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HEADLINES

TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



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India Women's Kabaddi Team
Captain Pushpa Rana eyes title
defense at 2026 Asian Games

HT BRIEFLY

Two Militants Killed in Overnight
Operation in Udhampur, Search Continues
HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

UDHAMPUR, SEP 17: Security forces killed two militants during an intelligence-based operation in the Brattal area of Udhampur district during the intervening night of September 16 and 17, the Army's White Knight Corps said on Thursday. The operation, designated Operation Sohan, was launched after confirmed intelligence inputs indicated the presence of militants in the general area of Brattal, according to the White Knight Corps. Troops of the Army's White Knight Corps, Jammu and Kashmir Police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jointly conducted the operation despite hostile weather, difficult terrain and poor visibility, the defence forces said. The Army said the operation resulted in the neutralisation of two militants. Arms and ammunition were also recovered from

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Hairdresser Arrested With 13.13
Grams Heroin-Like Substance in Leh
HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

LEH, SEP 17: The Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF), Leh, has arrested a hairdresser after allegedly recovering 13.13 grams of a heroin-like substance from his possession during an operation based on specific intelligence input. The arrested person has been identified as Jaskreet Singh, son of Dharmender Singh, a resident of Ludhiana, who is working as a hairdresser at a reputed salon in

>>> MORE ON P 02

Fresh Snowfall in Gurez Higher
Reaches as Rain, Thunderstorms
Sweep Kashmir
HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 17: A spell of unsettled weather brought rain and thunder activity to several parts of Kashmir during the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday, while fresh snowfall in the higher reaches of north Kashmir's Gurez Valley further lowered temperatures in the mountainous areas. Kabul Gali in the Tulail Valley of Gurez received a fresh layer of snow, covering the high-altitude landscape in white and bringing a marked change in weather conditions in the upper reaches.

>>> MORE ON P 02

Eight Labourers Injured as Tata Mobile
Collides With Electric Pole in Srinagar
HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 17: Eight labourers were injured after the Tata Mobile they were travelling in collided with an electric pole at Pirbagh area on the outskirts of Srinagar, with three of the injured reported to be in critical condition. Reports said the vehicle's driver lost control before colliding with the electric pole. The injured were subsequently brought to SMHS Hospital Srinagar for treatment.

>>> MORE ON P 02

Rain Triggers Power Disruptions
Across Several Kulgam Villages
HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

KULGAM, SEP 17: Electricity supply remained disrupted in several villages of Kulgam district following rainfall during the intervening night, with people complaining that power had not been restored in some areas even after several hours. According to locals, areas affected by the disruption include Sruundo, Bogund, Super, T.N. Pora, Danow, Makindpora, Dedepora and Kulpora. People said electricity disruptions following rainfall

>>> MORE ON P 02

Every Citizen Must Contribute To The Service Campaign : LG Sinha

LG celebrates PM Modi's birthday with children in Srinagar,
highlights welfare and development initiatives

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday celebrated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday with children at the Palaash and Pareesha homes in Srinagar, distributing school bags, sports kits and sweets before visiting the Children's Hospital at Bemina to meet young patients. Launching the month-long Seva Sankalp Abhiyan, Sinha appealed to citizens to participate in service activities and highlighted various government welfare and infrastructure initiatives, including the Seva Setu registration camps aimed at connecting



deprived beneficiaries with government schemes. The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today celebrated the birthday of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi with the

children of the 'Palaash' and 'Pareesha' children's homes in Srinagar. He distributed school bags, sports kits, and sweets, and also reviewed the residential facilities provided to ensure their

well-being. Subsequently, he visited the Children's Hospital at Bemina to spend time with the young patients and wish them a full and speedy recovery.

It is pertinent to mention that the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' begins today, marking a month-long festival of selfless service till 17th October. This campaign celebrates 25 years of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's public service, transforming India from the "Fragile Five" to the world's top five economies.

Over the next month, 12 programmes will include school competitions on 'Mere Sapno ka Bharat',

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"Leave Your Ego, Tell us Where The Reservation File is": Aga Ruhullah

Srinagar MP seeks clarity from J&K Government
over delay in reviewing reservation policy



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Srinagar Lok Sabha MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Thursday questioned the Jammu and Kashmir Government over the delay in addressing the reservation issue, alleging that the administration was not serious about pursuing the matter.

recruitment and its potential impact on employment opportunities, Ruhullah urged the government to disclose the status and contents of the file and said he was prepared to accompany students in pursuing the matter with the concerned authorities.

Srinagar Lok Sabha MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Thursday questioned the Jammu and Kashmir government over the delay in addressing the reservation issue, alleging that the administration was not serious about pursuing the matter.

Speaking to reporters, Ruhullah said the issue had been discussed for nearly two years but the government had failed to show urgency in taking it forward.

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J&K House in Amritsar upgraded to support patients, visitors

Renovated facility offers affordable
accommodation near major hospitals

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

AMRITSAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday inaugurated the renovated Jammu & Kashmir House at 2-Court Road, Amritsar, upgraded at an approximate cost of 2.30 crore to provide affordable and comfortable accommodation to J&K residents, particularly patients and their attendants visiting the city for medical treatment. The facility now includes four guest rooms with attached amenities, a common lounge, dining area and kitchen, with the Chief Minister directing officials to maintain high standards of cleanliness, hospitality and upkeep. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today inaugurated the renovated Jammu & Kashmir House at Amritsar, Punjab.

The heritage property, located at 2-Court Road, Amritsar has been



comprehensively upgraded with modern amenities to provide affordable and comfortable accommodation to residents of Jammu and Kashmir visiting Amritsar, particularly patients and their attendants travelling to the city for medical treatment.

>>> MORE ON P 02

"People are watching how legislators raise their concerns": Rahim Rather

Speaker calls for constructive debate, discipline and people-centric business during Autumn Session

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather on Thursday called upon legislators to uphold the dignity and decorum of the House and ensure constructive, people-oriented deliberations during the Autumn Session beginning September 21. Chairing the All Party-cum-Business Advisory Committee meeting, he stressed that elected representatives must use the Assembly to effectively articulate public and constituency concerns, while members suggested measures including regulated Zero



Hour, advance circulation of legislative material and restrictions on mobile phone use inside the House. : Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative

smooth, orderly and people-oriented functioning of the House.

The meeting was attended by Leader of

Assembly (JKLA), Abdul Rahim Rather, today chaired a meeting of the All Party cum Business Advisory Committee (BAC) ahead of the Autumn Session of the Legislative Assembly, scheduled to commence on September 21, 2026, with a focus on ensuring

Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma, Ali Mohammad Sagar, Mubarik Gul, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, Nizamuddin Bhat, Sajad Gani Lone, Mir Mohammad Fayaz and Choudhary Mohammad Akram. The Speaker sought their valuable suggestions for making the forthcoming Assembly Session more fruitful, meaningful and responsive to public concerns. He emphasised the need to provide adequate opportunities to the elected representatives to raise issues pertaining to their respective constituencies and bring matters of public importance to the floor of the House.

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HT BOTTOM NEWS

"J&K's Traditional Crafts Can Reach New Global Markets": Atul Dulloo

Action Plan targets 2,000 crore textile and handicraft exports by 2030



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Chief Secretary Atul Dulloo on Thursday called for a coordinated strategy to strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's

handicraft and handloom export ecosystem, with the newly framed Action Plan targeting an increase in textile and apparel exports from the present 800 crore to 2,000 crore by 2030. Reviewing the plan, Dulloo

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Waqf Board Reviews Arrangements For Urs at Dastgeer Sahib Shrine

Darakhshan Andrabi Stresses Cleanliness,
Facilities and Preservation of Heritage

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi on Thursday reviewed arrangements for devotees at the historic Dastgeer Sahib Shrine in Khanyar ahead of the Annual Urs. Inspecting cleanliness, visitor facilities and ongoing developmental and beautification works, Andrabi directed officials to ensure timely completion of projects while preserving the sanctity and heritage of the shrine and providing devotees with a clean, comfortable and spiritually

serene environment. Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson and Minister of



State Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi on Thursday visited the historic Dastgeer Sahib Shrine at

>>> MORE ON P 02

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates multiple development projects at Pampore

■ **HT News Network**

PAMPORE, SEPTEMBER 17: Minister for Education, Social Welfare and Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today visited Pampore Constituency and inaugurated multiple development projects, aimed at strengthening the educational, healthcare and public service infrastructure in the area.

The Minister was accompanied by Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Pampore, Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi; MLA Tral, Rafiq Ahmad Naik; MLA Pulwama, Waheed Ur Rehman Para and MLA Rajpora, Ghulam Mohi Uddin Mir.

Earlier in the day, the Minister inaugurated the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) Pulwama main building at Pampore. The project is expected to provide enhanced facilities for teacher education, training and capacity building.

On the occasion, Sakeena Itoo said that strengthening the institutions

dedicated to teacher training is essential for improving the quality of school education and equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills required to meet the emerging educational needs. She highlighted that government is committed towards modernising the education sector and creating better institutional facilities for students, teachers and other stakeholders. She said that investments in educational infrastructure, coupled with continuous professional development of teachers, are important for building a responsive and future-ready education system. On the occasion, Minister also distributed regularisation orders among 17 CPWs. She described the step as an important measure towards the welfare and professional security of the concerned workers and highlighted the government's commitment to strengthening social welfare mechanisms and ensuring support to personnel working in this sector. Later, Sakeena Itoo along with the accompanying MLAs, inaugurated



the Science Laboratory Block at Government Degree College (GDC) Pampore.

Addressing the gathering in the auditorium of GDC Pampore, the Minister said that a college is not merely a physical structure but an institution that shapes the intellectual, social and professional growth of young people. She emphasised the need to make higher education more

responsive to the changing aspirations of students and the evolving requirements of the employment landscape.

Referring to the year-on-year increase in enrolment at GDC Pampore, Sakeena Itoo appreciated the college faculty and staff for their efforts in strengthening the institution and creating a conducive academic environment. She said that the growing

enrolment reflects increasing interest among the students in pursuing higher education locally.

The Minister said that the students possess considerable talent and potential and stressed the need for a skill-oriented and innovation-driven curriculum that enables them to translate academic learning into practical capabilities. She also called for sustained efforts towards creating a safe, comfortable and inclusive campus environment where the students can pursue their studies with confidence. She urged the college authorities to continue encouraging co-curricular activities, innovation and skill development alongside academics so that students are better prepared for higher studies, entrepreneurship and employment opportunities. Sakeena Itoo also released the 2nd issue of biannual college newsletter "Shakh-e-Zafraan" and unveiled "Oneirataxia", a collection of poems authored by Dr. Gazala Gayas, Principal, Government Degree College Pampore.

DR TASADUK HUSSAIN ITOO AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS FELLOWSHIP OF THE ACADEMY OF MEDICAL EDUCATORS, UK

■ **HT News Network**

Dr Tasaduk Hussain Itoo, noted physician, medical educator, public health professional, and medical writer from Jammu & Kashmir, has been awarded the prestigious Fellowship of the Academy of Medical Educators (AoME), UK. The recognition marks a significant milestone in his professional journey and acknowledges his sustained commitment to medical education, professional development, teaching, learning, and the advancement of healthcare education.



Over the years, Dr Itoo has developed a multidisciplinary professional profile encompassing medicine, public health, medical education, scientific practice, diabetes care, and health awareness. His work as a medical writer and educator has also focused on translating health knowledge into accessible information for learners, healthcare professionals, and the wider community.

The award of FAcadMed adds another significant distinction to Dr Itoo's growing portfolio of national and international professional recognitions. Dr Itoo has also been assigned as an assessor by the Academy recently.

The Academy of Medical Educators (AoME) is a UK-based professional body dedicated to promoting excellence in medical and healthcare education. Fellowship represents an advanced level of professional recognition within the Academy and reflects an individual's experience, contribution, and commitment to the standards and values of medical education. Dr Itoo's progression from Membership, MAcadMed to Fellowship, FAcadMed represents an important advancement in his association with the Academy and further strengthens his professional identity as a medical educator.

Commenting on the achievement, Dr Itoo described the Fellowship as a deeply meaningful recognition of his continuing commitment to education and service and he emphasised that medical education is not limited to formal teaching, but also involves lifelong learning, reflective practice, evidence-informed healthcare, mentorship, communication, and sharing knowledge for the benefit of patients and society.

Workshop on Interlinking of Budget with SDGs held at Civil Secretariat, Srinagar

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: A workshop on "SDG Budget Tagging & Outcome-Oriented Financing Framework" was held today at Civil Secretariat, here with the objective of strengthening the linkage between the public expenditure, budgetary allocations and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The workshop was presided over by the Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Finance, Shailendra Kumar and attended by senior officers including DG Budget, DG Codes, DG Resources, DG Audit & Trainings (A&T), Director SDG, Director DED-II, Directors Planning and Directors Finance of various Administrative Departments, besides resource persons from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The event focused on the need to move from SDG



monitoring to SDG financing by linking identified development gaps with appropriate schemes, budgetary allocations and measurable outcomes. It was emphasised that SDG Budget Tagging would not involve creation of a separate SDG budget. It would instead bring an SDG perspective to the existing budgetary framework, enabling better assessment of whether public expenditure is addressing the identified development gaps and delivering intended outcomes. The participants deliberated on mapping of

existing UT Schemes, Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Central Sector Schemes with relevant SDG Goals and Targets to promote convergence, avoid duplication and identify financing gaps. The exercise is aimed at strengthening the linkage between resources, expenditure and development outcomes. Emphasis was also laid on outcome-oriented planning, with departments to prepare SDG-wise Action Plans covering identified gaps, targets, interventions, beneficiaries, responsibilities, resources.

Javid Dar reviews sheep breeding initiatives at Khimber Farm

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today visited the Sheep Breeding Farm at Khimber and reviewed the ongoing breeding programmes and developmental activities.

The Minister stressed the need for transformative and scientific interventions to revolutionise the sheep sector in Jammu and Kashmir, enhancing the productivity towards greater self-sufficiency in mutton production. Highlighting the government's Embryo Transfer Technology (ETT) programme, he said establishment of ETT laboratories across districts will enable rapid multiplication of superior germplasm and accelerate genetic improvement. He said that the Cabinet has



approved establishment of 20 ETT laboratories, one in each district, as a major intervention in this direction. Javid Dar also stressed the importance of scientifically utilising high-genetic-merit imported breeds, including Texel and Dorper, for strengthening the local breeding programmes. He said the focus should be on transferring superior genetic traits into locally adapted populations to improve meat productivity and strengthen the domestic mutton sector.

The Minister directed the department to ensure scientific selection, conservation and multiplication of quality

germplasm and its wider dissemination among farmers. He also directed that a transparent, scientifically formulated SOP be notified for allocation of breeding sheep to farmers, ensuring objective selection of beneficiaries, proper utilisation of superior germplasm and wider access to quality breeding stock.

He called for greater participation of youth in modern sheep husbandry, emphasising its potential for entrepreneurship, employment and strengthening rural livelihoods. He directed the department to provide aspiring young farmers with training.

DDC Kulgam chairs meeting to assess progress of Jal Jeevan Mission

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 17: District Development Commissioner (DDC), Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today chaired a review meeting at the Mini Secretariat, Kulgam to assess the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the district.

During the meeting, a detailed review of the ongoing works, functionality of completed works, provision of water supplies in quality and quantity as per JJM norms, physical and financial progress of schemes and works was conducted. It was informed that out of 221 sanctioned works, 141 have been completed as on date, while work on 80 works is ongoing.

DDC Kulgam directed the concerned officers of executing departments to expedite the execution of the remaining works with special emphasis on the completion and commissioning of Rapid Sand Filtration Plants (RSFPs) and water supply schemes while targeting the 100% Har Ghar Jal certification in the district at the earliest.

The DDC also reviewed the Action



Taken Report (ATR) of last meeting held on the scheme along with the status of mandatory compliances under JJM 2.0 and measures for the protection and strengthening of drinking water sources under JJM 2.0.

The meeting was attended by the Superintending Engineer, Hydraulic Circle Anantnag/Kulgam; Chief Planning Officer Kulgam, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti Kulgam and Qazigund, Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division Kulgam; Chief Agriculture Officer Kulgam, Executive Engineer, Ground Water Division, Srinagar; Nodal Officer, Jal Shakti Abhiyan; AEE Kulgam and Qazigund; DPMU Kulgam team and chemists of Kulgam, Damhal, and Damhal laboratories.

Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela organised in Ganderbal

DC calls Youth to avail benefits of National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme

■ **HT News Network**

GANDERBAL, SEPTEMBER 17: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today participated in the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela (PMNAM) organised at the Multipurpose Hall, Boys Higher Secondary School, Ganderbal, with the objective of creating greater awareness among youth about apprenticeship opportunities and connecting them with participating establishments.

Addressing the students, pass-outs and other participants, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of apprenticeship in providing practical exposure, industry-oriented skills and valuable work experience. He called upon the youth to actively participate in the programme and make full use of the opportunities available under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).

The DC emphasised that apprenticeship provides an important platform for young people to bridge the gap between formal education and employment by gaining



hands-on experience in relevant trades and sectors. He urged eligible students and pass outs to register on the NAPS portal, explore available apprenticeship opportunities and take advantage of the

scheme for enhancing their employability.

The Deputy Commissioner also called upon participating establishments, departments, PSUs, corporations and other organisations to make greater use of the

apprenticeship framework by registering their establishments and offering suitable opportunities to local youth in accordance with their workforce requirements.

He stressed the need for close coordination between educational institutions, government departments, and industries to ensure wider outreach and effective implementation of the scheme in the district.

The DC further directed the concerned officers to continue awareness and facilitation efforts so that maximum eligible youth are registered and connected with suitable apprenticeship opportunities. He emphasised that sustained efforts under NAPS can provide local youth with industry relevant skills and practical experience, thereby strengthening their preparedness for employment and future career opportunities.

The programme witnessed participation of students, pass outs, educational institutions, government departments and representatives of participating establishments.

DG Rural Sanitation launches UT-wide Swachhata HiSeva-2026 Campaign

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Director General Rural Sanitation, J&K, Anoo Malhotra today launched the UT-wide Swachhata HiSeva (SHS) 2026 campaign at Block Khonmoh, Srinagar, calling for collective efforts to transform cleanliness from a time-bound campaign into a sustained habit and an integral part of everyday life.

Addressing students, officials and community members at the launch programme, the DG Rural Sanitation said the objective of Swachhata Hi Seva is to inculcate responsible behaviour and build a sustained people's movement towards cleanliness and environmental protection.

She stressed that Swachhata Hi Seva should not have a defined beginning or end, but must become part of people's daily habits and behaviour. She also highlighted the importance of four-stream waste segregation at source, urging students and schools to take the message of responsible waste management to their homes and communities.

The DG encouraged schools to organise more awareness and creative programmes on cleanliness and urged students to actively participate in the campaign and share their initiatives to inspire wider community participation.

The launch programme featured



vibrant student-led performances, with participating schools presenting creative skits on different aspects of Swachhata. Sheikh Ali Mission School, Khonmoh, presented a skit on the Swachhata Hi Seva theme, while Higher Secondary School, Khonmoh, showcased a creative performance highlighting the importance of cleanliness.

Samaa Public School, Balhama, and Radiant Model School, Khonmoh, also presented skits centred on cleanliness and environmental responsibility. Northland Public School performed a skit highlighting the importance of waste segregation and maintaining a clean environment.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Director Rural Sanitation, Kashmir, Shabir Ahmad Hakak, said Swachhata Hi Seva represents a collective movement for

cleanliness and responsible citizenship.

He said cleanliness holds an important place across faiths and traditions and emphasised that the campaign must evolve into a permanent habit.

He explained the major pillars of SHS 2026, including identification and cleaning of Cleanliness Target Units (CTUs), cleanliness of public places, and greater involvement of youth and students. He called upon students to become active participants and ambassadors of the campaign.

Joint Director, RDD, Mantasha Binti Rashid, said the success of the campaign ultimately depends on how individuals contribute through simple actions in their daily lives. She encouraged students to practise home composting of vegetable and kitchen waste, explaining that

biodegradable waste can be converted into manure while reducing the amount of waste entering the environment.

She observed that nature functions through a circular system, while excessive use of plastic has disturbed this balance. She urged students to encourage their families to adopt composting and other sustainable practices, emphasising that such measures help fulfil collective responsibility towards nature.

ACP Srinagar, Bashir Ahmad Padder, said cleanliness campaigns can be transformed into a lifestyle through meaningful participation by individuals and communities. He expressed hope that the programme would inspire everyone to contribute towards cleaner and healthier surroundings.

Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Srinagar, Tabasum Qadir, also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the importance of awareness and collective responsibility in achieving the objectives of the campaign.

The participating schools were felicitated for their performances and contribution towards spreading the message of cleanliness and environmental responsibility among students and the wider community.

The launch reinforced the message that Swachhata Hi Seva is not merely an annual campaign, but a continuous people's movement that must become a part of everyday life.

Director Agriculture Kashmir inaugurates One-Day Training Programme under Mission Karmayogi

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, today inaugurated a one-day training programme for the first batch of employees under the Karmayogi Kartavya Karyakram, being organised as part of Mission Karmayogi, at the Directorate of Agriculture Kashmir, Lal Mandi, Srinagar.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director Agriculture stressed the importance of continuous learning, capacity building and professional development in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of public institutions. He said that Mission Karmayogi is an important initiative aimed at nurturing a skilled, responsive and future-ready workforce capable of delivering quality public services.

The Director underscored that the Agriculture Department, being directly connected with the farming community, has a vital responsibility to ensure efficient, transparent and farmer-centric service delivery. He called upon the participating employees to make the best use of the training and incorporate the learning outcomes into their day-to-day functioning.

"Capacity building is a continuous process. Such programmes provide an opportunity to upgrade our knowledge, strengthen professional competencies and develop a service-oriented approach towards our responsibilities," the Director said.

He further emphasized the need for greater use of technology, improved coordination and adoption of modern administrative practices



to enhance institutional efficiency and ensure effective implementation of various departmental programmes and initiatives.

The training programme is aimed at strengthening the professional, functional and behavioural competencies of employees while fostering a culture of continuous learning, accountability and excellence in public service.

During the programme, participants were oriented on various aspects of Mission Karmayogi and its competency-based approach, with emphasis on improving workplace efficiency, professional conduct, communication, teamwork and citizen-centric service delivery.

The programme was attended by officers and officials of the Directorate of Agriculture Kashmir along with the participating employees of the first batch from other districts also.

The inaugural session concluded with an emphasis on translating the knowledge and skills acquired during the training into improved performance and more effective delivery of services to farmers and other stakeholders.

MLA Kulgam lays foundation stone for development of playfield at Mohipora

■ Farooq Rather



KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 17: Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Kulgam, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami today laid the foundation stone for the development of a playfield at Mohidal Panchayat, Mohipora here in the presence of local residents and officials.

The playfield is being developed by the Department of Youth Services & Sports Kulgam at an estimated cost of 63 lakh and the project is being executed by the PWD (R&B) Division Kulgam.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Kulgam underscored the importance of providing adequate sports facilities to young people and said that development of playfields at the grassroots level would provide local youth with better opportunities to participate in sports and physical activities.

He stressed the need for quality and timely execution of the project so that the facility can be made available to the local youth at the earliest.

The development of the playfield is expected to provide a dedicated sporting space for the youth of Mohidal Panchayat and adjoining areas, encouraging greater participation in sports and contributing to the promotion of a healthy and active lifestyle.

During the visit, MLA Kulgam interacted with local residents and listened to their grievances, developmental concerns and demands. People from Mohipora and adjoining villages projected various issues related to development and sought timely intervention for their resolution.

Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Kulgam, Er. Fayaz Ahmad Kar, and officers of the concerned departments were present on the occasion.

ADDC Shopian chairs Workshop on launch of Swachhata Hi Seva 2026

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 17: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone today chaired a workshop on the launch of Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 at Mini-Secretariat Shopian.

The workshop was organized by Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat, Shopian under the auspices of the Directorate of Rural Sanitation, Department of RD&PR, J&K to sensitise officers and officials about the objectives, activities and responsibilities under the fortnight-long Swachhata Hi Seva campaign, being observed from September 17 to October 2, 2026, under the theme "Swachhata Mein Sahbhag; Swachh Bharat, Viksit Bharat."

The ADDC called for active participation and coordinated efforts by all concerned departments to make Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 a meaningful and impactful campaign across the district.

The ADDC emphasized that sanitation must not remain a mere ceremonial demand but must be adopted in its true spirit in every aspect of daily life. He stressed that Swachhata Hi Seva should be transformed from a campaign into a sustainable public movement, with active participation of every section of society.

The ADDC called upon all department to ensure visible cleanliness, proper waste



segregation and scientific waste management in their respective areas. He emphasized greater involvement of students, youth clubs, panchayat Raj Institutions, Self-help Groups and local communities, saying that collective participation is essential for creating a clean, healthy and environmentally responsible society.

The ADDC further directed concerned officers to ensure effective interdepartmental coordination, proper planning and timely execution of activities, while laying special focus on rural areas and public places. He urged all stakeholders to make Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 people-centric, participatory and result-oriented, so that its impact continues beyond the fortnight campaign.

District Programme Officer, ICDS, Mohammed Imran highlighted the pivotal role of the Rural Development Department in driving public

cleanliness. He urged officers to perform their duties with utmost dedication, responsibility and accountability, directing them to ensure comprehensive cleanliness in their respective areas.

Assistant Commissioner Development, Muzaffar Ahmed reiterated the need for sustained vigilance and directed field officers to maintain consistent sanitation in all assigned areas.

A formal Swachhata Pledge Ceremony was also conducted during the event, where officers and staff pledged to dedicate themselves to regular sanitation work and actively contribute toward a cleaner and healthier district.

The workshop was attended by district officers, officials, BDOs and Panchayat Secretaries. evelopment, Muzaffar Ahmed reiterated the need for sustained vigilance and directed field officers to maintain consistent sanitation in all assigned areas.

Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 Campaign launched with Community, School-Based Activities in Bandipora

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 17: As part of the nationwide Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) 2026 campaign, a series of community and school-level activities were organised across Bandipora to promote cleanliness, source segregation, responsible waste management and sustainable environmental practices.

The campaign commenced at Ward six, where citizens participated at the household level by cleaning their homes and lighting lamps as a symbolic Sankalp (pledge) towards adopting a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable way of life. The activity highlighted the importance of making cleanliness a regular household and community practice rather than a one-time exercise.

An intensive awareness and demonstration drive on the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026 was also conducted at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Plan, Bandipora, with a special focus on four-way source segregation of waste. Students and faculty members were sensitised about the proper segregation and handling of wet, dry, sanitary and special-care waste and the importance of responsible disposal at source.

The programme also promoted the Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (RRR) approach, encouraging students and community members to donate, reuse and responsibly manage items such as books, school bags and other usable materials, thereby reducing waste generation and promoting a culture of reuse.

As part of the campaign's educational outreach, a Swachhata Gyan Yatra was organised by Eaglet Public School, Bandipora, from the school premises to the Ekart Service Centre. The exposure activity provided students with an opportunity to understand cleanliness, responsible waste handling and sustainable practices in their surroundings.



An interactive Swachhata and Water Management session was also organised, focusing on rainwater harvesting, water conservation and responsible disposal of wastewater. Participants were encouraged to adopt simple and practical measures for conserving water and preventing water pollution.

Adding a creative dimension to the campaign, a thematic "Waste to Art" competition was held at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Plan, Bandipora. Students showcased their creativity by transforming waste and discarded materials into useful and artistic items, conveying the message that waste can be given a new life through creativity, reuse and responsible management.

The Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 campaign will continue to focus on community participation, awareness, source segregation, resource recovery, water conservation and sustainable waste-management practices, with the objective of making cleanliness and environmental responsibility an integral part of everyday life.

Audit, inspection and physical verification of 108 ALS ambulances conducted in Kulgam

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 17: On the directions of the Director Health Services Kashmir (DHSK), the Chief Medical Officer, Kulgam, Dr. Shawkat Hussain Parray, today conducted a comprehensive audit, inspection and physical verification of the 108 Advanced Life Support (ALS) Ambulances deployed in District Kulgam.

The inspection was conducted along with the designated team from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer, Kulgam, in coordination with District Head, JKEMS, Tasaduq Sofi, and Biomedical Engineer, to assess the operational preparedness, functionality and availability of essential emergency-care facilities in the ambulances.

During the inspection, physical verification of all equipment,

medicines, emergency drugs, consumables and other essential items available in the ambulances was carried out. The team checked the availability and functional status of critical life-saving equipment, including ventilators, cardiac monitors, defibrillators, oxygen cylinders and delivery systems, suction apparatus, Ambu bags, airway-management equipment, BP apparatus, pulse oximeters, emergency and resuscitation kits, stretchers, wheelchairs, immobilization devices, cervical collars, splints, IV sets, cannulas, dressing material and other trauma-care equipment.

The team also physically verified the availability of essential emergency medicines, injections, IV fluids, first-aid material, medical consumables and other drugs required for pre-hospital emergency care.



Besides equipment and medicines, the inspection also covered the overall cleanliness, hygiene, maintenance, functionality, safety arrangements and operational readiness of the

ambulances. Records pertaining to the availability, consumption and replenishment of medicines and consumables were also checked.

During the inspection, the CMO

directed the concerned ambulance personnel to ensure that all 108 ALS ambulances remain fully functional, properly equipped and readily available round the clock for

responding to medical emergencies. The staff were instructed to immediately report any shortage, malfunctioning equipment or requirement for replacement and replenishment. The CMO stressed that timely ambulance response and availability of functional life-support equipment are crucial components of emergency healthcare delivery, and directed all concerned to maintain the prescribed standards and ensure strict compliance with the directions issued by the Directorate of Health Services Kashmir. The team also physically verified the availability of essential emergency medicines, injections, IV fluids, first-aid material, medical consumables and other drugs required for pre-hospital emergency care. Besides equipment and medicines, the inspection also covered the overall cleanliness, hygiene, maintenance, functionality, safety

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SKUAST-K celebrates Graduation Day at Shalimar Campus

VC urges Graduates to lead with Resilience and Innovation

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) held the Graduation Day ceremony for the Undergraduate Batch of 2022 of the Faculty of Horticulture and College of Agricultural Engineering and Technology at the Shalimar Convention Center, Faculty of Horticulture.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai attended the ceremony as the Chief Guest. The ceremony began with the donning of ceremonial robes and an academic procession led by UG Coordinator, Dr. Aziz Mujtaba, with the participation of university officers and divisional heads.

Addressing the gathering, Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai congratulated the graduating students and highlighted the contribution of SKUAST-K



students to the university's innovation ecosystem. He noted that a majority of the

university's recent patents and emerging startups have been spearheaded by

graduating students. Prof. Ganai said the university's academic standards and course offerings have expanded to respond to evolving global requirements. Emphasising the role of higher education in society, the Vice Chancellor said a university's contribution should be reflected in producing skilled and empowered graduates capable of becoming self-reliant and developing sustainable solutions. He encouraged the graduates to build resilience, embrace self-reliance and adapt to changing professional and technological environments.

Earlier, Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension and Dean, Faculty of Horticulture, presented welcome address.

On the occasion provisional degree certificates were presented to the graduating students. The programme also included the signing of academic scrolls, oath-taking ceremony, and student valedictory address

ICSC signs MoU with Rapture Biotech Jammu to strengthen internship opportunities for Students

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Islamia College of Science and Commerce (ICSC), Hawal, Srinagar, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Rapture Biotech, Jammu, today, with the objective of strengthening academic-industry collaboration and providing structured internship opportunities to students in line with the provisions of the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020.

The MoU was signed by Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Hakak, Principal, Islamia College of Science and Commerce and Dr. Ambika Slathia, Director, Rapture Biotech, at the College premises. Dr. Abid Hussain Bandy, Coordinator Internships, Science, and Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Mir, Coordinator Internships, Commerce and Humanities, were also present.

The signing marks an important step towards facilitating meaningful industry exposure and experiential learning for students, particularly through the mandatory 2-credit, 60-hour internship component prescribed under the undergraduate curriculum.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Hakak, highlighted the importance of establishing sustained linkages between higher education institutions and industry to enhance students' practical skills, professional competencies and employability. He emphasized that such collaborations provide students with opportunities to complement classroom learning with hands-on exposure to real-world work environments.

Dr. Ambika Slathia, Director, Rapture Biotech, expressed her commitment to supporting the College in providing students with meaningful exposure to contemporary practices in biotechnology and allied areas. She underscored the importance of industry-academia partnerships in preparing students for emerging opportunities in research, biotechnology and related sectors.

The Coordinator Internships,



Science, stated that the collaboration would contribute significantly towards creating organized internship pathways for students of the science stream and strengthening the College's broader initiative of establishing MoUs with reputed institutions, research organizations and industries.

The MoU is expected to provide a structured framework for student internships, practical training, skill development and experiential learning, while also facilitating interaction between academic and professional domains. The signing of the MoU represents another step towards the College's continued efforts to promote experiential learning, industry-academia interface, skill development and employability-oriented education, in keeping with the objectives of NEP-2020. Dr. Ambika Slathia, Director, Rapture Biotech, expressed her commitment to supporting the College in providing students with meaningful exposure to contemporary practices in biotechnology and allied areas. She underscored the importance of industry-academia partnerships in preparing students for emerging opportunities in research, biotechnology and related sectors.

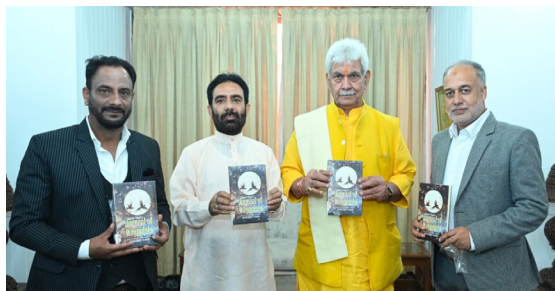
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The MoU is expected to provide a structured framework for student internships, practical training, .

LG Sinha Releases 'Journal of the Waypoints', Celebrating Kashmiri Literary Expression

HT News Network

Srinagar, Sept 17th (CNS): Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today unveiled Journal of the Waypoints, an evocative literary work based on the Kashmiri poetry of the distinguished multilingual poet, Dr. Satish Vimal. Authored by eminent writer, translator and poet Mushtaq B. Barq, the volume encompasses forty select Kashmiri poems of Dr. Vimal, rendered into English and supplemented with critical elucidations by the author. The publication seeks to transcend linguistic boundaries and acquaint a



broader readership with the poet's distinctive literary sensibility and creative expression. While commending Barq for his scholarly endeavour in translating and critically interpreting Vimal's poetry, the

Lieutenant Governor extended his felicitations to both Dr. Satish Vimal and Mushtaq B. Barq, wishing them continued creativity and distinction in their literary pursuits. Publisher Sheikh Waseem was also present on the occasion.

DLSA Budgam conducts Awareness Programme for Drivers, Helpers of Public Transport

HT News Network

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 17: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Budgam today conducted a second awareness programme for drivers and helpers of public transport to sensitise them about women's safety, legal rights, dignity and respectful treatment in public transportation.

The participants were sensitised about women's reservation in public transport, prevention of harassment and misconduct, and the importance of ensuring a safe and dignified environment for women commuters. They were advised to ensure that reserved seats for women are made available to them and to maintain polite, professional and responsible conduct.

Zahoor Ahmad Malik, Resource

Person, highlighted the legal rights of women and the duties and responsibilities of drivers and helpers towards ensuring their safety and dignity. He impressed upon the participants that any act of harassment or misconduct may attract legal consequences.

The programme was attended by representatives and staff of ARTO Budgam, officials and staff of DLSA Budgam, Para-Legal Volunteers (PLVs), drivers and helpers of public transport and members of the general public.

DLSA Budgam reiterated its commitment to promoting awareness regarding women's rights and called upon the transport community to contribute towards making public transportation safe, respectful and women-friendly.

Mela Patt showcases Bhaderwah's rich heritage, age-old tradition of communal harmony

HT News Network

BHADERWAH, SEPTEMBER 17: The annual Mela Patt, dedicated to Lord Vasuki Nag- the presiding deity of Bhaderwah Valley, was celebrated today here at historic Khakhal Mohalla with religious fervour, enthusiasm and traditional gaiety.

Deeply rooted in the cultural and religious heritage of Bhaderwah, the centuries-old festival commemorates the historic meeting between Mughal Emperor Akbar and Raja Nag Pal of Bhaderwah. The traditional celebration continues to attract hundreds of devotees and visitors from different parts of Jammu and Kashmir, cutting across caste, creed and religious identities.

According to local tradition, Mela Patt was first celebrated during the reign of Raja Nag Pal, when Bhaderwah was known as Bhadarkashi. The festival holds a special place in the cultural traditions of the region and is observed annually on Nag Panchami, seven days after the conclusion of the Kailash Yatra.

A key attraction of the festival is the traditional 'Dikko Dance', in which men belonging to different communities participate together.

The vibrant traditional performance reflects the region's rich cultural legacy while conveying a message of peace, brotherhood, mutual respect and communal



harmony.

The celebration witnessed enthusiastic participation of devotees and locals, with the historic traditions of the festival adding colour and vibrancy to the occasion. The centuries-old customs associated with Mela Patt continue to connect the younger generation with the cultural heritage and traditions of Bhaderwah.

Members of the Khakhal Mohalla Committee, the main organisers of the event, said that Mela Patt remains an important expression of the region's cultural identity and longstanding tradition of communal harmony. They highlighted the festival's role in strengthening the bonds of brotherhood and preserving the rich heritage of Bhaderwah.

MSME-DFO Jammu organises awareness program on branding, marketing for PM Vishwakarma beneficiaries at Ramban

HT News Network

RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 17: The MSME-Development & Facilitation Office (MSME-DFO), Jammu, Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Government of India, in collaboration with the district administration Ramban, organised a one-day awareness programme on Branding & Marketing for PM Vishwakarma beneficiaries at Government Senior Secondary School Batote.

The programme aimed to generate awareness among artisans about branding, marketing, product packaging and labelling, digital tools, financial services, skill development, training facilities and various government schemes available for the promotion and development of micro and small enterprises.

At the outset, Investigator MSME-DFO Jammu Ankit Sharma welcomed the participants and presented an overview of the programme.



General Manager District Industries Centre Ravinder Kumar Anand highlighted the importance of effective utilisation of government initiatives for enterprise development.

The School Principal Rajesh Kumar and IEDS, Assistant Director, MSME-DFO Jammu, also briefed the participants about the various initiatives being undertaken by the Ministry of MSME to support

entrepreneurs and artisans.

During the technical sessions, Function Manager DIC Kuldeep Singh delivered a presentation on UT Government schemes. The PM Vishwakarma Scheme was discussed by PMU Team Jammu representative Ajay Pal Singh, with a focus on the support and opportunities available to traditional artisans under the scheme.

A detailed session on loan and banking schemes, social security schemes and loan sanction and disbursement mechanisms was conducted by Lead District Manager Devendra Singh, along with inputs on social security schemes from the CSC District Manager.

Assistant Professor Government Degree College Prof. Ajaz Ahmed delivered a session on product packaging, labelling and designing, emphasising the importance of product presentation and marketability of artisan products.

Other speakers briefed the participants about skill development and entrepreneurship schemes, digital payment facilities and account-related services. A detailed presentation on MSME schemes, covering various support mechanisms available for the growth of micro and small enterprises, was also delivered.

US Based Ayoti Foundation discusses Educational Initiatives with DSEJ

HT News Network

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 17: A delegation of Ayoti Foundation, a U.S.-based nonprofit working towards strengthening educational opportunities for children in rural India, today called on Director School Education Jammu Dr. Naseem Javaid Chowdhary and held detailed discussions on the Foundation's ongoing educational interventions and proposed initiatives in Jammu & Kashmir.

Personnel Officer, Directorate of School Education Jammu Manisha, was also present during the meeting.

The interaction focused particularly on Ayoti's ongoing initiatives for the development and improvement of government schools in district Reasi, besides its broader plans for supporting educational infrastructure and learning opportunities across Jammu &

Kashmir.

Dr. Chowdhary took keen interest in the work being undertaken by the Foundation and appreciated its efforts towards strengthening school infrastructure and addressing the diverse educational needs of children. He also acknowledged the value of initiatives that seek to supplement institutional efforts through community and philanthropic participation.

Ayoti Foundation has been undertaking a range of interventions aimed at providing holistic support to Government schools and students. These include renovation and infrastructure upgradation of schools, morning breakfast and dry-ration support for children, distribution of school uniforms, books and stationery, deployment of skilled teachers, free computer education and support for other



essential educational requirements.

The Director School Education Jammu appreciated the Foundation's

comprehensive approach, observing that the quality of education is shaped not merely within the

classroom, but also by the environment, resources and opportunities surrounding a child.

PO Manisha also engaged with the delegation on the practical and institutional dimensions of the proposed initiatives, emphasising the importance of ensuring that philanthropic interventions remain aligned with the educational priorities and requirements of Government schools.

The delegation briefed the Director about Ayoti's ongoing projects and its plans for undertaking further educational and school development initiatives across Jammu & Kashmir. Discussions were also held on areas where future interventions could contribute towards improving school facilities and expanding educational opportunities for students.

The delegation expressed its gratitude to Dr. Naseem Javaid Chowdhary for his valuable time, encouragement and keen interest in the Foundation's work, as well

as to Ms. Manisha for her participation and engagement during the discussions.

The Ayoti delegation represented Kamal Chauhan, Founder & Chairman; Sunaina Chauhan, Founder & CEO and Vivek Sharma, Director, India Operations. Ayoti Foundation has been undertaking a range of interventions aimed at providing holistic support to Government schools and students. These include renovation and infrastructure upgradation of schools, morning breakfast and dry-ration support for children, distribution of school uniforms, books and stationery, deployment of skilled teachers, free computer education and support for other essential educational requirements.

The Director School Education Jammu appreciated the Foundation's comprehensive approach, observing that the quality of education.



HT EDITORIAL

When the System Works, The Corruption Will Get Eradicated....

Jammu and Kashmir needs an anti-corruption strategy that does not merely catch offenders, but removes the conditions that allow corruption to thrive. Corruption is rarely born in a single transaction. It often begins much earlier with an unnecessarily complicated procedure, an unexplained delay, excessive discretion or a citizen being made to depend on an official for something that should have been routine. By the time a bribe is demanded, the system may already have created the opportunity for it.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau's continuing action against officials accused of taking bribes sends an important message. Public authority carries accountability, and nobody entrusted with government responsibilities should regard office as personal privilege. Those found guilty of corruption must face the consequences prescribed by law. Such enforcement is essential.

But enforcement is only one side of the equation. If one official is caught today and another finds the same opportunity tomorrow, the problem is not limited to individuals. It points towards weaknesses in the system itself. A sustainable anti-corruption policy must therefore ask a more difficult question: what is it about a particular process that makes corruption possible?

Consider an ordinary citizen seeking a government service. If the application is submitted online, the required documents are clearly listed, the fee is fixed, the deadline is known and the applicant can track the progress of the case, there is considerably less room for informal intervention. But if the citizen has to move from one desk to another, repeatedly seek information and depend upon someone's discretion to know when the file will move, opportunities for exploitation increase.

This is where administrative reform should become the next major frontier.

Every government department should periodically examine its citizen-facing procedures. Rules that have become obsolete should be removed. Forms should be simplified. Timelines should be legally or administratively defined wherever feasible. Officials responsible for delays should be identifiable, and citizens should not be left guessing about the status of their applications.

Digital governance can make a significant difference, but digitisation alone is not reform. Putting a complicated procedure online does not make it citizen-friendly. Technology must be used to simplify processes, reduce unnecessary human contact, create digital trails and make responsibility visible.

There is also a need to strengthen the first line of defence within government departments. Vigilance, supervisory checks, internal audits, periodic inspections and rotation in sensitive assignments can help identify risks before they turn into corruption cases. An anti-corruption agency should be the strong external enforcement mechanism, not the only mechanism through which administrative integrity is maintained.

At the same time, the fight against corruption should not become a campaign against the public servant as a class. Government employees who discharge their duties honestly should have nothing to fear from a transparent accountability system. In fact, they should be among its strongest beneficiaries. An administration in which integrity, efficiency and timely decision-making are recognised will ultimately be more effective than one driven only by fear of punishment.

The citizen must also be placed at the centre of the anti-corruption framework. Filing a complaint should be simple. Its progress should be trackable. Genuine complainants should have confidence that their concerns will be treated seriously and lawfully. Equally, there should be safeguards against complaints being deliberately weaponised to harass officials or settle private disputes.

Most importantly, the justice and disciplinary process must deliver conclusions within a reasonable time, while fully respecting due process. The effectiveness of an anti-corruption framework depends not merely on detection, but on credible and lawful follow-through.

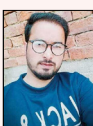
Jammu and Kashmir now has an opportunity to move from reaction to prevention. Every corruption case should therefore be treated not only as an individual offence but also as an opportunity to examine the process that permitted the offence to occur.

If a particular licence repeatedly becomes the subject of complaints, examine the licensing procedure. If files routinely remain pending in a particular office, examine the workflow. If citizens repeatedly complain about intermediaries, identify why intermediaries have become necessary. If discretion is being misused, narrow it through clearer rules.

That is how an anti-corruption campaign can become an administrative transformation.

The real sign of progress will not be a long list of arrests. It will be the ordinary citizen walking into a government office—or accessing a government service online—and finding that the process is clear, time-bound and transparent.

No recommendation. No middleman. No unofficial payment. No repeated visits. Sooner the better sense prevails to put the house. The strongest anti-corruption system is not the one that catches the most corrupt officials. It is the one that gives corruption the least room to operate. Jammu and Kashmir must certainly catch the corrupt. But the bigger mission is to redesign the machinery of governance so that fewer citizens ever have to encounter corruption in the first place.



Sahil Manzoor

This requires continuous efforts from the police, senior citizens, and family cooperation. This evil has no place in our pious society. Kashmir's renowned doctor, Mr. Mohammad Sultan Khuroo, recently highlighted that during the last fifteen years, cases of fatty liver and Helicobacter pylori have increased due to people's lifestyle. This is very alarming. We must seriously reflect on our lifestyle and improve our diet.

Today, young people are becoming victims of obesity, which is very unfortunate. Youth should be physically fit because they are the future of the nation. We live in an era of awareness and cutting-edge technology, yet we lack a basic understanding of how important physical fitness is and how dangerous junk food and an unhealthy lifestyle can be. Fast food is not entirely bad, but we must take every health-related matter

seriously and never be careless in this regard.

During the 1990s, the Kashmir Valley suffered for various reasons, and young people did not have enough opportunities to explore their interests and careers. Today, however, we have numerous opportunities to fulfil our dreams and live comfortably. Our parents, teachers, relatives, and well-wishers have great expectations of us. We must keep our promises and do our best for the nation and for humanity.

Routine Exercise Reflects Discipline
Routine exercise reflects discipline and keeps us fit and healthy. Therefore, regular exercise is vital for good health. Today's era is full of stress and anxiety, and people often complain about fatty liver, high cholesterol, obesity, and many other health issues. To overcome these problems, we need discipline in our lives. We must follow a balanced diet, exercise regularly, and go for routine medical check-ups.

Healthy People, Healthy Nation
Today, people face severe health problems such as obesity, gastrointestinal disorders, fatty liver, heart disease, orthopedic issues, and many other health risks. Our body performs countless functions such as digestion, blood circulation, and waste removal. When we observe these processes, we realize how perfectly they work. We are blessed with

intelligence to study and research what already exists in the universe. We should always be grateful and hopeful for the future.

Unfortunately, even in the age of advanced technology, we still lack complete treatments for certain diseases like cancer, AIDS, and several genetic disorders. This reminds us that every part of the universe has value and that we must remain humble.

Health Comes First
Today, people are motivated to achieve success and wealth but often forget to prioritize health. In reality, health comes before money, buildings, and fame.

Workers and labourers are fortunate because their jobs involve physical activity, which keeps them fit, although their income is often low. They deserve appreciation and better support. Sportspeople are also fortunate because regular physical activity keeps them healthy while bringing recognition and financial stability.

Many people complain that they do not have time for exercise. For them, a home gym is a great solution.

Importance of a Home Gym
A home gym means setting aside a room or a small space with basic equipment to exercise daily. You can gradually add equipment as your financial condition improves. You may even request friends and

relatives to gift fitness equipment on special occasions.

Benefits of Exercise
I started gym exercises in the 8th class. In Kashmir, it is often called the "iron game." During this journey, I met kind and supportive people who motivated me. I experienced great positivity, increased energy, and improved confidence. Exercise helps remove fatigue and brings freshness to daily life.

I encourage young people to join gyms, stay away from drugs, develop an interest in sports, and become confident and disciplined individuals. Before starting a home gym, consult a trainer for proper guidance. Involve your parents and siblings to make fitness a family habit.

Schools should establish mini gym centres to create awareness among students. Colleges should open gym facilities for students to reduce stress and promote healthy activities. In villages, many youngsters fall into harmful habits such as smoking and drug use. It is our collective responsibility to replace these habits with healthy activities.

Regular exercise keeps us happy, healthy, and energetic.

Sahil Manzoor Bhatti
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Why Is Nature Turning Against Humanity?

has increasingly become synonymous with uncontrolled consumption. Deforestation, unregulated mining, obstruction of natural waterways, unplanned urbanisation and industrial waste have severely damaged the

means of food production; it is a science deeply connected with the health of the Earth. Maintaining soil fertility, organic matter and the natural balance of microorganisms is essential for sustainable



SURINDERPAL SINGH

Human civilisation has achieved remarkable progress through the power of intelligence, science and technology. From exploring the depths of the oceans to reaching the heights of outer space, humanity has expanded its horizons beyond imagination. Modern transportation, digital communication, medical science and industrial development have made life more comfortable and convenient than ever before. Yet, behind this impressive progress lies a bitter reality: in the name of development, human beings have begun exploiting nature recklessly.

Today, the Earth's temperature is rising, weather patterns are becoming increasingly unpredictable, rivers are polluted, forests are disappearing and mountains are being ruthlessly excavated. At one time, we face scorching heat; at another, sudden heavy rainfall, floods or prolonged droughts. These changing circumstances compel us to ask an uncomfortable question: Have we destroyed our own life-supporting systems in our pursuit of development? The truth is that every assault on nature eventually returns to humanity's doorstep.

Nature has created an extraordinary and interconnected system that sustains life on Earth. Air, water, soil, forests, mountains, oceans and living organisms are all deeply connected. Any disturbance in one component can affect the entire ecological system. Unfortunately, human needs have gradually transformed into greed, and development



ecological balance. Forests are not merely sources of timber. They regulate rainfall, purify the air, prevent soil erosion and provide habitats for countless species. When forests disappear, we do not lose only trees; we weaken an entire ecosystem that supports human survival.

Punjab is widely recognised as India's food bowl. The Green Revolution gave the state a significant role in ensuring the nation's food security. However, over the years, excessive dependence on chemical fertilisers, pesticides and groundwater has created serious environmental challenges. In many parts of Punjab, the groundwater table is continuously declining. A land once known for its abundant water resources is now facing an alarming water crisis. If we fail to rethink our agricultural practices and water consumption patterns, clean drinking water may become a scarce resource for future generations. Agriculture is not merely a

farming. Every year, the issue of crop residue burning in Punjab and northern India becomes a matter of public debate. Burning paddy straw releases large quantities of smoke and harmful particulate matter into the atmosphere. Its impact is not confined to villages and farmlands; pollution travels across cities and distant regions. However, it is equally important to recognise that farmers cannot be held solely responsible for this challenge. Short intervals between harvesting and sowing, labour shortages, the high cost of machinery and financial pressures often force farmers into difficult decisions regarding crop residue management. Therefore, the solution cannot lie only in penalties and punishment. It requires scientific innovation, economic assistance and administrative support. The use of crop residue for bio-energy, compost, animal feed and industrial products should be

encouraged on a larger scale. A permanent solution to environmental problems is impossible without providing practical and affordable alternatives to farmers.

Punjab's identity has always been closely connected with its rivers. The Sutlej, Beas and Ravi have nourished this land for centuries. Yet today, increasing pollution, industrial waste and untreated domestic sewage pose serious threats to these vital water bodies. Rivers are not merely channels through which water flows; they are the arteries of entire ecosystems. When rivers become polluted, fish, birds, aquatic organisms and human communities all suffer the consequences. Water conservation cannot be viewed solely as the responsibility of governments. The unnecessary use of water in households, excessive irrigation in agriculture and the discharge of untreated industrial waste are all part of a collective responsibility that demands urgent attention.

Rapid population growth and urbanisation have placed enormous pressure on nature. Agricultural fields and open spaces are increasingly being replaced by concrete buildings, roads and commercial complexes. The reduction in green spaces in cities contributes to rising temperatures and deteriorating air quality. Urban development is necessary, but unplanned development can invite environmental disasters. When natural drains, ponds and traditional water channels are blocked by construction, the risk of flooding increases during heavy rainfall. We need cities that are not defined merely by tall buildings, but by green spaces, clean water, efficient waste management and healthy public environments. Global warming has significantly affected the Earth's climate system. Rising temperatures are influencing glaciers and snow-covered mountains, particularly in the Himalayan region.

SURINDERPAL SINGH
FACULTY IN SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
SRI AMRITSAR SAHIB
PUNJAB.

Social Media Code of Conduct for Government Officials



Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

The growing influence of social media has transformed the way people communicate, access information, and present themselves to the world. And government officials are no exception. Social media, whether it's Reels, short videos, personal posts, stories, or thoughts, has become an integral part of government employees' daily routines. Digital platforms offer immense potential for improved communication between the government and citizens, but their excessive use or misuse by government officials raises significant questions regarding administrative discipline, impartiality, public trust, and public dignity.

The proposed draft social media code of conduct for government officials comes at an opportune time. The question isn't "Should officials be allowed to use social media?" They should be. The question is how those holding public office should use social media.

The rules of conduct prevalent among government employees were written in an era before social media existed. Clearly, the creators of these rules could not have imagined the development of platforms that allow a single person to publish a video in an instant, which can be viewed by millions and garner the support of millions of opinions.

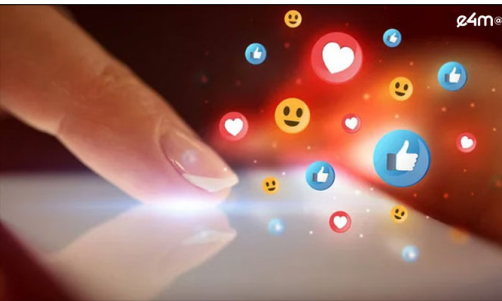
The use of social media while on duty is one of the biggest concerns. Public servants are responsible for carrying out public functions, serving public businesses, implementing public policies, and managing administrative efficiency. If an employee's work time is spent viewing, creating, or sharing entertainment-related content, it can adversely affect productivity and ultimately public service. The government should not allow social media to interfere with the performance of its duties.

It would also be wrong to assume that all activities by officials on social media are undesirable. Social media has now become an important tool of governance. Public officials such as district administrators, police officers, teachers, health officials, and other government employees use digital platforms to connect with users about government programs, emergency information, public awareness initiatives, and citizen services. Social media can be helpful in quick and direct communication

between the administration and citizens during disasters, epidemics, and other emergencies.

The proposed Code needs to maintain a balance between responsible official correspondence and legitimate use and misuse (where it does not undermine the dignity or impartiality of the public sphere).

Personal publicity is also a concern. Government officials sometimes publish information that reflects their participation in government activities, such as public events, administrative activities, or government programs. There is a clear distinction



between educating citizens about government functions and promoting oneself as a representative of the government. Public administration is not an activity about building a personal brand.

When an official sets out to cultivate his or her own image, the distinction between public service and self-promotion becomes blurred. Government officials are empowered by the government and citizens. Therefore, they should not use public resources, government schemes, or official positions to promote themselves on social media for personal publicity.

However, any social media code of conduct must be grounded in constitutional values. Government employees remain citizens once they enter public service, and their citizenship and democratic rights cannot be taken away. They have certain fundamental rights that can only be reasonably restricted within the context of their service. Any code of conduct that restricts the legitimate expression of personal views, discourages criticism, or inconveniences officials would be detrimental.

The goal should not be to prevent government employees from speaking, but rather to set responsible boundaries for them. Officials should have a clear understanding of all issues related to the disclosure of confidential information, political

propaganda, sharing unverified information, hate speech, harassment, conflicts of interest, misuse of official images and logos, disclosure of sensitive documents, and improper representation of government policy.

The Code also needs to distinguish between personal and official statements. If a citizen makes a personal statement posing as a government official, it could be considered the official voice of the government, even if the official did not intend to represent the government. Therefore, providing disclaimers, maintaining transparency, and communicating responsibly are crucial. Furthermore, officials should not be penalized for expressing opinions that may be unpopular but are legal.

Training will be just as important as regulation. A simple set of conduct rules alone will not solve the problem. Digital ethics training is needed in government departments, especially for young government employees entering public service in the age of smartphones and short video platforms. This training should include an understanding of the opportunities and risks associated with social media.

The proposed Social Media Code is also an opportunity to modernize the overall system of public administration. Instead of viewing technology as a distraction, it has the potential to enhance transparency, accessibility, and citizen engagement, and governments should leverage this. Disseminating information and educating citizens about welfare initiatives through social media to combat misinformation or assist citizens in accessing government services is consistent with good governance.

Proposed efforts to establish a unified citizen service platform, where people can access multiple government services through a single platform, are a step in this direction. Citizens want the same ease and convenience in government services as they do in digital services. They shouldn't be forced to log in to multiple websites, remember numerous passwords, or repeatedly enter the same information. Digital governance should be less burdensome for citizens than physical governance.

Ultimately, a social media code of conduct is about more than just Reels, videos, or screen time. It's about the evolving relationship between the public and digital presence. In today's fast-paced environment, where an official's post can reach thousands of people within minutes, responsible digital behavior has become an integral part of responsible administrative behavior.

(Dr. Priyanka Saurabh,
PhD (Political Science),
is a poet and social thinker.)

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A Generation at Risk: The Rising Shadow of Drug Addiction in Kashmir



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Drug addiction has become an increasingly important public health and social concern in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly because of its impact on young people and families. The issue is not limited to the use of substances itself; it can affect education, employment, relationships, physical health, mental well-being and the wider social fabric.

The growing official attention to the problem reflects its seriousness. In 2025, the Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority launched Drug Awareness and Wellness Navigation (DAWN) units as part of an approach combining drug-awareness work, community engagement and access to support. Jammu and Kashmir also notified dedicated Substance Use Disorder Treatment, Counselling and Rehabilitation Centres Rules, 2026, indicating an institutional focus on treatment and rehabilitation.

A Problem Beyond the Individual

Addiction rarely affects only the person using drugs. Its consequences can reach parents, siblings, spouses, children and the wider community. Families may experience emotional distress, financial difficulties, conflict and social stigma.

For a young person, substance use can interfere with studies, career development and relationships. In some cases, it may also deepen existing emotional or psychological difficulties. This makes drug addiction not simply a law-and-order concern, but an issue that requires health, social and psychological responses as well.

Why Young People Need Special Attention

Adolescence and early adulthood are important stages of emotional, social and personal development. Young people may face academic pressure, unemployment, peer influence, family difficulties, loneliness, uncertainty about the future and other forms of stress.

These circumstances do not automatically lead to substance use, but they can create vulnerabilities. Prevention therefore needs to address the wider environment in which young people live. Healthy relationships, education, skills, employment opportunities, sports, creative activities and accessible counselling can provide constructive alternatives and strengthen resilience.

The Link Between Addiction and Mental Health

Mental health and substance use can influence one

another. A person experiencing anxiety, depression, trauma, loneliness or severe stress may use substances as a way of coping. At the same time, problematic substance use can worsen psychological, social and physical difficulties.

This is why counselling and professional assessment should form an important part of prevention and recovery. A person struggling with addiction needs an opportunity to speak openly, understand the reasons behind the behaviour and receive appropriate support.

From Stigma to Treatment

One of the greatest obstacles to recovery is stigma. When addiction is viewed only as a personal failure, individuals and families may hesitate to seek help.

A more constructive approach recognises substance-use disorder as a condition that may require professional treatment. Depending on the person's circumstances, recovery may

involve medical care, counselling, behavioural interventions,

family support, rehabilitation and continued follow-up. The Government of India's Drug De-Addiction Programme has focused on strengthening treatment services and developing evidence-based approaches to substance-use disorders.

The Role of Parents and Families
Families can play an important role in prevention and recovery. Open communication is essential. Parents should create an environment in which children and young adults can discuss stress, peer pressure, emotional problems and other difficulties without immediately fearing rejection or humiliation.

Sudden behavioural or academic changes should not automatically be treated as proof of drug use. However, persistent and concerning changes deserve attention and, where appropriate, professional assessment.

Families also need support. Caring for someone affected by addiction can be emotionally exhausting, and relatives may themselves require counselling and guidance. Schools and Colleges Can Make a Difference
Prevention should begin before substance use becomes dependence. Schools and colleges can strengthen awareness through programmes that discuss not only the harmful effects of drugs but also emotional health, decision-making,

peer pressure, coping skills and help-seeking. Teachers and counsellors can help create safe spaces where students feel comfortable discussing difficulties. Young people should also have access to sports, cultural activities, volunteering, skill development and other meaningful opportunities.

Rehabilitation Must Include Reintegration
Recovery does not end when a person completes treatment. Returning to family, education, employment and community life can be equally important.

A recovering person may need continued counselling, family encouragement, vocational skills and opportunities to rebuild confidence. Communities can contribute by reducing stigma and supporting reintegration rather than permanently defining an individual by past substance use.

A Collective Responsibility
The challenge of drug addiction cannot be addressed by one institution alone. Government agencies, healthcare professionals, counsellors, schools, families, NGOs, community organisations and young people all have important roles.

Law-enforcement measures are necessary to address illegal trafficking and supply, while health and social services are necessary for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. These approaches address different parts of the problem and need to work alongside one another.

Protecting a Generation
Kashmir's young people are an important part of the region's future. Addressing drug addiction therefore means protecting not only individuals but also families, communities and future generations.

The response must begin with awareness but go much further—with early identification, accessible treatment, professional counselling, family support, rehabilitation and meaningful opportunities for young people.

Most importantly, people struggling with addiction should not be reduced to their addiction. Recovery is possible, and every person who receives timely support has an opportunity to rebuild a healthier and more purposeful life.

A Message of Hope
The fight against drug addiction is not only a fight against substances; it is a commitment to protect health, dignity, relationships and hope.

Kashmir needs a response that combines prevention with compassion, treatment with dignity, rehabilitation with opportunity and awareness with action. Protecting a generation requires all of us to recognise the problem, reject stigma and make help easier to reach.

Our young people need not only a drug-free environment—they need a future filled with education, opportunity, purpose and hope.



Winter Will Come But Not As We Once Knew It



BY-MOOL RAJ

The Meteorological Department's early reading of the coming winter has already begun to travel through the orchards, markets and drawing rooms of Jammu and Kashmir. Director Mukhtar Ahmad of the Srinagar MeT centre has said that El Niño conditions, which the World Meteorological Organisation expects to persist into the first months of 2027, favour a relatively milder and drier season than the region once took for granted. He has been careful to add what social media rumours have chosen to ignore: winter will arrive. Its intensity may vary, as it has varied for several years now, but the season itself is not optional. One or two strong western disturbances during the peak months could still bring substantial snow if the moisture supply is adequate. That single qualification is the difference between a forecast and a slogan. For a Union Territory whose water, tourism and agriculture are written in snow, the distinction matters. Chilla-i-Kalan, the forty-day heart of winter that begins on 21 December, has in recent years delivered less accumulation than the hills require. Consecutive seasons of below-normal precipitation have already strained springs, streams and the reservoirs that feed both the Valley and the plains of Jammu. A milder winter is not a gift if it means thinner snowpack, earlier melt and a leaner summer. Farmers who have just stored the apple and paddy harvest know that a dry December and January can undo months of work before the first blossom appears. Hydrogeologists at the National Institute of Hydrology's Western Himalayan centre in Jammu have pointed out that El Niño may alter the subtropical westerly flow, producing fewer western disturbances but occasionally stronger individual systems. The result could be long warm, dry stretches interrupted by intense, short-lived snowfall. That is a harder pattern to live with than a uniformly harsh but predictable cold.

The MeT's caution is itself a public service. Seasonal outlooks issued in mid-

September are not verdicts. Small shifts in the jet stream or in the track of Mediterranean weather systems can rewrite a winter in a fortnight. Sonam Lotus and other climatologists have therefore refused to treat El Niño as destiny. The Pacific signal sets a background temperature; the western disturbances write the actual story of rain and snow over the Pir Panjal and the Greater Himalaya. Those who remember winters when fifteen feet of snow closed the highway for weeks also remember winters when the same highway stayed open and the ski slopes of Gulmarg looked bare by January. Both belong to the same climate. What has changed is the frequency of the second kind.

A milder winter will ease the burden on the poorest households that spend a large share of income on heating and on the elderly for whom extreme cold is a medical risk. It will also test the administration's preparedness for the opposite problem: forest fire risk in dry mid-winter, erratic water supply in April and May, and the pressure on tourism operators who have built their calendars around reliable snow. The Department of Disaster Management and the Power Development Department cannot wait for the first blizzard to discover whether the grids and the shelters are ready. Municipalities in Jammu city, already struggling with drainage and encroachment, will find that a dry winter does not cancel the need for clean streets; it merely changes the kind of work required.

There is a larger lesson in the forecast. Weather is no longer a private inconvenience. It is a public account that must be read alongside agriculture, hydrology, public health and the unfinished work of rehabilitation for communities that still live with the memory of displacement. If the coming months are indeed milder, the responsibility is not to celebrate an easier season but to use the extra margin of time. Catchment restoration, rainwater harvesting in the plains, honest monitoring of snowfall at higher elevations, and clear communication that does not swing between panic and complacency are the real measures of whether a forecast has been understood.

The Author Is A Regular Columnist And Freelance Writer

What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity.



By M S Nazki

Anyone who has a continuous smile on his face conceals a toughness that is almost frightening. It only takes a split second to smile and forget, yet to someone that needed it, it can last a lifetime. It's a smile, it's a kiss, it's a sip of wine ... it's summertime!..

-What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity. These are but trifles, to be sure; but scattered along life's pathway, the good they do is inconceivable!

-If you smile when you are alone, then you really mean it!

-To hear never-heard sounds, to see never-seen colors and shapes, to try to understand the imperceptible, power pervading the world; To fly and find pure ethereal substances, that are not of matter, but of that invisible soul pervading reality. To hear another soul and to whisper to another soul; To be a lantern in the darkness, or an umbrella in a stormy day; To feel much more than know. To be the eyes of an eagle, slope of a mountain; To be a wave understanding the influence of the moon; To be a tree and read the memory of the leaves; To be an insignificant pedestrian on the streets, Of crazy cities watching, watching, and watching. To be a smile on the face of a woman/man, and shine in her memory. As a moment saved without planning!.....

-Yes! Go! In Northern command Lt Gen Pratik Sharma smiled both on and off screen, despite being famous for his intense, steely gaze. While characters like the King of Siam in The King and I or the robot gunslinger in Westworld relied on a stern and unyielding demeanor, Lt Gen Pratik Sharma was known to be warm, approachable, and quick to smile with fans and colleagues in real life!

The story which we had at our hands:

-Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, Army Cdr NC, reviewed the counter terrorism grid in South Kashmir, where he was briefed on the prevailing security scenario and operational preparedness. The Army commander emphasised on adaptability, precision, sustained vigilance and synergy, the key enablers for successful & intelligence driven operations and rapid response to any emerging challenges. During his interaction with the troops, he appreciated their indomitable spirit and dedication towards keeping the region free of #Terror and ensuring peace and stability.

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-These four traits—adaptability, precision, sustained vigilance, and synergy—form the ultimate framework for high-performing systems, elite teams, and advanced operations. Here is how these core pillars break down and connect:

-The Four Pillars:
Adaptability: The capacity to pivot rapidly. It involves reading changing environments and altering strategies without losing momentum.

-Precision: The execution of tasks with exactness. It eliminates wasted effort, reduces errors, and ensures high-quality outcomes.

-Sustained Vigilance: The commitment to long-term alertness. It prevents complacency, anticipates risks, and maintains operational standards over time.

-Synergy: The compounding effect of cooperation. It ensures that combined efforts produce a total output greater than the sum of individual inputs.

-Intelligence driven operations and rapid response to any emerging challenges.

Intelligence-driven operations and rapid response form the core strategy for security forces managing emerging security challenges in regions like South Kashmir.

-Recent Operational Reviews Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma recently visited South Kashmir to check the security grid and operational readiness. During his visit, he highlighted that success depends on clear coordination and fast action.

-As outlined in 12 Years of India's Zero Tolerance Against Terror, modern national security relies on advanced technology, real-time data sharing, and proactive prevention rather than purely reactive measures.

-When an Indian General smiles, the troops know that it is genuine. "This phrase highlights the profound bond of trust, mutual respect, and shared hardship between leaders and soldiers in the Indian Armed Forces. In the military, leadership is not just about giving orders—it is about earning the absolute faith of the troops, often in the most extreme conditions on Earth.

-Why this connection runs deep: Leading from the front: Indian military doctrine places a massive emphasis on officers leading their men from the front line, sharing the exact same dangers and privations.

-Shared hardships: From the freezing heights of Siachen to the scorching sands of Rajasthan, commanders live in the same harsh environments as their soldiers.

-Authentic leadership: Because officers intimately know the grit, sacrifices, and families of their jawans (soldiers), any moment of warmth, appreciation, or a smile is rooted in deep reality, not corporate pretense.

-The famous quote "The General always smiled, and the troops did the rest" captures the essence of Field Marshal Sam Bahadur Manekshaw, the legendary Chief of the Indian Army.

-Known for his unmistakable swashbuckling swagger, sharp wit, and flashing smile, Sam Manekshaw orchestrated India's greatest military victory during the 1971 Indo-Pak War, which led to the creation of Bangladesh in just 13 days.

-The Story Behind the Leadership: The phrase beautifully



reflects Manekshaw's unique philosophy of war—where a commander's calm confidence directly feeds the morale of the soldiers on the frontlines.

-The Smile of Certain Victory: In April 1971, when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi pressured him to go to war immediately, Manekshaw famously refused. He looked her in the eye and explained that an immediate campaign during the monsoons would guarantee defeat. He famously stated: "If you give me time, I guarantee victory." He took the time to meticulously plan the operation, ensuring that when the troops finally moved, they were unstoppable.

-Defusing Tension with Wit: Throughout his career, no matter how dire the situation, Manekshaw never let panic spread to his men. During World War II, when he was hit by nine bullets in his stomach in Burma, his commanding officer feared the worst. When the doctor asked what happened, Manekshaw simply smiled through the agony and quipped, "I was kicked by a mule." The doctor was so charmed by his spirit that he operated on him immediately.

-The Troops Did the Rest: Because his soldiers knew their Chief was entirely in control, completely unflappable,

and unconditionally protective of them, they fought with legendary devotion. On December 3, 1971, the war officially began. Driven by Manekshaw's flawless strategy and the brilliant execution of field commanders like Lt. Gen. Sagat Singh, the Indian Army achieved a lightning-fast victory. It resulted in the historic surrender of 93,000 Pakistani soldiers—the largest military surrender since World War II.

-Whenever people praised him for the monumental victory of 1971, Manekshaw would deflect the glory, flashing his signature grin and giving all the credit to his beloved boys on the ground.

-But, my God, it's so beautiful when the boy smiles! Today I plan to smile a lot, Smiling is confusing, he thought.

This is why always desire to smile

-When you lose your smile, you lose your way in the chaos of life! The future is uncertain, but that can be a good thing. There is strange comfort in knowing that no matter what happens today, the Sun will rise again tomorrow.....

No, Erwin Rommel did not always smile, but his famously cheerful grin in many well-known photographs was a calculated part of his public image and wartime propaganda., Rommel was described by peers as a serious, detail-oriented, and often intense career soldier. However, the abundance of images showing him smiling comes down to two major reasons:

-He Relished the Camera and Propaganda Rommel was one of Adolf Hitler's favorite generals and served as a major propaganda figurehead for Nazi Germany. He fully understood the power of media and actively staged dashing appearances for photographers. He welcomed personal photographers (including Hitler's official photographer, Heinrich Hoffmann) and knew exactly how to pose to project the image of an invincible, confident, and approachable commander to the public back home.

-He Was an Avid Photographer Himself Rommel was deeply passionate about photography and regularly carried his own Leica camera to the front lines. When interacting with his troops, medical personnel, or locals, he frequently smiled to put people at ease, a habit that made him highly popular with ordinary soldiers—even if his actual command style could be stubborn and ruthless.

-Historic Mix-Up: "Smiling Albert" People sometimes confuse Erwin Rommel with another prominent German Field Marshal of World War II: Albert Kesselring. Unlike Rommel, Kesselring was universally nicknamed "Smiling Albert" by both his men and the Allies because he was almost never seen without a massive, beaming grin, regardless of how dire the military situation became.

-No, Heinz Guderian did not always smile. While he is famously pictured smiling or laughing in a few well-known historical photographs, the vast majority of wartime records, photographs, and historical accounts show him with a serious, stern, or intense expression.

-The Famous "Parade: The most iconic image of Guderian smiling is from September 22, 1939, during the joint German-Soviet military parade in Brest-Litovsk. In the photo, he is caught sharing a genuine laugh with Soviet Brigade Commander Semyon Krivoshein. Because this photo is heavily featured in history books and documentaries to illustrate the brief, cynical alliance between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, it leaves a strong impression.

-His Relationship with His Soldiers Guderian was highly popular among his front-line troops, who affectionately nicknamed him Schneller Heinz ("Fast Heinz"). When visiting his tank crews on the front lines, he was known to listen to their grievances and act warmly toward them, which often resulted in candid, smiling photographs in the field.

-A Fiery Temper in Reality Behind the few smiling photos, Guderian was actually described by contemporaries and historians as a man with a fiery temper, cold demeanor, and a biting, sarcastic wit. He was notoriously difficult to work with and frequently engaged in shouting matches with his superiors—including Adolf Hitler and Field Marshal Günther von Kluge.

-When photographed in formal settings, alongside the German High Command, or as the war drastically turned against Germany in 1944 and 1945, his expressions were universally grim and severe.

-Yes, Alexander the Great certainly smiled, and ancient historians specifically recorded several moments where he did so. While classical statues and modern pop culture often depict Alexander with an intense, dramatic, or melting gaze, primary sources reveal he had a highly charismatic, emotional, and complex personality.

-Ancient biographers like Plutarch and Arrian documented his range of expressions, noting that his smiles often accompanied moments of irony, intellectual amusement, or confidence.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not reflect the editorial policy of Headlines Today at all and in any manner. We assume no responsibility or liability for the accuracy, completeness, or consequences of the views expressed therein....

He called upon citizens, particularly the youth, to become active partners in JMC's cleanliness initiatives by practising responsible waste management, ensuring proper source segregation and refraining from littering. He urged the students to become "Ambassadors of Cleanliness", take ownership of their surroundings and inspire others to adopt responsible civic practices.



DC Rajouri launches ‘Swachhata Hi Seva’ campaign; 50 schools to get waste-composting units Over 500 students, officials take Swachhata pledge

■ **HT News Network**

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma, today launched the district-wide Swachhata Hi Seva campaign under Sewa Pakhwada here from Boys Model Higher Secondary School.

More than 500 students, district officers and members of the school staff participated in the programme and took the Swachhata pledge administered by the Deputy Commissioner. The participants resolved to maintain cleanliness in their surroundings, adopt responsible waste-management practices and discourage the use of single-use plastic.

A major initiative announced

during the programme was the establishment of waste-composting units in 50 Higher Secondary Schools across the district. “These units will not serve merely as waste-processing facilities, but also as practical learning centres where students will be trained in the segregation of wet and dry waste and the conversion of biodegradable waste into compost manure, he said.

Interacting with the students and faculty, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised that educational institutions and young people can play a transformative role in changing community attitudes towards sanitation and waste management. “Every student can become an ambassador of Swachhata. The habits



learnt in school must travel to our homes, neighbourhoods and communities,” he said.

The Deputy Commissioner underlined the need for segregation of waste at source, composting of

organic waste and scientific processing and disposal of non-biodegradable waste. He urged students to lead by example and encourage their families to adopt environmentally responsible

practices.

The fortnight-long campaign, being observed from September 17 to October 2, will cover both rural and urban areas of Rajouri district. It will focus on cleanliness, community participation, sustainable waste management, elimination of single-use plastic and greater civic responsibility.

The campaign will be taken forward through three broad interventions—Jan Bhagidari involving communities, youth clubs and Self-Help Groups; promotion of source segregation and composting; and intensive cleanliness drives in schools, hospitals, government offices and other public institutions.

Rajouri admin launching 30 day Green Schools, Clean Rajouri campaign

■ **HT News Network**

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today chaired a meeting to discuss preparations for the 30-day Green Schools, Clean Rajouri campaign. The campaign is aimed at teaching scientific waste management, wet-waste composting to students and generating behavioural change in the society. The campaign is set to cover 50 Higher Secondary Schools, where students would be provided hands-on learning about wet-waste composting and its conversion into useful manure. The initiative will focus on developing a sense of ownership, responsibility and sustainable waste-management practices among children. The Deputy Commissioner directed for close coordination among all concerned departments at



the local level to ensure a united and coordinated approach towards waste management. He stressed that the campaign should go beyond awareness and result in practical behavioural change among students and households.

The KVKK will provide training to teachers, who will serve as master trainers for imparting practical knowledge of composting to students. The schools will subsequently facilitate hands-on composting activities, with each student bringing a specified quantity of wet waste per child for the purpose.

The schools will also monitor different stages of the composting process and analyse the progress to enhance the learning experience and explore measures for faster and more effective composting. The DC further directed that an IEC campaign be undertaken with a focused message on proper waste management at the household level, encouraging families to segregate and manage wet waste responsibly. He called for making the campaign a sustained learning exercise that equips students with practical skills while encouraging them to become ambassadors of cleanliness and responsible waste management in their homes and communities. The best-performing schools will be recognised during the campaign and shall be provided with incentives to encourage healthy competition and continued adoption.

Director ULB Jammu reviews progress of development projects, civic services in Hiranagar, Parole

■ **HT News Network**

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 17: Director Urban Local Bodies Jammu Kapil Sharma conducted a field visit to Municipal Committee Hiranagar and Municipal Committee Parole to review the progress of major development projects, municipal infrastructure, sanitation and solid waste management facilities.

During the visit to MC Hiranagar, the Director inspected the upcoming Shopping Complex, Community Hall and Smart Library. He reviewed the physical progress and status of these assets and directed for speedy completion and optimum utilization for public benefit.

The Director also inspected the site at Hiranagar where a substantial quantity of legacy waste has accumulated. He directed the Executive Officer to closely monitor the work being undertaken by the agency engaged for remediation and clearance and ensure that the work is expedited and completed at the earliest. He also reviewed progress of the ongoing CAPEX works in the MC.

At MC Parole, the Director inspected various ongoing development works and reviewed the municipal infrastructure and civic facilities



available in the town. He directed the Executive Officer and field staff to accelerate the pace of ongoing works and ensure their timely completion.

The Director also inspected the infrastructure identified for the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Centre. He directed the Executive Officer to ensure proper cleaning and upkeep of the premises and take steps for early operationalization of the ABC Centre.

The MRF Plant at Parole was also inspected. The Director reviewed its present status and directed the Executive Officer to make the facility fully functional and effectively utilized for proper segregation and scientific management of municipal solid waste.

ACD reviews progress of development works in Doda

■ **HT News Network**



DODA, SEPTEMBER 17: Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Doda Din Mohd. Afaqi today chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of ongoing development works being executed under Capex, MPLAD and CDF schemes in the district. The meeting was attended by Executive Engineer REW Doda Suresh Bharti, all Block Development Officers (BDOs), Assistant Executive Engineers (AEs), Junior Engineers (JEs) and field staff of the Rural Development Department (RDD).

During the meeting, the ACD conducted a detailed review of the physical and financial progress of the ongoing works across different blocks. The concerned officers briefed the chair regarding the status of works, expenditure, site-level progress and issues, if any, affecting timely execution. The ACD stressed the need for close monitoring and effective coordination among field functionaries to ensure that development works are executed as per approved specifications and within the stipulated timelines.

The ACD further directed the concerned officers and contractors to complete all allotted works on or before September 30, 2026, without compromising on quality. He called for regular monitoring of progress at the block level and timely resolution of bottlenecks so that the benefits of the schemes reach the intended beneficiaries at the earliest.

DC Kishtwar approves rates for Land Acquisition Cases

■ **HT News Network**



KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Deputy Commissioner (District Collector), Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting of Collectors to consider, finalize and approve rates for land acquired for road construction projects. A total of 03 land acquisition cases, as proposed by the SDM Chatroo (Collector Land Acquisition), were cleared and rates finalized. The cases included Km 2nd to Loidhar Phase-III, Village Dhar; Chatroo to Treshi, Village Inderwal and Pranzil to Supnai Phase-I, Villages Sigdi and Bhata. The Deputy Commissioner directed expeditious completion of all codal formalities for disbursement of compensation as per the approved rates.

The meeting was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal, ACR Idrees Lone, SDMs and other concerned officers and officials.

ADC reviews arrangements at ongoing Mela Patt

■ **HT News Network**

BHADERWAH, SEPTEMBER 17: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bhaderwah Sunil Kumar Bhutyal today visited Khakhal Mohalla and adjoining areas to review the arrangements for the ongoing three day Mela Patt which started on September 16.

During the visit, the ADC took stock of various arrangements put in place for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the mela. He reviewed arrangements related to security, repair and maintenance of lanes, drains and municipal paths, uninterrupted power and water supply, medical facilities and ambulance services, sanitation and cleanliness, traffic management and fire and emergency preparedness. Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B); SDPO; Assistant Engineer, PDD; BMO; Naib Tehsildars; traffic officials and representatives of Fire & Emergency Services and PHE department were present on the occasion.

DC Reasi inaugurates Job Fair, urges youth to avail employment opportunities

■ **HT News Network**

REASI, SEPTEMBER 17: The District Employment and Counselling Centre, Reasi today organised a Job Fair for unemployed youth of the district, providing them direct access to employment opportunities and a platform to interact with prospective employers.

The Job Fair was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek, who interacted with participating employers, officials and job seekers. More than 700 job seekers from different parts of the district participated in the event and explored a range of employment opportunities. Addressing the participants,



the Deputy Commissioner extended his best wishes to the aspiring candidates and urged them to actively participate in the recruitment process and make the best use of the opportunities available to them.

He emphasised that the performance and professional conduct of local youth would help create a positive impression among participating companies and encourage greater participation of employers in future Job Fairs, thereby

contributing to the expansion of employment opportunities in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner also urged the youth to make full use of the Mission YUVA scheme, which provides expert assistance in business planning, staffing, training and marketing strategies. He assured the aspiring entrepreneurs of all possible support and facilitation from the district administration in establishing and running their enterprises.

DC Reasi launches Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 Campaign

■ **HT News Network**

REASI, SEPTEMBER 17: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today launched the Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 campaign in the district, marking the beginning of the fortnight-long cleanliness drive from September 17 to October 2, 2026.

Since its inception in 2017, Swachhata Hi Seva has served as a nationwide platform for mobilising citizens, institutions and leadership towards voluntary participation and collective efforts for cleanliness.

The launch featured a Swachhata Pledge Ceremony followed by a Signature Campaign, with participants taking the pledge and signing



in support of the cleanliness initiative, reaffirming their commitment to cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised the need to maintain cleanliness at homes, workplaces and public spaces. He urged officers and citizens to keep their surroundings neat and well-organised and encourage others to adopt responsible cleanliness practices.

He called upon people to make the principles of “Reduce, Reuse and Recycle” an integral part of daily life by minimising plastic use, reusing resources and ensuring proper segregation and recycling of waste. He also stressed the importance of plantation and preservation of greenery for a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

The Deputy Commissioner urged officers, Panchayati Raj Institutions, educational institutions, local bodies and citizens to actively participate in cleanliness and awareness activities being organised during the fortnight and contribute towards building a cleaner, greener and healthier Reasi.

DLSA Jammu organises awareness program on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

■ **HT News Network**

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 17: District Legal Services Authority Jammu, under the guidance of Principal District & Sessions Judge/Chairman, DLSA Jammu Tahir Khurshid Raina and under the supervision of Civil Judge (Sr. Division)/Secretary, DLSA Jammu Maleeka Sharma, today organised an awareness programme on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 at Delhi Public School

Jammu. Resource persons were Adv. Ifra Nasir, Panel Lawyer, DLSA Jammu, Adv. Uma Kapahi, Panel Lawyer, DLSA Jammu along with Maleeka Sharma, Secretary, DLSA Jammu. Secretary, DLSA Jammu in her address, stated that it is both an honour and a responsibility to speak on a law that sits at the heart of our collective duty towards children. She emphasised that teachers are not merely instructors of curriculum but are the first responders in a child's ecosystem.

She explained that the JJ Act is not only for police, magistrates or child welfare officers but for every adult who interacts with children daily, as teachers often see the first signs of distress, neglect, exploitation or behavioural change.

She elaborated that the law classifies children into two streams i.e. Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) – those alleged or found to have committed an offence and Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP)



– those who are orphaned, abandoned, trafficked, abused, working illegally, begging or living on the street. She informed

that for CNCP, the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) decides placement, rehabilitation and restoration and for CCL, the

Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) conducts inquiry and orders rehabilitative measures.

She further explained the categorisation of offences as petty, serious and heinous and the critical provision under Section 15 which allows preliminary assessment for a child aged 16-18 years alleged to have committed a heinous offence. She clarified that if the JJB, aided by experts, finds the child possessed sufficient mental and physical capacity to commit

the offence and understand its consequences, the case may be transferred to a Children's Court for trial as an adult and that this is exceptional, not routine and always subject to safeguards.

She urged the teachers to ensure mandatory reporting of any apprehension of child abuse, trafficking, forced labour or missing child to Childline 1098, local police or CWC/JJB, to maintain confidentiality and not disclose names or photographs of children involved

in any proceeding, to watch for red flags like unexplained injuries, frequent absenteeism or sudden drop in performance and to support rehabilitation and social reintegration of children. She concluded that the courtroom may pass orders but teachers shape the environment where those orders succeed or fail and that every child who walks through the school gates must be seen, heard and protected as a rights-holder under the law.



Green Tea for Beauty



Shahnaz Husain

Green tea ,a staple for health conscious people is most popular health drink in the world . Green tea, the magic drink discovered in china in 3000 B.C. is light yellow or pale green in color is made from the same plant as black tea (camellia sinensis). It is one of the least processed true teas, allowing it to retain the majority of its beneficial health compounds.Green tea with wonderful healing properties contains antioxidants, which help fight against free radicals in the body.

You do not need fancy products or special serums to help you remain young, this beloved drink soothes irritated skin and its anti-ageing properties prevent wrinkles, fine lines and other skin diseases.

A green tea is richer in phenolic compounds and other nutrients and can be used to make skin care products like tea toner, face masks , cleanser and steam treatment to detoxify skin pores and keep skin hydrated . You can use the leaves of herbal teas to steam your face or add it in your regular face pack, its anti-oxidant, anti-ageing and anti-inflammatory properties helps keep your skin healthy ,glowing and help you calm you down, too.

According to experts, "Polyphenols present in green tea inhibit growth of two proteins, which are known to promote tumour cell growth. Green tea is also known to heal the pre-cancerous scaly keratosis, which is a skin



ailment that occurs due to unnecessary and chronic exposure to sun. It thus helps in treating not only minor skin problems, but also in keeping it immune to serious damages like skin tumours." Drinking green tea promotes DNA repair in skin which helps to fight cancer .

. Green tea contains a powerful antioxidant called EGCG that fights DNA damage from UV rays to prevent skin cancer. Green tea has zero calories and is penacca for those who wants to have slim ,active , smart body physique and get rid of belly fat .Green Tea contains EGCG which reduces waist size , aids weight loss and decreases body fat . Green tea helps to deal with problems of acne, blackheads, whiteheads, clogged and closed pores, . This is a natural astringent, and so mops up the extra sebum or oil, solving the problem at its root. It helps remove all the dirt and grime from open pores, and then tightens the freshly cleansed pores to prevent pollutants from getting in.

Green Tea contains EGCG and caffeine which help reduce appetite by regulating the hunger genes and hormones EGCG reduces the levels of the hunger hormone, leptin leading to decrease in food consumption and body weight loss in long run thus increases insulin sensitivity, and regulates blood sugar levels .

Green tea also has several beauty benefits and can be used easily as home beauty treatments. In fact, it is a wonderful skin toner. Take half cup water and bring it to a boil. Put tea leaves in a ceramic bowl. Pour the hot water over it and keep for 2 minutes. Strain and cool the liquid. Apply on face with cotton wool to tone the skin. Leave on. Or, you can dip a tea bag in a cup of hot water. Cool and use it to tone the skin. Or make the tea-water and keep in an airtight jar in the refrigerator. Use the lotion to tone and refresh the skin.

It also nourishes the skin and delays visible ageing signs . Green tea contains

Vitamin B2 and Vitamin E, both essential for refreshing and radiant skin . B2 plays an essential role in maintaining collagen levels for youthful and fairer skin.Vitamin E promotes new skin cell growth and also acts an intense hydrator for soft and nourished skin.

Boil 2 to 3 cups of water and add 2 green tea bags. Let it soak for a few minutes. Cool and apply on the face with cotton wool pads. The remaining liquid may be kept in the fridge. Green tea liquid may also be mixed with a little honey and applied on face. Wash off with plain water after 20 minutes.

Green tea, in fact, can be used in many other ways in beauty care. Ground almonds, green tea leaves and curd will make a good facial and body scrub.It also has anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory properties and can be used to control an acne condition. Make a powder of green tea leaves and mix it with a little cinnamon powder and lemon juice into a paste. Apply this on the eruptions directly and wash off with plain water after 20 minutes.

Mix a green tea, coconut oil, honey, and lemon juice mask for brightening Skin tone . Add 1 tbsp green tea leaves, (30 ML) of honey, 1 tsp of coconut oil, and (30 ML) of lemon juice to a bowl. Mix them with a spoon and apply the paste on the face for 15 minutes and allow it to dry in natural atmosphere rinse off the mask with luke warm water. Apply a moisturizer after you rinse off the mask. You can use this mask for once in a week

Green Tea helps you fight problem of dry and chapped lips .Apply green tea bag soaked in warm water over your lips . It will relieve burning sensation and hydrate the lips .

Drinking green tea actually benefits the teeth and freshens the breath. Green tea mouth washes are also available. You can make a cup of green tea with one tea bag and wash the mouth with it for a fresh feeling.

The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India

Ageing is not a destructive force

How defying ageism can help you live longer

Research shows a positive attitude towards ageing can make people feel younger and live longer. Here's how to fight ageism in your own life."Ageism can change how we view ourselves."

That's according to The World Health Organization's global report on ageism. And addressing this bias – how we harmfully think, feel or act towards people, or ourselves, on the basis of age – is critical for creating a more equal world, it argues.

There are health benefits of defying ageism too – as research suggests that it can make people feel younger and live longer. More on that later.

It's true that you can be any age and experience ageism. Take Gen-Z for example, those born between 1997 and 2012, who are often branded as "lazy" by older generations. It does mostly affects older adults though, and most of the research on ageism has focused on this demographic.

In the UK, one in three people experience age-based prejudice or discrimination. In a US study, 93% of 2,000 adults aged between 50 and 80 years old said they experienced some form of everyday ageism. Internalised ageism was the most common, followed by exposure to ageist messaging.

"The interesting part of this whole phenomenon is the person who is ageist is going to be aged at some point in time," says Parminder Raina, scientific director at the McMaster Institute for Research on Aging in Canada. By 2030, one in six adults in the world will be aged 60 or over. "Ageism is a very personal issue. But people don't recognise it as a personal issue."

Negative attitudes towards ageing are often inherited in the early years of life, from our parents, the media or biased memories, even as early as three, according to one study. As a result, one researcher suggests that children must be educated on ageing from a young age to ensure their effective understanding of the life cycle, and to better prepare them for their own ageing process.



Ageing is not a destructive force. It is actually a remarkable achievement of the modern public health system – Parminder Raina

After all, the way we talk about ageing can affect how we feel about it, and in turn the way we live. Consider the language used in popular media – which undoubtedly can shape our views. Raina gives the example of the phrase "grey tsunami", a metaphor which infers that our rapidly ageing population is a problem.

"Tsunami is a very destructive force. Ageing is not a destructive force. It is actually a remarkable achievement of the modern public health system," he says.

A self-fulfilling prophecy geism can cause older adults to internalise and confine themselves to negative stereotypes. For example, they may become less willing to accept new learning opportunities when they are perfectly capable of doing so, which can lead to low levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. This is referred to as the stereotype embodiment theory – where stereotypes are unconsciously assimilated, internalised and

then influence day-to-day functioning and health.

In other words, it can be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Studies show the concept of "stereotype threat" also feeds into this low self-confidence – if people are made aware of their age before they do a certain task, for example, they're likely to perform worse in that task. "One explanation is that it's because of the anxiety that's induced," says Hannah Swift, reader of social and organisational psychology at the University of Kent in the UK. "If we were to be judged by somebody [in relation to somebody younger taking part], the stereotype infers an expectation, which then might make you feel worried or anxious, because there's this stigma attached to the stereotype."

One ageist stereotype is that all old people are weak and frail, says Raina. "And that's far from the truth... [most] older people live in their communities, live independently, function, and contribute to their local communities through volunteerism or whatever else they do."

But some older people do have complex needs, he adds. "They might have major health challenges, but that proportion is much smaller than the ones who are ageing in a very functional and a healthy fashion."

It's worth remembering that many of the negative stereotypes around ageing are socially constructed – for example, if someone was to say a person is "too old to be studying", who dictates what age is too old?

In fact, one study on individuals' personal perception of their age (the age they feel, or their "subjective age") versus their actual age, found that those with a positive attitude towards ageing felt younger. Another 10-year longitudinal study in the US found that those with an older subjective age predicted lower life satisfaction.

(BBC NEWS)

North East Zone Inter-State Badminton Championship 2026 begins in Meghalaya

United News Of India

SHILLONG, SEP 16: The North East Zone Inter-State Badminton Championship kicked off at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Sports Complex here in Meghalaya's capital on Wednesday, with 250 top-tier shuttlers competing for the title.

Returning to Meghalaya for the first time since 2016, the tournament serves as the official qualifying ground for the team events of the highly anticipated National Games 2027, in Meghalaya.

The event is organised by the Meghalaya State Badminton Association (MSBA), under the aegis of the Badminton Association of India (BAI).

Top-tier shuttlers representing all eight Northeastern states-Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim-are set to battle it out on the court.

With each state contingent fielding meticulously selected players, the courts in Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium saw intense competition across categories on the opening day.

Sports and Youth Affairs Minister, Wailadniki Shylla said that the return of this important championship to Shillong after ten long years comes at a highly opportune moment, as

Meghalaya prepares to host the 39th National Games next year.

Emphasising the value of the exposure, he stated, "We do understand



that champion is created from this kind of platform," reinforcing that youth need these opportunities and platforms to compete against other States.

He added that the State witnessed a surge in the Sports budget from a mere Rs 40 crore eight to nine years ago to a staggering Rs 844 crore.

The objective of this funding is to provide better infrastructure, platforms, and opportunities for the youth, alongside a hike in prize money that now awards Rs 2 lakh to National Games gold medalists.

Furthermore, Shylla underscored the transformative Meghalaya Outstanding Direct Appointment Policy,

which guarantees direct government jobs to State athletes who secure medals at major events. This policy also allows athletes a grace period of up to ten

years to pursue higher education or advance their sporting careers before taking up their appointed posts.

Turning to National Games preparations, he confirmed that a dedicated stipend will be provided to the final selected team to support their ongoing training.

He concluded by announcing a directive under the Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS) to establish special provisions, ensuring athletes receive medical care and support for sports-related injuries throughout their journey.

The tournament was officially declared open by the Sports and Youth

Affairs Minister, followed by an oath-taking ceremony led by the captain of the Meghalaya Badminton Contingent.

Ace shuttler Ashmita Chaliha, the first Indian ever to win the Korea Masters Title, who is representing Assam in the tournament, commended the sports momentum as she returned to compete in Shillong at the North East Inter-State Badminton Championship after nearly a decade.

Expressing optimism regarding the host State's venue readiness and infrastructure build-up for the upcoming National Games next year, Chaliha highlighted the rise of grassroots talent across the region.

She observed that while young shuttlers are emerging through structured training, grooming and high-level match exposure will be essential to bridge the gap with elite circuits. Fresh off his career-defining Men's Singles title victory at the Cameroon International 2026 and a former U-17 national champion Mizoram's H. Lalthazuala, expressed firm conviction in Team Mizoram's title prospects. Looking ahead to next year's National Games in Meghalaya, the international champion commended the Chief Minister of Meghalaya for his proactive support of athletes, expressing immense enthusiasm to compete on the grand stage.

India Women's Kabaddi Team Captain Pushpa Rana eyes title defense at 2026 Asian Games

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, SEP 16: As the Indian women's Kabaddi team gears up to represent the country at the upcoming 2026 Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, captain Pushpa Rana and Pooja Kajla believe the responsibility of defending India's gold medal comes with confidence and motivation, with the team firmly setting its sights on the top spot.

Rana, who has been handed the responsibility of leading the 12-member squad, said the team has been preparing extensively by analysing opponents and working on areas of improvement identified by the coaching staff.

"First of all, we practice according to the situation. We also analyse the videos of the upcoming matches. Our coaches also tell us about the shortcomings of the past and what needs to be improved. And now we are working on that. I think our team is well prepared," said Rana.

Kabaddi has traditionally carried immense



expectations at the Asian Games, with India having won 11 gold medals in the sport, including three in the women's event.

The Indian women's team will look to defend the gold medal won in Hangzhou, where they edged Chinese Taipei 26-25 in the final.

Madras HC asks MS Dhoni to respond by Oct 9 for video recording his plea in Rs 100-crore defamation case



United News Of India

CHENNAI, SEP 17: The Madras High Court on Thursday directed iconic cricketer M.S. Dhoni to respond by October 9 to a petition filed by retired IPS officer G Sampath Kumar, seeking video recording of the former Indian captain's deposition in a Rs 100-crore defamation suit.

The former Indian skipper had filed the civil defamation suit in 2014 against Private Media,

Tamil Nadu Police officer Sampath Kumar and others over alleged malicious statements claiming that he was involved in betting and match-fixing in IPL matches in 2013.

In the case, the High Court had earlier ordered the appointment of an Advocate Commissioner to record Dhoni's deposition

and Sampath Kumar too approached the court seeking a direction for video recording of Dhoni's deposition.

In his petition, Sampath Kumar sought the appointment of a judge to monitor the recording of the deposition. He also sought a direction that an unedited copy of the video-recorded deposition be provided to him.

The retired IPS officer further prayed that the deposition should not be conducted at five-star hotels or private bungalows and should instead be held in a court premises or a government building.

When the petition filed by the retired cop came up for hearing today, Justice Govindarajan Tilakavathi directed Dhoni to file his response by October 9 and adjourned the matter to that date for further hearing.

Khalin Joshi leads by one-shot at Nava Raipur Open 2026

United News Of India

RAIPUR, SEP 17: Khalin Joshi returned a one-under 33 to retain a one-shot lead after the third round of the inaugural Rs 1 crore SECL presents Nava Raipur Open 2026 at the Fairway Golf & Lake Resort in Nava Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

The 34-year-old Bengaluru golfer (29-30-33), who began the day with a two-stroke advantage, mixed two birdies with his first bogey of the week to reach 10-under 92 heading into the final round.

Joshi, a two-time winner on the DP World PGTI this season and currently 12th in the Race to DP World India Championship, has dropped only one shot through the opening 27 holes.

Heavy rain left the course unsuitable for full 18-hole rounds, prompting the Tournament Committee to stage each of the tournament's four rounds over the back nine.

Chandigarh's Angad Cheema (34-29-30) emerged as Joshi's closest challenger after producing a bogey-free four-under 30. The 36-year-old climbed from tied 13th to second at nine-under 93.

Seven players shared third place at eight-under 94, leaving eight golfers within two shots of the lead ahead of the final nine holes.

Delhi's 18-year-old Pritish Singh Karayat (34-31-29) made the biggest move of the day, firing a bogey-free five-under 29 to surge from tied 36th into the seven-way tie for third.

Asian Games: Indian women begin title defence against hosts Japan

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, SEP 17: Fresh from their record eighth Asia Cup title, defending champions India will begin their Asian Games campaign against hosts Japan in the women's quarterfinals on Friday, with a place in the semifinals at stake.

India arrive in Nagoya with plenty of confidence after their dominant run in Dubai last week, but the Asian Games format leaves no room for an off day. The women's competition features eight teams and starts directly with the quarterfinals, meaning there is no group stage and a single defeat will end a team's campaign.

Shafali Verma will be one of India's main threats after finishing as the leading run-scorer in the Asia Cup. The opener was in excellent touch throughout the tournament and gave India strong starts at the top of the order.

Smriti Mandhana, meanwhile, will be keen to find her rhythm after an inconsistent Asia Cup. India will also look towards captain Harmanpreet Kaur, who had a quiet tournament in Dubai but brings considerable experience of

high-pressure matches. The bowling attack has several options, with all-rounder Deepti Sharma expected to lead the spin department alongside Sree Charani. The left-arm spinner was one of India's standout performers in the Asia Cup and



completed 50 T20I wickets in just her 30th appearance.

India also have pace options in Nandani Sharma, Renuka Thakur and Kranti Gaud, while Radha Yadav and Shreyanka Patil add to their spin resources. Patil has returned after recovering from an ankle injury.

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