energy.

-Historical and Cultural Context Philosophical Roots: Many Eastern and Western philosophies view a gentle

grin of a man who had lost his mind to the isolation. It was a quiet, steady radiance. "Anand, brother," his commanding officer, Captain Vikram, once asked while huddled over a kerosene stove.

-How do you keep that smile on your face? Your discipline, holding off a force three times their size until reinforcements arrived at dawn.

-Anand survived that night, though the wound earned him a permanent scar and a ticket back to the plains for recovery. On the day he was to board the

-He waited for optimal weather and preparation, protecting his men from a mismanaged disaster.

-Fearless Camaraderie: He treated all ranks with immense dignity, frequently visiting the wounded, eating with the soldiers, and standing up for their welfare against bureaucratic interference.

-Mutual Loyalty: His absolute trust and fearless attitude earned him fierce devotion from the entire rank and file of the Indian Army.

-K. M. Cariappa

Field Marshal Kodandera Madappa Cariappa (28 January 1899 – 15 May 1993) was an Indian military officer and diplomat who was the Indian Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) of the Indian Army. He led Indian forces on the Western Front during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947. He was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army in 1949. He is one of only two Indian Army officers to hold the five-star rank of Field Marshal; the other being Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw.

-His distinguished military career spanned almost three decades. Born in Madikeri, Kodag district, Cariappa joined the British Indian Army shortly after the end of World War I, and was commissioned as a temporary first lieutenant into the Carnatic Infantry. He was transferred between multiple regiments early in his career before settling on 1/7 Rajputs, which became his permanent regiment.

-He was the first Indian military officer to attend the Staff College, Quetta, the first Indian to command a Chief of staff, and was also one of the first two Indians selected to undergo training at the Imperial Defence College in Camberley.

-He served in various staff capacities at various unit and command headquarters (HQ) and also at the General HQ, New Delhi. Before taking over as the C-in-C of the Indian Army, Cariappa served as the commander of the Indian Army's Eastern and Western Commands.

-Prem Baghat

Baghat applied himself to his studies in his final year and was commissioned in the British Indian Army on 15 July 1939 as a Second Lieutenant (2Lt.) in the Royal Bombay Sappers and Miners. He was posted to the 21 Field Company of Engineers at Pune in September, shortly after war began in Europe.

-World War II

On 23 September 1940, Baghat's company was sent to East Africa, as part of the 10th Indian Infantry Brigade, 5th Indian Division, Sudan Defence Force under the overall command of Lieutenant General William Platt. The 10th Infantry Brigade was commanded by Brigadier William Slim, MC (later Field Marshal the Viscount Slim). On 6 November, Slim launched an attack on the fort of Gallabat, with the assault spearheaded by the 3rd Royal Garhwal Rifles, under Lieutenant-Colonel S.E. Taylor. Gallabat was captured, but an enemy counterattack forced the brigade to withdraw. The Sappers were tasked with obstructing the enemy to prevent them from following too closely.

-The story which we got:

-Proud of our soldiers who remain ever ready Lt Gen Pratik Sharma's GOC in C Northern Command

-I decided to start with a small story:

-My stars are not always as bright as the sun but who likes the heat of the sun when fans are not lit! I'm writing this story in a candle light!

-But I will start this story in the light of the candles!

-Hope-less I was but my defiant nature told me to do this story!

-So here I begin:

-The sun over the Siachen Glacier does not warm; it blinds. At 18,000 feet, the air is a thief, stealing breath from the strongest lungs. Yet, whenever the men of the 19th Jammu and Kashmir Rifles looked at Naib Subedar Anand Singh, they saw a smile that defied the arctic freeze.

-Anand was an anomaly. In a place where the temperature routinely dipped to minus forty, and where the silence was broken only by the crack of shifting ice or distant artillery, his face remained relaxed, his lips curved upward.

-It was not a smirk of arrogance, nor the hollow

grin of a man who had lost his mind to the isolation. It was a quiet, steady radiance. "Anand, brother," his commanding officer, Captain Vikram, once asked while huddled over a kerosene stove.

-How do you keep that smile on your face? Your



moustache is literally frozen. "Anand rubbed his hands together, his dark eyes crinkling. "Sir, the enemy wants us cold, tired, and miserable.

-If I lose my smile, the enemy wins a small battle without firing a single bullet. Besides, my mother told me that a smile keeps the soul warm.

-The men laughed, the tension in the bunker thawing just a little. That was Anand's gift. In the brutal terrain of Kashmir's borders, morale was as critical as ammunition.

When rations were delayed due to blizzards and the men had to survive on hard biscuits thawed over candles, Anand would serve them with the flair of a five-star waiter, smiling as he presented the "delicacies."

-When a rookie soldier broke down from homesickness, Anand would sit with him, share his pouch of roasted gram, and smile as he spoke of the fertile fields of Punjab, promising the boy that they would both see the mustard blooms again.

-They called him "Muskurahat" – The Smile. Then came the night of November 14th. A sudden blizzard masked an infiltration attempt by an enemy patrol. The forward post was cut off from the main base. Mortar shells began to rain down, turning the pristine white snow into a chaotic canvas of black soot and fire.

-Anand and his small squad of five were trapped in a sangar – a stone bunker. The communication lines were down. Shrapnel tore through the air, and a piece caught Anand in the shoulder.

-Captain Vikram crawled over to him, his hands shaking as he applied pressure to the wound. "Hold on, Anand.

-Medics are trying to reach us. "Anand winced, but as he looked up at his captain, the corners of his mouth tugged upward. "I am holding, Sir. They missed my heart. Their aim is bad.

-Even bleeding in the freezing mud, he smiled. It was a fierce, defiant thing now. It told his men that fear had no home in their bunker. Inspired by his calm, the squad held their ground, returning fire with precise

military chopper, the entire unit gathered on the helipad.

-His shoulder was in a sling, and his uniform was worn, but his face was unchanged. He looked at his brothers-in-arms, raised his left hand in a crisp salute, and flashed that familiar, unstoppable smile.

-As the chopper lifted into the gray sky, Captain Vikram adjusted his cap. He realized then that Anand's smile was never just an expression. It was his armor.

-It was his weapon. It was the ultimate declaration that no matter how harsh the winter, the warmth of an Indian soldier's spirit could never be extinguished.

-Now we come to the story:

-Did YB ever smile?

-Yes, YB did smile, though his most famous film characters – such as the stern King Mongkut in The King and the icy gunslinger in The Magnificent Seven – were known for a fierce, unyielding stare.

-Off-screen and in candid promotional photos, he frequently smiled, laughed, and projected a warm, charismatic personality.

-On-Screen and Stage Playing with expressions: In The King and I, his character experiences moments of humor, warmth, and softening, allowing his expression to break into a grin or a light smile.

-Commanding presence: Directors cast him for his intense, commanding posture and sharp look, which meant his serious expressions outnumbered his smiling ones in films.

-Off-Screen Life Real-life warmth: Co-stars and crew members noted that away from the cameras he was witty, highly approachable, and quick to laugh.

Public appearances: Photographers captured him smiling at press events, interacting with fans, and celebrating wins like his Academy Award.

-In command, a smile does matter as soldiers recognize who you are?

-Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw (popularly known as "Sam Bahadur") is widely considered India's finest general, legendary for his brilliant tactical mind, decisive

The Return of the Suitcase



Yousuf Mir

(This story explores human prejudice, family resentments, and the unseen forces that sometimes shatter years of hard work, parental dreams, and the bright futures of daughters before they can fully unfold.)

Surat, Seerat, and Shohrat were three sisters. Surat was the eldest, while Shohrat was the youngest. Their father, Mukallam, was a school teacher who had earned considerable respect in his community. His honesty, dedication, and compassionate attitude toward his students had made him widely admired.

Mukallam belonged to a mountainous region blessed with dense forests, singing waterfalls, and lush green meadows. Far removed from the noise and distractions of city life, it was a place where learning and reflection could flourish.

His three daughters studied in different grades, and every evening after returning from work, Mukallam would personally teach them. He did everything within his means to provide them with the best possible education. His greatest dream was to see all three of his daughters become doctors.

But fate intervened unexpectedly. Circumstances forced him to leave his home behind and begin a life of displacement. It was a difficult existence, requiring the family to move from one residence to another, sometimes twice a year. The constant upheaval disrupted their domestic life and made Mukallam fear that the dreams he had nurtured for his daughters might never come true.

Yet his daughters refused to surrender to adversity. They resolved to turn their father's aspirations into reality, regardless of the hardships they faced. They worked tirelessly, studying day and night, and their perseverance eventually bore fruit. Two of the sisters became doctors, while the third attained a high level of education and distinction in her own field.

Although Mukallam found comfort in his daughters' remarkable achievements, he continued to suffer because of the prejudice and resentment of certain relatives. They never truly accepted him, and the success of his daughters only seemed to deepen their sense of envy.

With time, life gradually stabilized, and Mukallam purchased a house in the city where his family finally settled permanently. Outwardly, he had managed to provide comfort and security for his loved ones, yet inwardly he remained troubled. Despite all the accomplishments surrounding him, happiness seemed to elude him.

A persistent fear gnawed at him from within. He

where these invisible interventions originated or how they managed to disrupt his family's life. He suspected many things, but he possessed no evidence. He encouraged his daughter to remain hopeful, yet he himself lived under the shadow of anxiety and fear.

At last, through the efforts of a friend, a marriage proposal was finalized with a respectable family living in a distant village. Both the young man and the young woman were satisfied with the match. Rings were exchanged, gifts were presented, and a wedding date was fixed.

Preparations were underway in both households when, one morning shortly after sunrise, there was a knock at Mukallam's door.



worried that his daughters might become victims of broken engagements and failed proposals. This invisible fear consumed him like termites hollowing out a piece of wood. His daughters had grown up and reached marriageable age.

His efforts were now focused on arranging a suitable match for the daughter who had not become a doctor and who was over thirty-five. Many proposals came and went, but each one collapsed for one reason or another. Sometimes it was an aunt's interference, sometimes a relative's stubbornness, and sometimes mere excuses piled upon excuses.

Every failed proposal left another scar upon Mukallam's heart. He could never fully understand

His daughter herself stepped out onto the veranda. As soon as she opened the door, she was stunned. Standing outside was a man carrying the very suitcase that had been gifted to the groom.

Mukallam instantly understood what he had feared for years.

But his gaze fell upon his highly educated and dearly beloved daughter, whose teeth had closed in shock, leaving her unable to utter a word.

Email: yousufmir555@gmail.com

Why Are We Harming Our Kashmir Valley?



Sahil Manzoor

Kashmir is truly one of the most astonishing places in the world. Every year, people travel from far and wide to experience its beauty for recreation, research, trekking, winter sports, trade, and many other purposes. The Kashmir Valley is not merely a place on the globe; it is a priceless treasure blessed with breathtaking landscapes, magnificent mountains, crystal-clear rivers, and world-famous Mughal gardens such as Nishat Garden, Shalimar Garden, Pari Mahal, and Verinag.

Every corner of Kashmir offers a unique fragrance of nature. The cool breeze touching our cheeks, the lush vegetation, and the peaceful surroundings create an atmosphere that is both captivating and unforgettable. Anyone visiting Kashmir for the first time is likely to feel as though they have stepped into a dream.

The valley remains beautiful throughout the year. Its pleasant climate, majestic mountains of the Peer Panjal Range, sparkling streams, and scenic meadows make it one of the world's most attractive tourist destinations. Kashmir's warm hospitality has earned admiration from visitors across the globe. Tourists leave with unforgettable memories, photographs, and stories to share with their loved ones. Every season—spring, summer, autumn, and winter—adds a unique charm to the valley and contributes greatly to the tourism sector.

Despite this natural paradise, I am deeply concerned about the way we are harming our own homeland. Pollution has become one of the greatest threats to the sustainable future of Kashmir. Unfortunately, many people believe that development means constructing more roads, large buildings, and hotels. While infrastructure is important, true development should never come at the cost of our environment. Development should improve the quality of life while protecting nature for future generations.

As a resident of Raiyar-Ich, Doodhpathri, I have witnessed these changes over the past fifteen years. Our village has increasingly suffered from air, water, noise, and soil pollution. There is no proper solid waste management system, and many people dispose of waste into nearby canals. This pollutes our water bodies and increases the risk of diseases such as

hepatitis and other water-borne illnesses.

Before it is too late, we must educate and encourage local communities, especially those living near tourist destinations, to adopt proper waste disposal practices. We must keep our beautiful destinations clean, green, and free from environmental hazards. Protecting our environment is a shared responsibility.

Development is meaningful only when it benefits society without destroying nature. It should be sustainable and continue serving generations to come. Development should not be measured solely by economic gains but by how well we preserve our natural heritage. Let us educate the younger generation, inspire them to care for nature, and work together to keep Kashmir clean and beautiful.

I conclude with a poem dedicated to my beloved homeland.

My Charming Kashmir
Oh, my Kashmir, oh my crown,
Why in the pleasant month of June
Do you still look so brown?
I love the summer, I long for heat,
Yet your valleys remain incomplete.
You are my pride, you are my crown,
Then why, dear Kashmir, do you look so brown?
My lofty mountains still feel cool,
My meadows remain beneath winter's rule.
I yearn for greenery, fresh and fair,
And gentle breezes in the air.
Oh, my Kashmir, oh my crown,
Why do you still look so brown?
This is truth and not a myth,
You are unique, with beauty rich.
You are charming, you are alluring,
Your timeless grace is so enduring.
I seek your charm, I seek your beauty,
Your splendour is my heart's duty.
Oh, my Kashmir, oh my crown,
Why do you still look so brown?
People travel thousands of miles,
To find your peace and wear your smiles.
They come to ease their weary minds,
Leaving anxiety and fatigue behind.
Yet I worry when summer turns white,
As pollen fills the air in sight.
I fear the dust that may surround
The beauty for which you are renowned.
Oh, my Kashmir, oh my crown,
Why do you still look so brown?

Sahil Manzoor Bhatti
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Javed Rana launches 'Knowledge Sharing and Ideation' workshop series for professional development of engineers in Jal Shakti Department

HT News Network

JAMMU, AUGUST 21: The Jal Shakti Department today launched its "Knowledge Sharing and Ideation" workshop series to promote continuous learning, professional development and exchange of technical knowledge and field experience among its engineers and officers.

The workshop series was inaugurated by Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmad Rana in the presence of Additional Chief Secretary, Shaleen Kabra.

The series, earlier conducted by the Administrative Department, has been revived as a regular platform for sharing technical knowledge, innovations, field experiences and good practices, besides discussing emerging technologies and improved approaches to planning and execution of departmental works.

Appreciating the initiative, Minister Javed Ahmad Rana described it as an innovative and out-of-the-box approach to upgrading the professional skills of engineers without any additional financial burden on the Government.



He emphasised the need for continuous learning, acquisition of new skills and adoption of Artificial Intelligence to improve service delivery and ensure quality. He also encouraged other Government departments to emulate the initiative and make greater use of their existing institutional expertise for capacity building.

The workshops will be held every Friday from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM and will be attended by all engineers and gazetted officers of the Department. The inaugural session was

conducted today through virtual mode and witnessed participation of 1,519 engineers from across J&K, including 788 from Kashmir and 731 from Jammu, wherein all offices of Chief Engineers, 14 offices of Superintending Engineers and 74 offices of Executive Engineers were connected. The technical session was followed by an interactive question-and-answer session, during which young engineers participated enthusiastically and engaged with the presenters.

The inaugural session featured presentations on "Flood Plain Zoning and Risk Management of River Tawi", delivered by Er. Sunil Singh, AEE, SD-1st Flood Control Division, Samba, and "Seismic Safety of Structures", delivered by Er. Mueed Rasool, XEN, I&FC Kupwara.

The sessions will cover a wide range of subjects, including technical and engineering matters, project planning and implementation, Artificial Intelligence, emerging technologies, innovations, field experiences, best practices, digital platforms, public service delivery and departmental procedures. The initiative will also provide a platform for engineers from different wings and field formations to share practical solutions and successful practices.

The Design, Inspection and Quality Control (DIQC) wing has been designated as the nodal agency for coordination and conduct of the workshop series. Constituted under the Cadre Review vide Government Order No. 91-JK(JSD) of 2026 dated May 15, 2026, DIQC is mandated to strengthen technical scrutiny, quality assurance, inspection and advisory mechanisms in the Department.

5th batch of Shri Budha Amarnath Ji yatra pilgrims receives grand welcome at Poonch

HT News Network

POONCH, AUGUST 21: The 5th batch of the Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra, comprising around 4,000 devotees, reached the College Ground Poonch today, where the district administration, police, Yatra Management Committee and locals accorded the pilgrims a grand and warm welcome.

Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma, Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik and Additional SP Ajay Sharma, along with other officers and officials from the civil administration and police department, members of the Yatra Management Committee, civil society representatives and enthusiastic locals welcomed the pilgrims.

The college ground witnessed a festive atmosphere as the devotees were greeted with warmth and traditional hospitality. A large number of locals gathered at the venue to welcome the pilgrims and showcase Poonch's rich tradition of communal harmony, hospitality and respect for visiting devotees.

Different societies and organisations set up various food stalls and refreshment arrangements to facilitate the pilgrims and provide them with refreshments during their stay.

MVD Rajouri intensifies enforcement against traffic violations

137 vehicles checked, 21 challans issued, 5 E-Autos seized

HT News Network



RAJOURI, AUGUST 21: On the directions of Secretary Transport J&K Avny Lavasa and Transport Commissioner Vishesh Paul Mahajan, the Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) Rajouri conducted an intensive enforcement drive along the Rajouri-Thamamandi route and in Rajouri town to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act and adherence to prescribed fare rates.

During the drive, the enforcement team checked 137 vehicles, issued 21 challans and seized five e-autos for violations. A total penalty of 48,600 was imposed on the violators. ARTO Ashiq Rafiq Malik directed e-auto operators to install fare meters in their vehicles and charge fares strictly as per the approved rates issued by the Transport Commissioner's office. He also advised the operators to comply with all statutory requirements and avoid overcharging passengers. The enforcement drive aimed to promote road safety, ensure regulatory compliance and safeguard the interests of commuters. Among those present were MVI Lakhvinder Singh and AMVI Nitin Singh, along with other officials of MVD Rajouri, who accompanied the enforcement.

DC Ramban inspects Dalwas-Sowani Road, directs PMGSY to expedite restoration

HT News Network

RAMBAN, AUGUST 21: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alias Khan today inspected the damaged stretches of Dalwas-Sowani Road affected by mudslides triggered by recent heavy rainfall.

During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Engineer PMGSY Ramban and NHAI engineers present at the site to immediately initiate restoration works and ensure that road connectivity is restored at the earliest.

The Deputy Commissioner directed NHAI to take up construction of a crate wall along the National Highway to protect the Dalwas-Sowani Road at the take-off point. He also instructed the Executive Engineer PMGSY to expedite restoration works at other affected locations.

The engineers concerned apprised the Deputy Commissioner of the extent of damage and the measures being undertaken for early restoration of the affected stretches. The



Dalwas-Sowani Road provides vital connectivity to Dalwas, Karma and Sowani villages, and its restoration is essential for the smooth movement of residents and timely access to essential supplies and services.

The DC directed the executing agencies to deploy adequate manpower and

machinery and expedite the restoration work, particularly at the stretches affected by heavy rainfall and mudslides. He stressed that all necessary measures be taken on priority to restore connectivity while ensuring the quality and durability of the works.

Secretary DLSA inspects Prison Legal Aid Clinic at District Jail Udhampur

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, AUGUST 21: Sub-Judge/Secretary District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Udhampur Sumati Sharma today conducted the monthly inspection of the Prison Legal Aid Clinic and a comprehensive jail visit at the District Jail, Udhampur.

During the visit, the Secretary held direct discussions with inmates across different barracks to assess their access to legal assistance, medical care and other necessities. She examined case files and clinic records to verify that eligible prisoners are being identified and provided free legal aid, legal awareness sessions and timely representation as guaranteed under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. The Secretary gave special attention to women prisoners and met female inmates separately to hear grievances relating to legal aid, delays in pending cases, lack of representation or welfare concerns. She also sought feedback from inmates on the quality and frequency of legal awareness outreach and the responsiveness of the prison's legal aid arrangements. The inspection included a thorough review of the jail's living conditions and essential services. She evaluated cleanliness and sanitation standards in the barracks, the hygiene of kitchen and food preparation areas, the adequacy and nutritional quality of meals and the general maintenance of facilities. She reviewed the



availability and delivery of healthcare services, including access to medical staff, procedures for emergency care and provision of medicines. She also observed infrastructure such as the condition of cells, bedding, ventilation, water supply and sanitary facilities. The visit reinforced the DLSA's continued commitment to protecting the constitutional and legal rights and dignity of persons in custody. By monitoring the functioning of the Prison Legal Aid Clinic and the overall custodial environment, the District Legal Services Authority, Udhampur aims to ensure effective, timely and humane legal aid services in correctional institutions and to remedy shortcomings that impede inmates' access to justice. The visit reinforced the DLSA's continued commitment to protecting the constitutional and legal rights and dignity of persons in custody. By monitoring the functioning of the Prison Legal Aid Clinics.

DDC chairs District Steering Committee on Pulses under Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses in Udhampur

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, AUGUST 21: To promote self-reliance in pulse production and strengthen pulse cultivation in the district, the maiden meeting of the District Steering Committee on Pulses was convened today under the chairmanship of District Development Commissioner Udhampur Minga Sherpa.

The meeting marked the operational launch of the Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses in the district under the broader Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative, with active participation of all members of the Steering Committee concerned.

During the meeting, the



Chief Agriculture Officer presented a detailed status report on pulse production, yield per hectare and existing productivity levels across the district. The report highlighted significant yield gaps among various agricultural blocks.

The Steering Committee held detailed discussions on the proposed Annual Action

Plan under the mission, with emphasis on aligning resources and interventions to systematically bridge the identified production gaps in the coming seasons.

While reviewing the block-wise data, the DDC observed considerable variations in pulse productivity across Udhampur district. He stressed the need

to address these geographical disparities to achieve the objectives of the mission and directed the Agriculture Department to accord priority to low-productivity villages.

The chair further advised the department to identify low-productivity clusters as "test villages" or "model villages" for intensive implementation of technological and scientific agricultural interventions under the mission.

To ensure a robust and data-driven approach to planning and resource allocation, the DDC directed the Agriculture Department to conduct a comprehensive census of farmers engaged in pulse cultivation across the district.

Training programme on implementation of PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan held in Udhampur

HT NEWS DESK

UDHAMPUR, AUGUST 21: Consultants from the Industries and Commerce Department held a district-level training-cum-demonstration programme on the implementation of the PM Gati Shakti-National Master Plan in district Udhampur.

Among those present was Chief Planning Officer Udhampur Uttam Singh, along with officers and officials from various departments.

During the training session, participants received hands-on demonstrations of the key features and functionalities of the PM Gati Shakti platform.



The consultants explained in detail the role of the digital platform in facilitating integrated infrastructure planning, enabling seamless sharing of departmental data and strengthening coordination among various departments.

Technical Experts Santosh Kumar and Yudhishter Seth

briefed participants on the importance of effective utilisation of the PM Gati Shakti portal for informed decision-making, coordinated planning and expediting developmental projects.

The participants were encouraged to make optimum use of the digital platform to

ensure seamless inter-departmental coordination and efficient implementation of various infrastructure and development initiatives.

The training also provided an opportunity for the officers and officials concerned to clarify their queries and gain practical understanding of the portal and its applications in departmental planning. The participants were encouraged to make optimum use of the digital platform to ensure seamless inter-departmental coordination and efficient implementation of various infrastructure and development initiatives.

>>>>> World Entrepreneurs' Day <<<<<

NABARD-supported RBIC at SKUAST-K organises design thinking workshop at GDC Pulwama

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 21: Rural Business Incubation Centre (RBIC) at SKUAST-K, supported by NABARD under the Gramya Vikas Nidhi scheme, organised a one-day interactive ideation programme and design thinking workshop at Government Degree College (GDC), Pulwama.

Titled "From Grassroots Problems to Scalable Startups:

RBIC Idea Resonator on Agri & Rural Innovation," the event was held to commemorate the World Entrepreneur's Day and brought together more than 100 enthusiastic students to explore entrepreneurial avenues, problem-solving, and sustainable enterprise building.

The initiative aims to expand the regional startup and incubation ecosystem across Jammu & Kashmir by identifying high-potential ideas early and helping students

convert local community challenges into commercially viable enterprises.

Prof Bashir Ahmad Sheikh, Principal, GDC Pulwama, delivered the presidential address, welcoming the initiative and highlighting the vital role of academic institutions in reshaping the economic aspirations of local youth. He emphasised that students possess remarkable potential and that structured platforms like Idea Resonator



are critical for exposing them to entrepreneurship beyond conventional career paths. He

urged participants to look at the region's distinct agrarian landscape through an

entrepreneurial lens and take full advantage of institutional support to build sustainable ventures.

Dr Jameel Ahmad Khan, Chief Executive Officer of RBIC, led an intensive masterclass on the Design Thinking process. He guided students through the fundamentals of user empathy, problem definition, creative ideation, market validation, and functional prototyping. Dr Khan emphasised that impactful

innovation starts with asking the right questions and understanding local friction points firsthand, assuring participants that RBIC will provide full-cycle incubation, lab access, and financial linkages to help nurture their grassroots concepts into scalable startups.

The team from the Mission YUVA highlighted the state-wide scope of the 'Udhyan Jagriti 5.0' campaign, emphasising its mission to

foster grassroots entrepreneurship and mobilize youth across Jammu and Kashmir.

The speakers elaborated on the institutional support provided under the 'Neo-Innovative Enterprises Scheme', designed to identify high-potential, youth-led startups and equip them with essential seed funding, technical mentorship, and seamless market access.





Saving Youth from Drug Abuse Is a Collective Responsibility of Society: SSP Samba Anuj Kumar

■ HT NEWS DESK

Vijaypur, Jammu, August 21, 2026: On the occasion of Sanskrit Month, a grand Sanskrit Shobha Yatra and Anti-Drug Rally was organized on Friday by MV International School, Vijaypur, in collaboration with Shri Kailakh Jyotish avim Vedic Sansthan Trust, with the objectives of preserving and promoting Sanskrit, spreading awareness about Indian culture, and strengthening the resolve to build a drug-free society.

The rally commenced from near J&K Bank in Vijaypur Market and witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, parents, representatives of social and religious organizations, and prominent citizens. Carrying placards and banners bearing

messages on Sanskrit, Indian culture, and the harmful effects of drug abuse, the students spread awareness among the public. The rally passed through various areas of Vijaypur and proceeded towards the railway station. The chief guest, SSP Samba Anuj Kumar, said that drug abuse is a serious challenge facing society and that it can be tackled not merely through police action, but through the collective efforts of families, schools, society, and religious institutions. He said that young people can be kept away from drugs by channeling their energy into education, sports, good values, and constructive activities. He urged parents to strengthen communication with their children and appealed to students to stay away from drugs

themselves and encourage others to do the same. Speaking about the importance of Sanskrit, he said that Sanskrit is a cornerstone of India's rich cultural, spiritual, and intellectual heritage. He emphasized that young people should remain connected to their culture and heritage alongside receiving modern education.

Mahant Rohit Shastri, President of the Trust, described Sanskrit as the carrier of India's ancient knowledge tradition and cultural heritage. He said that along with preserving Sanskrit, it is equally important to focus on inculcating values and building character among the youth. He described the Sanskrit Shobha Yatra and Anti-Drug Rally as an inspiring

confluence of social and cultural awareness.

Gaurav Abrol, School Manager, said that the objective of the school is not only to educate students but also to develop them into responsible, well-mannered, and socially aware citizens. He expressed gratitude to all the students, teachers, parents, the Trust, social and religious organizations, and the administration and police department for their support in making the event a success. On the occasion, former DDC Shilpa Dubey, SP Samba G.R. Bhardwaj, DSP Dr. Sumit Sharma, former Councillor Ravi Kumar, Amit Jamwal, Honey Singh, Aman Sharma, Sanjeev Gupta, and several other prominent citizens were present.

Hakim Mohmmad Yaseen Welcomes Reopening of Doodhpathri, Urges Early Opening of Toshamaidan

■ HT NEWS DESK

Budgam, Aug 21: People's Democratic Front (PDF) president and former minister Hakim Mohammad Yaseen has welcomed the reopening of Doodhpathri and thanked the Lieutenant Governor's administration and the police

for facilitating public access to the tourist destination. Speaking to reporters, Yaseen urged the administration to reopen Toshamaidan at the earliest, saying that hundreds of poor families in the area depend on tourism and related activities for their livelihood. He also criticised the National



Conference government, alleging that the promises made to the people in its election manifesto remain unfulfilled. Yaseen claimed that there has been a lack of visible development and that the government's commitments have largely remained on paper.

Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION GANDERBAL

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Phone: 01955-253335; Fax: 01955-252130; Email: kupwara@nic.in

CIVIL WORKS

e-NIT No. 54/EE/R&B/Divn/Gbl of 2026-27 under Endorsement No..6546-51

Dated:- 21-08-2026

For and behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, UT of J&K, e-tenders are invited on Percentage Basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S.No.	Name of the Work.	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Est. of TEND. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rupees)	Time of Completion	Class Of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
01	Construction of road, imp. and black topping from Hs. Water Khan to Ward No. 7, Bala, Wazir.	Rs.4.00 Lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.8000/-	20 Days	DEE

Major Head: District Capex Budget.

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	21-08-2026
2.	Period of Downloading of Bidding Documents	21-08-2026
3.	Bid Submission Start Date	21-08-2026 from 04:00 PM
4.	Bid Submission End Date	27-08-2026 upto 04:00 PM
5.	Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bids (Online)	27-08-2026 at 04:15 PM in the Office of PW(R&B) Division Ganderbal.

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in shape of Treasury Receipt/e-Challan in favour of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Ganderbal.

NOTE:- The Date of Treasury Challan and CDR must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date. Any deviation shall render the bidder as Non-Responsive.

2. The Bidders shall upload earnest money equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG at the time of tendering pledged in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal.

3. The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of Allotted Cost as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal within 03 days before Fixation of contract and shall be released after completion of DLP and the 2% EMD shall be released in favour of successful bidder only after the receipt of 5% Performance Security.

Unbalanced Bid:- As per the Circular Instructions of Finance Department Vide No. (Principal Secretary to Government Finance Department's circular issued under endorsement No: FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 Dated:- 08.08.2025), which is reproduced as:-

Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee/security percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of the project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

Where the bid price is 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

The additional performance guarantee percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is 0.5% or more.

The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security.

In case bid of the bidder is unbalanced. The lowest bidder (L-1) has to provide additional performance security, immediately after issuance of LOA/LOI. The successful bidder shall submit the additional performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 03 days after the issuance of LOA/LOI and in case of the delay in submission of additional performance security, the tender shall be re-advertised without any notice at the cost, risk and responsibility of the L-1 or penalty shall be imposed as per the rules.

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on the website www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Website in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal.

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

7. The earnest money shall be forfeited if:-

a). Any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.

b). Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.

c). Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.

8. Instruction to Bidders regarding e-tendering process:-

a) Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

b) To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.

c) The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.

d) Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned.

e) Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid. Besides, original photocopies of documents related to the bid be submitted physically by registered post/through courier before the date specified.

f) Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents including tender documents fee in terms of soft copies and all other documents required as per NIT with technical bid. No document (s) which has/have not been uploaded shall be entertained for technical evaluation in the form of hard copy. However in case of any clarification the bidders all have to produce original documents in support of soft copies if need arises.

NOTE:- Scan all the Documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

9. Bidders should note that if the documents uploaded/submitted on the basis of which the contract has been awarded are forged/fake/not genuine at any time, the contract shall be cancelled and the contractor/bidder shall be recommended for blacklisting and debarred from taking part in tendering which the PWD/Other Departments for a period of one year in the first instance, besides the performance security deposited for the said work shall be forfeited.

DIPK-4846/26

Send Date: Aug 21, 2026

Executive Engineer

PW(R&B) Division Ganderbal



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION SRINAGAR

NEAR J&K BANK Zaldagar Srinagar

Telefax No. 0194-2952696 e-mail Id: to-exenmidsrinagar@jk.gov.in

Sub: Corrigendum to this office e-NIT No. 25 of 2026-27, dated: 14.08.2026

Ref: JK Government official e-Procurement portal Tender ID No.: 2026_IFC_321000_1

Corrigendum

Intending bidders are requested to note the following changes in the above-mentioned tender document:

S.No.	Read the below given	Instead of below given
1.	Annexure A, S. No. 01 Pump efficiency >=70 or above NPSH at site = 3.3mtrs	Annexure A, S. No. 01 Pump efficiency - 80 or above NPSH at site = 2.3mtrs
2	Annexure B, S. No. 01 Pump efficiency >=70 or above	Annexure B, S. No. 01 Pump efficiency - 80 or above
3	Annexure C, S. No. 01 Pump efficiency >=70 or above	Annexure C, S. No. 01 Pump efficiency - 80 or above

Rest of the terms and conditions shall remain un-altered as laid down in the original e-NIT.

DIPK-4840/26

Send Date: Aug 21 2026

**Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Irrigation Division
Srinagar**

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Nissar Ahmad Bukhari father of Syed Ayaan Nissar Bukhari resident of Kreeri District Baramulla want to inform the general public through this notice that my name and my wards name has been mistakenly mentioned in the school records Syed Ayaan Nissar son of Syed Nissar Ahmad Bukhri instead of Syed Ayaan Nissar Bukhari son of Nissar Ahmad Bukhari, Now I want to correct it, in this regard if anybody has any objection they may contact the Principal SRM Welkin Educational Trust Sopore within seven days after that no objection will be entertained

Nissar Ahmad Bukhari
Father of Syed Ayaan Nissar Bukhari
R/O:- Kreeri District Baramulla

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Gh Ahmad sheikh S/o Jum Sheikh do hereby notify the general public that I am the registered consumer of electricity connection bearing Consumer No. 0206050002644. I have decided to transfer the said electricity connection in the name of Gh Mohi ud din Ganie S/O Gh Ahmad Ganie. If any person has any objection regarding this transfer, he/she may file the same in writing before the Concerned AEE/Executive Engineer, PDD Sub-Division within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the stipulated period, no objection shall be entertained and the transfers shall be processed as per rules.

Gh Mohi ud din Ganie
S/O Gh Ahmad Ganie

PUBLIC NOTICE

In the Bank records bearing Account No. 0101040100004024, my name and address have been mentioned as Syed Sarwar Hussain S/O Syed Baker Razvi, R/O 19 Sundar Plaza, M.G. Road, Pune 411, whereas my correct name and address are Syed Sarwar Razvi S/O Syed Baqar Shah, R/O Sheeshgari Mohalla, Khanyar, Srinagar. Now, I want to apply for correction of the same in the bank records. If any person has any objection in this regard, he/she may contact the B/M, J&K Bank, Khanyar Branch, within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After seven days, no objection shall be entertained.

Syed Sarwar Razvi
S/O Syed Baqar Shah
R/O Sheeshgari Mohalla, Khanyar, Srinagar
Cell No.: 8899022099

Correct Name: Syed Sarwar Razvi
Correct Father's Name: Syed Baqar Shah

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Name wrongly mentioned in my Passport bearing passport no T 2381992 as Umar Gulzar Tali instead of Umar Gulzar per Adhaar record which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the passport office srinagar within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name..UMAR GULZAR
S/O GULZAR AHMED TALI..
R/O KREERI BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is here by notified that my name has been incorrectly mentioned in my Bank Account as SHAOIB AHMAD BHAT bearing Account No. 0139040100011913 while my correct name is SHOIB MOHAMMAD BHAT S/O GH MOHAMMAD BHAT which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of J&K BANK KREERI authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name..SHOIB MOHAMMAD BHAT
S/O...GH MOHAMMAD BHAT
R/O...TETRA NANGMARG
Account No..0139040100011913
Dist...BARAMULLA

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1st CLASS SOPORE

In the case of MOHD RAFFEQ PARRAY S/O MUSHTAQ AHMAD PARRAY R/O NOORBAGH
C E O MUNICIPAL COUNCIL SOPORE /BDO SANGRAMA /BDO SOPORE

Non applicant
NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

whereas the above case titled case is under process in this court there in to the non applicant u/s 13 (3) of the registration of Birth & Death Act 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant/ applicants SON namely MOHD HAIDER S/O MOHD RAFFEQ PARRAY as 29/06/2021 (dd/mm/yy) at GURO Hospital Whereas through the medium of this proclamation the public at large informed that in case anyone has any objection for the issuance of direction with respect to the registration aforementioned Birth event he/she shall file the same before this court in person or through counsel within seven days from the date of publication of this proclamation if the date fixed is declared holiday the matter will be taken on the next working day.

EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1st CLASS SOPORE

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1st CLASS SOPORE

In the case of FEROZ AHMAD PARRAY S/O MUSHTAQ AHMAD PARRAY R/O NOORBAGH applicant
C E O MUNICIPAL COUNCIL SOPORE /BDO SANGRAMA /BDO SOPORE

Non applicant
NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE
whereas the above titled case is under process in this court there in to the non applicant u/s 13 (3) of the registration of Birth & Death Act 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant/ applicants DAUGHTER namely BUSHRA FEROZ D/O FEROZ AHMAD PARRAY as 21/06/2017 (dd/mm/yy) at M C H SOPORE Whereas through the medium of this proclamation the public at large informed that in case anyone has any objection for the issuance of direction with respect to the registration aforementioned Birth event he/she shall file the same before this court in person or through counsel within seven days from the date of publication of this proclamation if the date fixed is declared holiday the matter will be taken on the next working day

EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1st CLASS SOPORE

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for the information of the general public that I have a PDD electricity agreement in the name of my father Mr. Abdul Ahad Dar S/O Ghulam Qadir Dar R/O Kalli Mohalla, Narbal, Budgam bearing Consumer ID No. 0206050000492. My father has passed away and I Mr. Mohammad Amin Dar S/O Abdul Ahad Dar R/O Kalli Mohalla, Tehsil Narbal, District Budgam, am his legal heir and permanent resident of the same address. I have applied before the PDD Department for transfer of the said electricity connection / agreement in my own name i.e. Mohammad Amin Dar S/O Abdul Ahad Dar. If anybody has any objection regarding the transfer of the said connection, he/she may contact / inform the office of Assistant Executive Engineer, PDD Sub-Division Narbal / Budgam within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained and the department shall transfer the connection in my favour. Applicant:

Mohammad Amin Dar
S/O Abdul Ahad Dar
R/O Kalli Mohalla, Narbal, Budgam
Consumer ID: 0206050000492

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Name wrongly mentioned in my School Records as Mehdi Reza S/o Ajaz Hussain Shiekh R/o Astanpora chattergam D.O.B 06/01/2020 insted of Mehdi Reza Shiekh S/o Ajaz Hussain Shiekh R/o Astanpora chattergam BK Pora Budgam D.O.B 16/01/2020 as per D.O.B Certificate which needs to be corrected. If anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may file his/ her objection in the Office of Muslim international School B.K.Pora within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Mehdi Reza Sheikh
S/o Ajaz Hussain Shiekh
R/o Astanpora chattergam
BK Pora Budgam Chadoora
Budgam

Office of The Executive Magistrate 1st Class Narbal District Budgam Notice For the General public

is notified that the applicant namely Nazir Ahmad Bhat S/o Mohammad Ramzan bhat R/o yarigund Tehsil Narbal District Budgam applied for the Date of Birth of his Own namely Nazir Ahmad Bhat S/o Mohammed Ramzan Bhat. The applicant intends to register the Date of Birth of his Own as per school records / medical Board is 06/ 11/ 1966
If any one has objection in this regard, Convince Office of the Executive Magistrate 1st Class Narbal District Budgam within the period of seven days. After completion of said period no objection will be entertained.

20/08/2026

Office of The Executive Magistrate 1st Class Narbal District Budgam Notice For the General public

is notified that the applicant namely Abdul Rahim Sheikh S/o Late Ghulam Ahmad Sheikh R/o Kawoosa Khalisa Tehsil Narbal District Budgam applied for the issuance of Death certificate of his father Ghulam Ahmad Sheikh S/o Habibullah Sheikh
The applicant intends to register the Date of his of his father per Masjid Committee 30/03/1990
If any one has objection in this regard, Convince Office of the Executive Magistrate 1st Class Narbal District Budgam within the period of seven days. After completion of said period no objection will be entertained.

20/08/2026





SKUAST-K's Celebrates World Entrepreneurs' Day with Startups

HT News Network

SKUAST-K Innovation, Incubation & Entrepreneurship Centre (SKIE) celebrated World Entrepreneurs' Day, bringing together resident startups, mentors and industry partners under the banner "Stakeholders of Change" for a day-long programme reflecting on Kashmir's growing entrepreneurship ecosystem.

The session was chaired by Director Education, SKUAST-K Prof Altaf Mohd Bhat, with Chief Executive Officer of SKIE delivering the keynote address to an audience of founders, innovators and prospective entrepreneurs.

In his address, Naveed Hamid traced SKIE's journey from an idea to an institution that now



stands behind more than 125 registered startups across agri-tech, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, deep-tech, food processing and rural enterprise, backed by funding partners including DST New Delhi, i-TBI, BIRAC, MEITY, NABARD and IFAD. He pointed to the centre's recent recognition as Start Startup

Ecosystem Award and "Incubator of the Year", when that recognition came with a fifty-lakh seed fund, we didn't see it as a trophy. We saw it as fifty lakh reasons to go back to work faster.

"This centre does not build startups. You do. We only build the room you build them in," Naveed

Hamid told the audience, urging founders in the audience not to see Kashmir's biotech and agri-tech challenges as reasons to look elsewhere, but as the very market they were uniquely positioned to serve. He added that SKIE's mentors and doors "don't close when the pitch deck stops being the hard part and the business starts being the hard part."

Director Education, SKUAST K Prof Altaf Mohd Bhat, chairing the proceedings, "commended SKIE's role in embedding entrepreneurship into the university's academic culture and encouraged audience to see startups as a viable career path alongside conventional employment".

He further deliberated on Entrepreneurs' Day and quoted let's

stop treating entrepreneurship as an event we celebrate once a year, and start treating it as the daily infrastructure of this university, this valley, this Union Territory. Let the next INNOVATION fellow who walks through that door find not a favour, but a system. Let the next founder who signs an incubation agreement in this building find not a ceremony, but a relationship that outlasts the ribbon-cutting. Let the next visitor who calls SKUAST-K a "ready reference" for innovation centres across the country say it not because we told them to, but because they walked through here and saw it for themselves, in you.

The "Stakeholders of Change" segment brought together founders from SKIE's incubated ventures alongside mentors.

Committee on Environment deliberates on measures for conservation, management of vital Lakes of J&K

Chairman Tarigami calls for scientific data, community involvement to guide our conservation efforts

HT News Network



SRINAGAR, 21ST AUGUST 2026: The Committee on Environment today convened for a meeting at Assembly Complex here to discuss and deliberate on measures for the conservation and management of Hokersar, Mansabal, Wular, Nigeen, Mansar and Surinsar Lakes and other wetlands of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was chaired by Chairman of the Committee, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, and attended by Prof. Gharu Ram, Dr. Baldev Raj Sharma, Daleep Singh, Showkat Hussain Ganie, Javaid Ahmad Mirchal, Sajjad Shafi, Dr. Rameshwar Singh and Devyani Rana; members of the committee.

The meeting was also attended by Chairman JK PCC Vasu Yadav; CWLW & PCCF WL Suneesh Buxy; VCLCMA, FALCMA, Regional Wildlife Wardens of Kashmir, Jammu and Rajouri/Poonch, CEO Mansabal Development Authority, Project Coordinator WUCMA, WLWs of Jammu, Wetland and Kathua, and CED WUCMA Wular besides officers of the Assembly Secretariat. Speaking during the meeting, the Chairman stressed that wetlands are vital for ecology, biodiversity and flood mitigation in J&K. He expressed concern over environmental pollution and human interference in these water bodies. He said that everyone has a duty to protect these natural assets for future generations. Reviewing the CAG audit paras, Tarigami said that Scientific data and community involvement must guide our conservation efforts. He directed the concerned departments to submit time-bound Action Taken Reports on conservation measures taken for the 6 major lakes and other wetlands of J&K.

The Committee was informed that using high-resolution satellite imagery, a comprehensive exercise has been undertaken to identify wetlands across the UT. It was informed that earlier wetlands above 2.25 hectares were mapped, followed by those between 2.25 to 1 hectare, and now even wetlands below 1 hectare are being identified. So far, approximately 1700 wetlands have been identified in J&K. To ensure transparency and easy access, the Department informed that a dedicated State-level portal is being developed having layers for Forest boundaries and Protected Area Network of the Wildlife Department.

The Chairman directed that this portal be made public-friendly. He said that the portal will help clear confusion about boundaries and will be accessible to Hon'ble Members, departments and the public.

The Chairman directed that the portal should include data on vegetation, water bodies, rivers and other ecological features in a phased manner. He emphasized that public access to this data will bring greater accountability and community participation in wetland conservation.

Meeting held by Railway officials with Director, Horticulture regarding transportation of Kashmiri apples by rail

HT News Network

Jammu, 21 August 2026 With the objective of ensuring safe, timely and economical transportation of apples in the upcoming apple season 2026, an important meeting was organized today on 21st August 2026 at Srinagar by Railway officials with the Director, Horticulture, Planning & Marketing, Srinagar and all stakeholders. The meeting was attended by Assistant Commercial Manager / FS / Jammu and Assistant Operations Manager / M / Jammu on behalf of Jammu Division, along with officials of the Horticulture Department, fruit growers, Kisan aggregators and business aggregators, including about 30-35 prominent representatives. In this meeting, various traders, farmers and apple traders participated physically as well as through virtual mode. The main objective of the meeting was to ensure



safe, timely and economical transportation of apples through Railways in the upcoming apple season.

Various important issues were discussed in the meeting, especially detailed deliberations were held on transportation of fruits from Anantnag and Pampore Goods Sheds and movement of apples through parcel train from Budgam to Adarsh Nagar Delhi. The Horticulture Department, fruit growers and apple traders expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the Railways for the services provided last year. They informed that last year in 2025, when the National Highway was closed due to natural reasons,

Railways played a vital role in that difficult time. It is noteworthy that last year, Jammu Division successfully transported about 20,000 tonnes of apples from Kashmir to other mandis of the country through Goods Trains and JPP-RCS Parcel Train, Parcel Vans and BCN wagons, which saved the growers and traders from incurring huge losses.

In view of the upcoming apple season 2026, the transportation of apples to different parts of the country through Railways this year also was discussed in the meeting. In this regard, it was decided that the Directorate of Horticulture will provide detailed information regarding the anticipated quantity and transportation requirements to the Railways within a week, so that timely arrangement of parcel van rakes and BCN wagons can be made by the Railways. In the meeting, Railway officials advised all aggregators to consider Railway parcel service as per their requirement.

SKUAST-K Builds Capacity of Agricultural Officers on Organic Farming and Certification

HT News Network

Shuhama, August 21 Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Ganderbal, SKUAST-Kashmir, organised



a one-day workshop on Organic Standards, Technologies and Certification for Agricultural Officers of Ganderbal district in collaboration with HADP Project No. 16.

The workshop aimed to raise awareness and build the capacity of Agricultural Officers regarding the importance, principles, and certification requirements of organic farming, while charting a roadmap to make organic agriculture both profitable and sustainable.

The programme began with an introduction and welcome address by Dr. Moneesa Bashir.

Dr. Ajaz Ahmad Malik, Senior Scientist and Head, KVK Ganderbal, highlighted the importance of maintaining soil health, biodiversity and ecological balance while minimising the use of synthetic chemical inputs. He acknowledged the support and leadership of Prof. Parmmeet Singh, PI, HADP-16, in making the workshop possible.

During the technical sessions, KVK scientists deliberated on the basic principles of organic farming, production standards, certification procedures, soil health and nutrient management, permitted and prohibited inputs, conversion period, inspection and traceability. Special emphasis was placed on available certification systems and adherence to prescribed standards throughout production and handling to ensure the authenticity of organic produce and consumer confidence.

An interactive session enabled participants to discuss practical issues related to organic certification, farm practices, documentation, input selection and marketing of organic produce.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. Faiqa Syyed, Scientist, KVK Ganderbal, and concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Suja Nabi Qureshi, Scientist, KVK Ganderbal.

Mission Shakti spreads awareness on women empowerment in Shopian

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, AUGUST 21: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women, Mission Shakti Shopian, under the banner of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, organised an awareness programme at Government Middle School Mashwara, Block Keller, with a special focus on girl education, empowerment, safety and protection. During the programme, students and participants were sensitised about the importance of educating girls and ensuring equal opportunities for them to pursue their studies and build a bright, secure and dignified future. The team emphasised that an educated girl is the foundation of an educated, empowered and progressive society. Participants were encouraged to support girls in continuing their education and to promote a safe, positive and supportive environment where every girl.

SKUAST-K and Spices Board Conduct Training Programme for Tribal Spice Growers in Khag Drung

HT News Network

Budgam, August 21 In an effort to extend agricultural outreach to remote and tribal regions, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Budgam of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir), in collaboration with the Regional Office of the Spices Board, Srinagar, organised a one-day training and awareness programme for spice growers in the tribal area of Khag Drung in Budgam district.

The programme was led by Ashutosh Gautam of the Spices Board and Dr. Ambreen Nabi of SKUAST-Kashmir, KVK Budgam, and focused on strengthening



farmers' knowledge of spice production, post-harvest management, quality standards, sustainable production practices and market opportunities.

During the inaugural session, Dr. Iram Farooq provided the participants with an overview of the objectives of the programme and the activities of the Spices Board. She also

highlighted the outcomes of previous collaborations between the Spices Board and Krishi Vigyan Kendras, particularly in facilitating improved market linkages and expanding opportunities for farmers.

In the technical session, Ashutosh Gautam elaborated on the various activities and support mechanisms of the Spices Board. He apprised the participants about the existing schemes, eligibility criteria, application procedures, training opportunities and market linkage initiatives available to spice growers.

He also discussed improved production practices and post-harvest management of saffron and Kashmiri red chilli.

Javed Rana reviews Wildlife department functioning, development initiatives

HT News Network

JAMMU, AUGUST 21: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a meeting to review the functioning of the Wildlife Department and the progress of various ongoing and sanctioned projects.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on projects sanctioned under CAPEX for the Pir Panjal and Chenab regions besides various development works at Jambu Zoo. During the meeting, Javed Rana reviewed various developmental, plantation and conservation initiatives being undertaken across the Pir Panjal



and Chenab Divisions under CAPEX. He emphasised the need for timely completion of all sanctioned works and activities while ensuring the highest standards of quality and sustainability.

Appreciating the efforts of frontline staff, the Minister encouraged them to continue working with dedication towards strengthening the department's conservation

efforts and advancing its green mission. The Minister reviewed the progress of infrastructure being developed at Jambu Zoo, including new and upgraded animal enclosures and specialised habitats for different species, along with facilities for rescued wildlife. He stressed that all such works should be planned and executed with due emphasis on animal welfare, scientific management.

Government Acts to Curb Sugar Price Rise, Ensure Adequate Availability During Festive Season

HT News Network/PIB

New Delhi: Sugar prices have increased in recent weeks, from 48.18 per kg on 20 July 2026 to 55.70 per kg on 20 August 2026. The Government is closely monitoring the situation and has taken a series of measures to ensure adequate availability of sugar and stable prices for consumers.

Rise in sugar prices cannot be attributed to ethanol

It is incorrect to attribute the recent increase in sugar prices to diversion of sugar for ethanol production.

In fact, the share of sugar diverted for ethanol has declined from around 12% in 2022-23 to around 9% in 2025-26. Moreover, nearly three-fourths of the ethanol produced in the country now comes from grains, particularly maize.

The present increase in sugar prices is due to a combination of factors, including lower-than-expected

domestic production, increased demand ahead of the festive season, weather-related damage to the sugarcane crop, tightening global sugar supplies and speculation and hoarding by some sections of the industry.

Sugar production lower than initial estimates Sugar production during the current season is expected to be around 306 LMT, compared to the initial estimate of around 343 LMT by sugarcane-growing States.

Production has been affected by Red Rot and Top Borer disease in sugarcane, as well as waterlogging caused by excess rainfall.

Despite the lower than estimated production, adequate sugar stocks are available in the country to meet domestic demand until the new crushing season begins in October.

Sugar prices are rising globally too

The tightening of sugar supplies is a global



phenomenon and is not limited to India.

The global sugar deficit for 2026-27 is estimated at around 33 LMT. Concerns over weather conditions have further affected the global outlook.

As a result, international sugar prices have risen sharply from \$474 per tonne on 30 June 2026 to \$552 per tonne on 20 August 2026 – an increase of

over 16% in less than two months.

Ethanol programme has helped farmers and strengthened sugar mills

India normally produces around 320-340 LMT of sugar annually, against domestic consumption of around 280-290 LMT. In years of surplus production, excess stocks block the funds of sugar mills and can delay payments to sugarcane farmers.

Diversion of excess sugar towards ethanol has helped address this structural problem and improved the financial health of sugar mills.

The results are visible. As on 20 August 2026, 97% of sugarcane dues for the 2025-26 sugar season have already been paid to farmers.

The improved financial position of sugar mills has also reduced their dependence on Government support. While around 14,600 crore of subsidy was provided to the sugar industry between 2014 and 2021, no such subsidy has been announced

since 2021-22. At the same time, sugar prices for consumers have remained broadly stable over the longer term, increasing by only around 3% annually between August 2024 and July 2026.

Government acting against hoarding and to increase supply The Government has observed that speculation and hoarding by some sugar mills and traders have also contributed to the recent price increase. Several steps have therefore been taken:

A stock limit of 400 tonnes has been imposed on sugar dealers across the country from 1 August to 30 November 2026.

From 1 September, bulk consumers will not be permitted to hold sugar stocks exceeding 15 days of consumption.

Joint teams of Central and State Government officials are carrying out physical verification of sugar stocks at mills to check hoarding and artificial scarcity.



'I can't do the things my friends do': Life as a teenage carer

Ava-Grace Britton is 17 and studying acting at college in north London. She likes going out, seeing her friends and wants to go to university next year. Unlike most of her peers, however, she also cares for her father, Paul, who has significant mobility and memory issues after suffering a series of strokes eight years ago.

Along with her mother Karen, Ava-Grace monitors Paul's blood glucose levels, gives him medication and helps with dinner and jobs around the house. "I worry about him all the time," Ava-Grace told the BBC. "Before I go to college I help him and most days I have to return home quickly to look after him."

She is not alone. Officially, census data suggests there are around 130,000 carers under the age of 18 in England and Wales.

But the true figure is thought to be much higher, with many young carers hidden from view. The Carers Trust estimates there could be as many as 1 million carers under 18, with another 500,000 aged 18 to 25.

For some the responsibilities are significant, amounting to more than 50 hours a week - with consequences on young carers' social and academic prospects.

'Life upside down'
Paul's strokes were brought on by a sepsis infection, which he caught after cutting his thumb at work. His health is further compromised by diabetes which needs careful monitoring. His condition deteriorated so much he had to



give up work as a borehole engineer. He is now cared for full-time by Ava-Grace and Karen, who runs her own charity which organises lunch clubs for the elderly and vulnerable.

"It turned our life upside down," said Karen. "Paul spent three months in hospital and in rehab. I don't know how I would cope without Ava-Grace."

Ava-Grace says her caring responsibilities have demanded a number of trade-offs over the years. "You have to make sacrifices. I can't do all the things my friends do," she said.

"At one point I was really enjoying dance and could have started competing, but it would have been a huge time commitment which wasn't possible.

While enjoying college now, she had to move schools several times after being bullied and



struggling with attendance because of her caring responsibilities and epilepsy, which she has to manage.

"I worry about the future," she said. "I really want to go to university, but can't imagine going anywhere too far from home. I know my dad needs me."

More than half of young carers, like Ava-Grace, provide support to parents.

The rest mainly look after siblings and grandparents. The Carers Trust says there has been a big rise in non-parent carers in recent years as the cost of living crisis has meant parents have had to prioritise earning money, leaving children to care for other family members.

That can make socialising and pursuing hobbies difficult as well as lead to higher rates of bullying, school absence and even suspensions.

Young carers are 25% less likely to achieve five GCSE passes including English and Maths than their peers, according to Department for Education data.

As a result they are twice as likely to be out of education, employment or training for two years or more.

Support for carers
Some support is available. Young carers are entitled to assessments from their local council to look at the impact on their health, education and wellbeing.

"When young carers get these it can make a real difference," said Andy McGowan, the lead on young carers at the Carers Trust.

"But it takes many years of caring before they are actually identified. And then the support in place to help is patchy, it really depends on where you live."

McGowan, who was a young carer himself to both his parents, says even when help is given to the young in the form of respite breaks, peer support

and counselling, the underlying issue – the caring demands being placed on them – is often not addressed.

"The threshold to get adult social care from councils to relieve the caring burden is so high, many don't get help. Until that is addressed, the inequalities young carers face will not be tackled."

The NHS could do more, he added, particularly in terms of preventative and early support for things like substance misuse and mental health, which are also contributory factors to the caring responsibilities young carers have.

"Often young carers are left to fight their own battles for too long - and so school and their own health come second," he said.

In July, the government published an action plan for unpaid carers which included measures to support young carers, including improved help in schools and joined-up support between the NHS, social care and education.

Other parts of the UK have their own policies – in Scotland, for example, there is a dedicated young carers' grant.

"Through our new national care service, this government is determined to build a system that recognises the extraordinary contribution of unpaid carers, supports them better and, in particular, helps young carers," a government spokesman told the BBC.

For families like the Brittons, more help cannot come soon enough.

"I worry about the impact caring has on Ava-Grace," said Karen.

"She has had to grow up very quickly – that has had benefits, she is calmer and more mature than many girls her age and she has a real strength about her. But Ava-Grace and others like her need more help and understanding."

(BBC News)

Wellness habits you can start now - at no (or little) cost

Wellness has become a bit of a buzzword - and one that often comes with a hefty price tag. Luxury spa days, floating sound baths in five-star hotels, retreats costing thousands of pounds; these are all wonderful, if you can afford them.

But what about the rest of us? From health experts, entrepreneurs and influencers, here are ways to pursue a healthy body, mind and soul without exhausting your overdraft.

Head to wellness meet-ups
The cost of studio memberships can be pretty high, so people are increasingly organising their own free or affordable wellness-based gatherings - these can usually be found through local groups on social media, and on platforms like Meetup.

Yoga teacher Anastasia Mirraslavskaya, for example, hosts a meetup called Sunday Reset in London. Every month the group meets in a different city park to do yoga and meditate together, and they also come together for online meditation sessions over Zoom. Some of the sessions are paid-for - about £10 - and others are free.

"I wanted to create a space where people could experience [yoga and meditation] in a simple and accessible way," she told the BBC.

Erica Correa, a model, is trying to do something similar in Liverpool. She's started arranging a regular meetup called Soft Sunday, where people come together for curated wellness experiences. The last session was a pilates class, followed by a beauty experience.

"Everything about Soft Sunday is intention over expense," she told the BBC. "Wellness is more about the decisions that you make in life, how

you protect your time."

For now they're invitation-only, but she's hoping to open them up to more people soon.

Start gardening (even if you don't have a garden)
Gardening is often described as boosting physical and mental wellbeing, and it doesn't have to mean spending hundreds of pounds on plants and equipment. Research by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) found that people who garden every day report higher wellbeing and lower stress levels.

If you don't have your own garden, many councils offer allotments where you can rent a plot for a relatively small annual fee.

Community gardens are another option - you can find ones local to you on the Good to Grow map, or the RHS's website. Many welcome volunteers free of charge and provide tools and equipment, making it easy to get outdoors, meet new people and learn new skills.

Damien Newman, Thrive's training, education and consultancy manager, said they provided "the opportunity to be engaged in gardening and connect to a welcoming social group".

"It's good across our holistic health spectrum, good physically, cognitively, socially, psychologically and emotionally," he said.

Take up an 'old-fashioned' hobby
From birdwatching to crocheting, hobbies once seen as old-fashioned are also finding a new audience as people look for inexpensive ways to improve their wellbeing.

Birdwatching, for example, costs little more than a trip to your local park, with local groups and online communities across the UK. You can search for birdwatching groups near you on the RSPB's website.

And its benefits may go beyond simply spending time outdoors. Research suggests that just 30 minutes of birdwatching can boost happiness, improve wellbeing and help people feel more connected to nature.

Crochet is also making a comeback and can be picked up for just a few pounds. All you need to get started is a hook and a ball of yarn.

Research has also linked crochet with improved wellbeing, with people saying it helped them cope with stress, grief, chronic illness and other life challenges.

Get moving outdoors
Exercise doesn't have to revolve around the gym. Whether it's bodyweight

workouts, outdoor yoga or running, there are plenty of ways to stay active without spending much money.

Bodyweight training, also known as calisthenics, uses your own body weight for exercises such as push-ups, squats and pull-ups to help build strength. Because it requires little or no equipment, it's an easy way to improve strength, flexibility and co-ordination at home or in your local park.

Running has also grown in popularity, with about 7.1 million adults now taking part - an increase of more than 500,000 over the past year - with more people joining local run clubs or heading out on their own.

For beginners, the NHS Couch to 5K programme offers a free nine-week plan designed to gradually build fitness and help people run five kilometres without stopping.

And once you've reached that point, you could try one of the almost 1,500 free parkruns in the UK every weekend - find one close to you on the Parkrun website.

Find your zen with online sound baths Sound baths are very 2026.

For the uninitiated, a sound bath is where a practitioner plays crystal or Tibetan sound bowls, gongs and chimes in a soothing way. They're calming, relaxing, and the vibrations can help put you into a meditative state.

But depending on where you are, in-person sessions can be pricey, or hard to come by.

So, for an affordable alternative, you can find recordings of sound baths on platforms like YouTube and Spotify and recreate the experience at home. Some meditation apps also have in-built sound options that you can meditate to, though these sometimes come with a subscription cost.

Lyz Cooper, founder of the British Academy of Sound Therapy, told the BBC that while the quality of recordings online can vary, there are good ones out there - just make sure to look up recordings created by experienced practitioners or established organisations.

"If you wear over-ear headphones, lie down, close your eyes and make sure you are in a place where you're not going to be disturbed, the therapeutic benefits of listening are potentially very good," she said.

"Ultimately, the most important thing is that people find an approach they'll genuinely use."

(BBC News)

Sri Lanka bring in uncapped Mishara, Arachchige for must-win Colombo Test

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, AUG 21 :Sri Lanka have brought in uncapped batter Kamil Mishara and all-rounder Sahan Arachchige as two forced changes to their Test squad for the second match against India in Colombo, amid a growing injury crisis to a couple of senior players, who featured in the 165-run defeat in the series opener in Galle.

The second Test, which begins Sunday is a must-win game for the hosts, who will need to boost a depleted batting line-up to level the two-match series.

Mishara and Arachchige have earned their call-ups on the back of strong recent performances. Arachchige was the leading run-scorer for his side in the recent series against India A, while Mishara has continued to impress in domestic cricket.

The uncapped duo was picked in



place of Kusal Mendis, Dinesh Chandimal and Pathum Nissanka, who have all been ruled out of the Colombo Test.

Mendis is recovering from a serious hamstring injury, while Nissanka remains sidelined following wrist surgery. Chandimal, meanwhile, suffered a concussion on the fourth day of the Galle Test and

will have to serve the mandatory seven-day stand-down period.

The absences could open the door for Mishara and Arachchige to make their Test debuts as Sri Lanka look to strengthen a batting unit that struggled against India in Galle.

India's victory in the opening Test was powered by young left-arm spinner

Manav Suthar, who claimed 10 wickets in only his second Test, while Devdutt Padikkal's 167 helped the visitors establish a substantial first-innings lead.

Sri Lanka currently sit sixth in the World Test Championship standings with a point percentage of 33.33. India are fifth on 53.33%, making the Colombo Test important for both teams as they look to improve their positions in the WTC cycle.

Sri Lanka squad for second Test: Dhananjaya de Silva (captain), Lahiru Udara, Kamil Mishara, Pasindu Sooriyabandara,

Kamindu Mendis, Sahan Arachchige, Sonal Dinusha, Niroshan Dickwella, Keshara Nuwantha, Prabath Jayasuriya, Milan Ratnayake, Lahiru Kumara, Asitha Fernando, Vishwa Fernando.

Henriques ton helps Portugal stay on track for T20 World Cup

United News Of India

HELSINKI, AUG 21 :Former Australia international Moises Henriques has struck a superb century to help Portugal to yet another victory at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Europe Sub-regional Qualifier C event in Finland.

Henriques smashed 111 from just 51 deliveries as Portugal amassed a big score of 211/6 and Czechia could only muster 24/5 from 8.5 overs in reply,

before rain hit the Tikkurila Cricket Ground venue in Vantaa. There was enough play for Portugal to clinch a 91-run victory (DLS method) over Czechia, which was their fourth consecutive success at the event and sets up a mouth-watering contest against Spain on Friday to decide which team progresses through to the regional final on the path to the next edition of the ICC Men's



T20 World Cup in 2028.

Spain too are unbeaten at the Sub-regional event following four victories of their own in Group A, with their latest win coming with a nine-wicket triumph over Bulgaria on Wednesday. They will face Portugal with Henriques in excellent form, with the former Australia all-rounder having scored 178 from three hits at the to be ranked as the leading run-scorer at the event, according to ICC.

Upset wins for Guru Prakash, Manav at Asian Jr Open & Girls Classical Chess Championships



United News Of India

MUMBAI, AUG 21 :The second round of the Asian Junior Open and Girls Classical Chess Championships witnessed several upsets as the battle for honours intensified at the ITC Maratha Sheraton, here.

In the open section, Guru Prakash, rated 2113, stunned the recently crowned Asian Junior Rapid Champion FM Vivaan Vishal Shah (2339), while Manav Kumar defeated the higher-rated FM Arun Kataria.

Hardik Shah held FM Amanmuhammet Hommadov of Turkmenistan to a draw, while Mehul Sondhi shared the point with FM Madhvendra Pratap Sharma.

Top seed IM Mayank Chakraborty maintained his perfect start by defeating Vivaan Sardana to move to 2/2. IM Artem Pingin, IM Apoorv Kamble and IM Aaditya

Dhingra also registered victories to remain among the leaders with perfect scores.

The Girls section also produced its share of surprises, with Sunetra Dey holding the higher-rated FM Prishita Gupta to a draw. Tripurambika V defeated WCM Anushka Babu Kutwal, while Pranavasi S registered an impressive victory over Uzbekistan's WFM Begmuratova Sarvinov. Top seed WFM Pratidee Bordoloi continued her winning run to reach 2/2. Kazakhstan's WFM Mariya Kholyavko and Turkmenistan's WFM Shohradova Lala also maintained perfect scores with victories in the second round.

The championship is being organised by the Maharashtra Chess Association on behalf of the All India Chess Federation and the Asian Chess Federation at the ITC Maratha Sheraton, Mumbai.

Azhar breaks through for maiden title at Kolar Open

United News Of India

KOLAR, AUG 21 :Hyderabad's Mohammad Azhar held his nerve through testing wind and rain to clinch his maiden professional title, winning the INR 1 crore Kolar Open presented by ZION Hills Golf County by two shots here on Friday.

The 27-year-old Azhar carded a one-under 71 in the final round to finish at nine-under 279 (70-68-70-71), overcoming a two-shot deficit at the start of the day and sealing a breakthrough victory on the DP World Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI).

Azhar's triumph earned him the winner's cheque of INR 15 lakh and lifted him seven places from 17th to 10th in the 2026 DP World PGTI Order of Merit. His season earnings rose to INR 35,14,675.

Chandigarh's four-time PGTI winner Angad Cheema (73-68-67-73) and Delhi's three-time winner Shaurya Bhattacharya (68-67-71-75) shared second place at seven-under 281.

Bhattacharya, who began the final round with a two-shot advantage, appeared in control for much of the day before his challenge unravelled dramatically on the closing holes. Consecutive double bogeys on the 17th and 18th handed Azhar the advantage and left Bhattacharya two shots adrift.

It was a second successive runner-up finish at Zion Hills for Bhattacharya, who had also finished second in the inaugural edition last year, two shots behind defending champion Kshitij Naveed Kaul. Azhar, who turned professional in 2020, built his winning round on patience and timely putting. He reached the par-five second green in two and converted the birdie with a two-putt before setting up a tap-in birdie on the fourth.

Hockey World Cup : Dutch challenge awaits Indian men's, women's teams



United News Of India

AMSTELVEEN, AUG 21 :The Indian men's and women's hockey teams face a stern test against Olympic champions the Netherlands to begin their respective second-stage campaigns at the FIH Hockey World Cup Belgium and Netherlands 2026, which is being held simultaneously for both men and women. With the Netherlands, crowned Olympic champions at Paris 2024 in both men's and women's hockey, the fixtures

present the Indian teams with a formidable challenge as the tournament enters a decisive phase.

The Indian women's team will be the first to take on the Dutch, facing the tournament's co-hosts tonight in their opening Pool E encounter at the Wagener Stadium. India entered the second stage unbeaten, having produced an impressive 6-1 win over South Africa before playing out a goalless draw against England. Earlier, the team had also drawn against China.

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