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Voice To The Voiceless



P:12
India Women's Kabaddi Team
Captain Pushpa Rana eyes title
defense at 2026 Asian Games

HT BRIEFLY

Traffic Cop Killed After Truck Hits Him Near Qazigund Bridge

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

KULGAM, SEP 19.: A Traffic Police Head Constable was killed after being struck by a truck near Shampora Bridge in the Qazigund area of Kulgam district on Saturday morning, officials said.
The deceased was identified as Mushtaq Ahmad, son of Abdul Sabir Bhat, a resident of Kulpora, officials said.
According to officials, the incident occurred when a truck bearing registration number JK03Q-9011 lost control near Shampora Bridge and hit the traffic policeman, leaving him seriously injured. He succumbed to his injuries at the spot.
Police have seized the truck and launched an investigation into the circumstances leading to the collision, while efforts are underway to trace the driver, who was

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Abducting Accused In Multiple Cheque-Bounce Cases Arrested In Srinagar: Police

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

BUDGAM, SEP 19.: Police have apprehended an absconding accused from Hawal area of Srinagar in connection with multiple cheque-bounce cases and a cheating case registered at Police Station Magam, officials said.
The accused was identified as Reyaz Ahmad Dar, a resident of Attina, Beerwah. Police said he was wanted in connection with FIR No. 26/2024

>>> MORE ON P 02

KPDCL Floats Fresh Works to Strengthen Kashmir Power Network

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 19.: The Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited has initiated a fresh round of infrastructure works covering receiving-station augmentation, replacement of ageing equipment, feeder improvements and network stabilization across Kashmir, with several tenders issued or extended during September.
Among the latest works is a tender issued on September 18 for replacement of 11-kV vacuum circuit breaker panels at various receiving stations under KPDCL's Sopore division, with the tender process scheduled to continue until October 8.

>>> MORE ON P 02

Martyr DySP Humayun Muzammil Memorial Cricket Tournament begins in Anantnag

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

ANANTNAG, SEP 19 Jammu and Kashmir Police has organised the Martyr DySP Humayun Muzammil (Shaurya Chakra) Memorial Cricket Tournament at the Sports Stadium here, as part of its efforts to promote sports and engage youth through community-oriented initiatives. The tournament has drawn participation from 32 cricket teams from across Anantnag district,

>>> MORE ON P 02

Sunil Sharma holds extensive public outreach in Srinagar

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPT 19 : As part of the BJP's ongoing mass public outreach programme across Jammu and Kashmir, Leader of Opposition in the J&K Legislative Assembly, Sunil Sharma held detailed interactions with several delegations representing trade unions, businesses, traders, transporters, civil society, intellectuals, professionals, medical associations, students and other sections of society in Srinagar. J&K BJP Secretary Arif Raja, Co-

>>> MORE ON P 02

“India’s Environmental Action Must Move from Declarations to Implementation”: PM Modi

Prime Minister inaugurates NGT international conference on climate dynamics, launches mobile application

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the National Green Tribunal's two-day international conference on “The Future of Environment and Climate Dynamics” in New Delhi and launched the NGT Mobile Application. Addressing the gathering, Modi highlighted India's civilisational connect with nature and the importance of environmental protection and climate action, while Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant, Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, Attorney General R. Venkataramani and NGT



Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava underlined the need for stronger environmental jurisprudence, climate justice and international cooperation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi

on Saturday inaugurated the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) two-day international conference on ‘The Future of Environment and Climate Dynamics’ in New Delhi and launched the NGT

Mobile Application.

Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant, Attorney General for India R. Venkataramani, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav and NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava were present at the inaugural session.

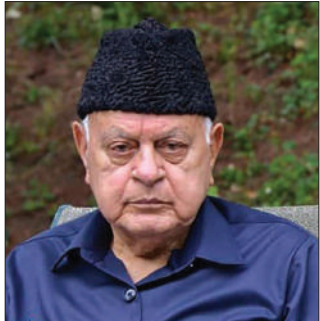
Addressing the gathering, Prime Minister Modi highlighted India's historical and cultural connection with nature and commended the NGT for its role in advancing environmental protection and climate action.

Chief Justice Surya Kant highlighted India's environmental jurisprudence,

>>> MORE ON P 02

“People in the World Want Peace as Fuel Prices Are Increasing”: Farooq Abdullah

NC chief hopes Russia-Ukraine and West Asia conflicts come to an end



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday said people across the world wanted peace amid rising fuel prices and expressed hope that the ongoing conflicts involving Russia, Ukraine, Iran, the United States and Israel would come to an

end. Commenting on the global economic situation, Abdullah said the “economy is in doldrums” and hoped that the prevailing wars would eventually cease. On the reported drone incident near Mecca, he said it was unclear who was behind the incident, noting that both Iran and the Houthis had denied involvement. National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday said people across the world want peace amid rising fuel prices and expressed hope that the ongoing conflicts would come to an end.

Talking to reporters, Abdullah said everyone wanted the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and the ongoing conflict involving Iran, the United States and Israel to end.

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“People Want Development and Peace”: Sunil Sharma

LoP says BJP gaining acceptance in Kashmir, promises to raise corruption and unemployment in Assembly

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Saturday claimed that the BJP was gaining acceptance across Kashmir and said the party would raise issues including corruption, unemployment and poor basic services during the Assembly session beginning September 21. Sharma alleged shortcomings in governance, citing concerns over electricity, water, roads, staffing in schools and healthcare facilities, and said the BJP would raise issues concerning recruitment, unemployment and public grievances during the session. The Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Saturday claimed that the

acceptance of the BJP is increasing across Kashmir, and asserted that workers from other parties,



including the PDP, are embracing its policies despite the threat of suspension.

Speaking to KNS, Sunil Sharma said, “There is no doubt about it. And let me tell you, it is the policy of the BJP. Today, everyone is accepting these policies. And not just the PDP

>>> MORE ON P 02

“We Will Not Tolerate Public Concerns Being Ignored”: Tariq Karra

Congress to raise roads, water, gas and other basic issues during upcoming Assembly session

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Jammu and Kashmir Congress president Tariq Hamid Karra on Saturday said his party would raise issues concerning the common people during the upcoming Assembly session and would not remain silent despite being part of the ruling coalition. Karra said concerns related to roads, water, gas and other basic amenities would be taken up prominently, asserting that the Congress would continue to raise public issues while a party meeting scheduled for Sunday would finalise its strategy for the Assembly session



beginning September 21.

The Congress in Jammu and Kashmir will raise issues concerning the common people in the upcoming Assembly session and will not remain silent merely because it is part of the government, the party's J&K unit chief, Tariq Hamid Karra, said on Saturday.

Speaking to news agency Kashmir News Service (KNS) JK Congress chief said, “We are in the government, but that does not mean we will tolerate the

concerns of common people being ignored, be it basic facilities related to roads, water, gas, and other basic issues. The Congress will not leave any stone unturned to raise them in this Assembly session for the welfare of the people,” Karra told KNS.

He said the Congress, despite being in an alliance with the National Conference, has been raising and fighting for the welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir since day one and will continue to do so. Karra asserted that his party would ensure that public concerns, particularly those relating to basic amenities

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HT BOTTOM NEWS

Kashmiri Film The Sledge Selected for International Competition in Germany

Raja Shabir Khan's children's feature to have

World Premiere at 31st SCHLINGEL Film Festival in Chemnitz

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Kashmiri cinema is set to make its mark on the international stage with The Sledge, a Kashmiri-language feature film written and directed by National Award-winning filmmaker Raja Shabir Khan, selected for the International Competition of the 31st SCHLINGEL International Film Festival for Children and Young Audiences in Chemnitz, Germany.

The film will have its World Premiere at the prestigious festival, scheduled from October 2 to 10, 2026, bringing a story from Kashmir before an international audience



and placing a Kashmiri-language children's feature in a competitive global festival programme.

Set against the snow-covered landscapes of Kashmir, the 75-minute film follows three children who accidentally break their father's sledge. Fearing punishment, they decide to earn money to repair it by selling kahwa to tourists in Gulmarg. Their innocent plan takes an unexpected turn when they find a tourist's bag containing money and chocolates.

The discovery leaves the children facing a difficult choice—whether to use the money to solve their own problem

>>> MORE ON P 02

“What People Need Now Is Action, Not More Promises or Plans”: Altaf Bukhari

Apni Party chief seeks stronger implementation and accountability to address Srinagar's civic problems

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari has called for effective implementation, better coordination and greater accountability in Srinagar's development, saying residents need visible improvements rather than more plans and promises. In a post on X, Bukhari said the city continued to face problems including waterlogging, traffic congestion, inadequate pedestrian facilities and poor waste management, and urged authorities to translate existing development

plans into tangible improvements in basic civic



infrastructure and services.

Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari has called for effective implementation, better coordination

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Sakeena Itoo inaugurates girls sports competition at Kulgam, new road projects at Aharbal, Manzgam areas Lays foundation stone for Health Centre at Gandwani

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 19: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today visited Kulgam district and participated in a series of programmes besides inaugural and foundation laying events aimed at strengthening the sports, healthcare and road connectivity infrastructure.

Earlier in the day, the Minister inaugurated U/19 girls Base Ball inter-district tournament at L/NK Shri Nazir Ahmad Wani, Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Kulgam. The tournament was being hosted by the Youth Services and Sports Department, Kulgam with participation from all districts of the Kashmir Division.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister appreciated the efforts of the Youth Services and Sports Department in providing young athletes with opportunities to showcase their talent. She encouraged the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to actively participate in sports and



contribute positively for the overall development of the society. During the extensive tour, the Minister laid the foundation stones for construction of a Health Sub-Centre at Gandwani, to be constructed at an estimated

cost of Rs. 40.00 lakh.

The foundation stones for construction and maintenance of the road from Chechmulla-Aharbal road to Lonepora, with an estimated cost of Rs.366.81 lakh; construction of

road from Khuri Batapora ITI to Sheikhnagin with an estimated cost of Rs 30.00 lakh; construction of Aharbal Main road to Chandar Manzgam-A with an estimated cost of Rs. 18.00 lakh and construction

of road from H/o Bashir Mirza to Gujar Basti kawtaqri with an estimated cost of Rs 15.00 lakh were also formally laid by the Minister. The projects are aimed at improving the road connectivity, easing transportation and facilitating smoother movement of people in the adjoining areas of the district. Sakeena Itoo spoke with the people and enquired about the public welfare issues and provision of government extended services to them. She emphasized directed sectoral and district heads to regularly monitor the works and ensure the timely completion. The Minister was accompanied by District Programme Officer, ICDS Zaheer Ahmad Kafi, Kulgam, SDM DH Pora, Bashir-ul-Hassan, Assistant Commissioner Development Kulgam, Bilal Kamgar, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer, Executive Engineers of PDD, Jal Shakti, Irrigation and Flood Control Kulgam, Executive Engineer (R&B) DH Pora, besides other concerned officers and officials in presence of huge gathering of local people.

DC Kulgam dedicates newly constructed Sumo Stand near Cham-bgund bridge to public

■ **Farooq Rather**



KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 19: The newly constructed Sumo Stand near Chambugund bridge at Kulgam has been dedicated to the public by the Deputy Commissioner, Shahzad Alam, today in presence of Tehsildar Kulgam and CEO MC Kulgam along with officials and local transporters and public.

The vital transport facility has officially started being operational and functional for the convenience of the general public, commuters and transport operators of the area. The stand will facilitate the systematic boarding and alighting of passengers and parking of passenger vehicles plying on various routes, including Gudder, Laisoo, Malwani, Banimullah and adjoining areas.

The operationalisation of the Sumo Stand is expected to help in streamlining vehicular movement, reducing roadside congestion near Polytechnic College and providing a designated facility for passengers and transport operators in the area.

Municipal Council Kulgam has made necessary arrangements for the proper functioning of the stand and will continue to coordinate with the concerned departments for its effective management and maintenance.

"The facility marks another step towards improving public amenities, traffic management and organised transport facilities in the area", said DC Kulgam while committing for establishing more public friendly facilities in the district.

Training on District Census Handbook concludes at Shopian with focus on Accurate Data Collection

■ **HT News Network**

SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 19: The training programme on District Census Handbook (DCHB) concluded today in District Shopian with a training session held at the Meeting Hall of Mini Secretariat, Shopian for the field functionaries.

On the occasion, the trainers imparted training to the field functionaries on various aspects of the District Census Handbook, including data collection, compilation and verification procedures.

During the training, the participants were briefed about the preparation of the District Census Handbook, the required data and information and the procedures to be followed for accurate collection, compilation and verification of the information. The field functionaries were also apprised of their roles and responsibilities and advised to ensure accuracy and completeness of the information collected during the exercise.

ADC Kupwara chairs Meeting to review Solid Waste Management Measures

■ **HT News Network**

KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 19: On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Additional Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan, today chaired a meeting to review the implementation and progress of various measures related to solid waste management in the district.

The meeting held a threadbare discussion on several key issues concerning effective implementation of the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026, with emphasis on strengthening waste management mechanisms and ensuring compliance by all stakeholders.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the registration of Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs) and the identification of BWGs failing



to comply with the provisions of the SWM Rules, 2026. Directions were also issued regarding issuance of notices to non-compliant bulk waste generators.

The meeting also reviewed the inspection of waste processing plants to assess their functioning and compliance with prescribed standards. The status of four-way waste segregation and the retrofitting of door-to-door waste collection vehicles was also discussed.

The participants deliberated

on measures related to the Single-Use Plastic portal, including the use of the portal and imposition of penalties in cases involving seized prohibited plastic items, in accordance with applicable rules.

The meeting further reviewed the status of capacity-building programmes conducted for stakeholders regarding the SWM Rules, 2026. The need for enhanced awareness and capacity building among concerned departments and field functionaries.

Dr Karwani inspects construction work in Transit accommodations for PM Package Employees

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M), Dr. Arvind Karwani, concluded a week long inspection tour of transit accommodation sites for PM Package Employees under construction across the Kashmir Valley. Dr. Karwani was accompanied by concerned site engineers and senior officials of the district administration and Relief Organization.

While interacting with the site engineers at the construction sites, he emphasized on achievement of targets in a time bound manner. He particularly underlined on the importance of early completion of allied works and basic amenities at the sites, so that the possession of allotted quarters can be



handed over to the employees at the earliest possible, as per the criterion laid down by the Government. He enjoined upon the engineers to ensure quality of the work and execution strictly as per the approved DPR.

Dr. Karwani also interacted with PM package employees at various locations and gave a patient hearing to their demands, particularly related to the allotment of quarters.

Pertinent to mention that 6000 quarters at 20 different

locations across the Kashmir valley under PMDP programme are being constructed for PM Package employees, out of which 5176 flats stand constructed. Allotment of flats has been made against the applications received from the employees for all the sites and possession of flats shall be handed over to the employees immediately after the completion of the important basic infrastructure and takeover of the sites from the PWD (R&B).

DC Pulwama reviews implementation of PM-NAPS in district

■ **HT News Network**

PULWAMA, SEPTEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom today chaired a meeting at the Administration Complex Pulwama to review the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS) in the district and take stock of measures for increasing apprenticeship opportunities for eligible youth.

During the meeting, detailed presentations were given on the online process for registration and onboarding of establishments and candidates under NAPS. The presentation covered the step-by-step process of establishment registration, completion of establishment profile, creation of apprenticeship opportunities, searching suitable candidates, processing applications and other procedural formalities.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments and field functionaries to identify eligible establishments in their respective sectors and facilitate their registration on the



apprenticeship portal. He called for concerted efforts to ensure that eligible establishments complete their profiles and create suitable apprenticeship opportunities so that more local youth can be connected with practical training and work-based learning opportunities.

The DC further stressed the need for effective coordination among DIC, Education, Health, Labour and ITI

authorities for wider outreach and facilitation of eligible candidates. He directed the concerned officers to facilitate registration of eligible youth, ensure completion of their profiles and guide them in identifying and applying for suitable apprenticeship opportunities.

During the meeting, Dr. Qayoom laid emphasis on execution of Employer-Apprentice agreement and actual

engagement of apprentices in potential/eligible establishments and directed the concerned to complete target by 25th September, 2026.

The Deputy Commissioner also called for regular monitoring of the registration and engagement process and directed the concerned officers to address procedural bottlenecks, provide necessary handholding to establishments and candidates and ensure timely completion of apprenticeship contracts wherever eligible. Emphasising the importance of apprenticeship in bridging the gap between formal training and workplace requirements, the Deputy Commissioner said that concerted efforts should be made to expand the apprenticeship ecosystem in the district and provide local youth with opportunities to gain practical experience, industry-relevant skills and enhanced employability.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Pulwama; General Manager, DIC Pulwama; and officers from DIC, Education, Health, Labour, ITI Pulwama besides the concerned technical teams.

DC Poonch flags off Census awareness Van to snow-bound, remote areas

■ **HT News Network**

POONCH, SEPTEMBER 19: Principal Census Officer (Deputy Commissioner) Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma today flagged off a dedicated Census Awareness Van from the District Headquarters to Snow Bound areas of Tehsil Mandi and Tehsil Surankote.

The District Census Officer and Additional District Census Officer were also present.

The initiative has been undertaken to disseminate important information regarding the Census Population Enumeration among the people, particularly those residing in remote, snow-bound villages of Tehsil Mandi and Tehsil Surankote.

The specially equipped van carries a display system containing Census-related information and awareness material to educate the public about the census process and importance of active public participation.

The district administration emphasized that the outreach initiative will help bridge the information gap and ensure that residents in far-flung areas remain properly informed about Census-related activities. The District Census Officer and Additional District Census Officer were also present.

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The district administration emphasized that the outreach initiative will help bridge the information gap and ensure that residents in far-flung areas remain properly informed about Census-related activities.

ADC Anantnag reviews progress of Solid Waste Management Site at Uranhall

Directs timely completion of Works

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 19: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Anantnag, Vikas Ahlawat, today chaired a meeting at the DC Office Complex, Anantnag, to review the status and progress of the Solid Waste Management site at Uranhall.

The meeting was attended by the Tehsildar Anantnag, District Mineral Officer, Executive Engineers of PDD, R&B, PHE and I&FC, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council Anantnag, besides representatives of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and Directorate of Urban Local Bodies, Kashmir.

At the outset, the ADC took a detailed review of the present status of the Solid Waste Management site, including the progress of ongoing works, infrastructure



requirements, inter-departmental issues and measures required for its proper development, operation and management.

The concerned officers briefed the meeting about the works completed so far and apprised the ADC of various issues requiring coordinated intervention for ensuring the smooth development

and operationalization of the site.

The ADC stressed the importance of close coordination and effective communication among all concerned departments and stakeholders for resolving the issues in a time-bound manner. He directed the concerned officers to identify and address bottlenecks on priority and ensure that all assigned works are completed within the stipulated timelines.

He further called for regular monitoring of the progress of works and directed the executing agencies to maintain proper coordination so that infrastructure and other essential requirements at the site are completed without unnecessary delays.

Emphasizing the importance of scientific and effective solid waste management, the ADC underscored the

need for coordinated efforts towards developing the Uranhall site as a properly managed facility. He directed all stakeholders to work in close coordination and ensure timely resolution of issues related to land, infrastructure, utilities and other requirements.

The ADC also called for clear responsibility and accountability among the concerned departments, with regular follow-up on the decisions taken during the meeting. He stressed that the concerned agencies should remain in close touch and ensure timely completion of their respective components.

The meeting concluded with directions for expeditious action, regular progress monitoring and coordinated efforts to ensure the timely development and effective management of the Solid Waste Management site at Uranhall.

JKEDI organises District-Level Startup Idea Challenge at GDC Tral

■ HT News Network

TRAL, SEPTEMBER 19: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), in collaboration with Government Degree College Tral, organised a District-Level Startup Idea Challenge and Boot Camp under the J&K Startup Idea Challenge 2.0.

The programme organised with the theme Ignite Ideas, Build Startups, Create Impact aimed to nurture creativity among students and aspiring entrepreneurs and equip them with the confidence and support needed to transform innovative ideas into viable business ventures. It forms part of JKEDI's broader initiative under the J&K Startup Policy 2024-27 to foster a robust startup ecosystem across the Union Territory through district-level boot camps.

Distinguished guests present on the occasion included Chand Kishore Sharma, Joint Director, JKEDI; Prof. Jasvinder Singh, Principal, Government Degree College Tral; Raiyees Manzoor, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Pulwama; Mohd Ayoub Joo, Chief Manager, Cluster Office Pulwama, J&K Bank; Prof. Rafiq Ahmad Khan, HOD Physics, GDC Tral; Dr. Umar Amin, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, GDC Tral; Arshid, successful entrepreneur from New Hatric Bakery; Nazir Ahmad Mir, Senior Faculty Member, ITI Tral; Tariq Beigh, Block MIS Officer, NRLM Tral; along with other dignitaries, faculty members and guests.

The programme provided a platform and starting point for students to begin their entrepreneurial journey. An idea today, with the right support, can grow into something remarkable tomorrow.

Students pitched their startup ideas before



a panel of experts. The most promising ones will be shortlisted for intensive mentoring, pitch training and the Grand Finale of the J&K Startup Idea Challenge 2.0. Selected innovators will receive opportunities for mentorship, incubation support and pathways to convert their concepts into sustainable ventures.

The event concluded by reminding participants that every successful startup begins with the determination to take the first step.

The organisers expressed gratitude to all dignitaries, faculty members and students for their enthusiastic participation and reiterated JKEDI and GDC Tral's commitment to empowering the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to become job creators rather than job seekers.

No permission sought or issued for proposed Gurez event: AD tourism gulmarg

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Assistant Director Tourism Gulmarg today clarified regarding social media post circulated through the twitter

handle "Tantra in silence at gurez" that his office has neither granted any permission nor issued any authorization for conducting the said event, through an official communication.

It further stated that, "this office has no information or official

communication regarding the proposed event referred to in the said social media post. No application seeking permission for the event has been received or processed by this office," reads the clarification.

It further clarified that the said

proposed event has not been authorized/ approved by the Office of the Assistant Director Tourism, Gulmarg, and this office has no association with the organization or conduct of the event mentioned in the social media post.

Kathua Admin hosting District Marathon-2026 on October 4

■ HT News Network



KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 19: The District Administration Kathua is going to host the District Marathon-2026 on October 4 under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan, in collaboration with The Season Play (TSP), to promote a healthy and active lifestyle and spread awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse. In this regard, the Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma today chaired a meeting in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to review and finalize arrangements for the event. The marathon would feature 3 Km, 5 Km and 10 Km race categories, with participation from youth, students, sports enthusiasts and the general public.

During the meeting, the DC reviewed various arrangements including route planning, traffic management, security, medical and first-aid facilities, sanitation, drinking water, registration, publicity and participant mobilization.

The concerned departments were directed to ensure close coordination and complete all arrangements well in advance for the smooth and successful conduct of the marathon.

The DC emphasized that the event should serve as a platform to strengthen the collective resolve against drug abuse, particularly among youth, while encouraging healthy lifestyles and positive engagement. The district administration has invited citizens, youth, educational institutions, sports organizations and other stakeholders to participate enthusiastically in the marathon and contribute to the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan. Among others, GM DIC, Mushtaq Chaudhary, ASP Sunil Kesar, CPO Ranjeet Thakur, representatives of colleges and officers/officials of concerned departments attended the meeting.

Javid Dar lays foundation stones, inaugurates major development projects in Rafiabab

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA SEPTEMBER 19: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today laid foundation stones and inaugurated a series of major developmental projects across Rafiabab constituency, marking a significant push towards strengthening rural infrastructure and improving public services in the area.

The projects, spread across key sectors including education, veterinary services, livestock development and road connectivity, are aimed at creating modern infrastructure and improving the quality of essential services for the people, particularly those living in rural and far-flung areas.

At Watergam, Javid Dar laid the foundation stone for an Engineering Complex, being constructed at an estimated cost of rupees 60 crore. The facility is expected to strengthen infrastructure and provide improved facilities for the concerned sector.

The Minister also laid the foundation stone for an Embryo Transfer Technology (ETT) Laboratory at Chijhama, Rafiabab, envisaged as an important intervention for strengthening modern breeding practices and improving livestock development



infrastructure in the region.

At Shultoo, Rohama, Javid Dar inaugurated the upgradation of the existing Veterinary Building, including fencing, completed at a cost of rupees 29 lakh. The facility is expected to enhance veterinary services and provide improved support to livestock farmers and animal rearers of the area.

Giving impetus to educational infrastructure, the Minister laid the foundation stone for construction of a 10-room double-storey building at Higher Secondary School Shultoo, at an estimated cost of rs 2.74 crore.

He also laid the foundation stone for construction of Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Computer laboratories/rooms at Boys Higher Secondary School Shultoo, involving an estimated cost of rs 72 lakh, aimed at providing students with better academic infrastructure and strengthening science and technology education.

In the road sector, the Minister inaugurated the Brandub-Khahmoh Road, 1st and 2nd kilometre, completed at a cost of rs 1.70 crore, providing improved connectivity and facilitating smoother movement of people and goods. At Arkhurwari, Javid Dar laid the foundation stone for the permanent restoration of the Vohlutra-Shultoo-Arkburwari Road, estimated to cost rs 1 crore, which will further improve connectivity between the adjoining habitations and enhance access to essential services and markets. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the Government is committed to take development to the doorsteps of the people, with special focus on strengthening infrastructure and public services in rural and far-flung areas. He said that development is not merely about creation of physical assets but also about ensuring that these assets.

Javid Dar visits Handwara Fruit Mandi, assures priority resolution of growers' concerns

■ Dr Ab Qayoom

KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 19: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today visited Handwara Fruit Mandi and reviewed its overall functioning, infrastructure and facilities being provided to fruit growers, traders and other stakeholders associated with the horticulture trade.

Member Parliament Choudhary Mohammad Ramzan and MLA Langate Sheikh Khursheed Ahmad accompanied the Minister during the visit.

The Minister held a detailed interaction with representatives of fruit growers, traders and the Mandi Association and listened to their concerns and suggestions regarding the smooth functioning of the mandi. The stakeholders apprised the Minister of various issues pertaining to basic infrastructure, facilities, marketing arrangements, transportation and other requirements aimed at facilitating hassle-free trade and ensuring better returns to growers.

While addressing the



gathering, Javid Dar sought constructive suggestions from the stakeholders for further improving the functioning of the mandi and strengthening the existing marketing mechanism. He stressed the importance of developing efficient, transparent and grower-friendly market infrastructure to ensure that farmers and fruit growers receive better facilities and an enabling environment for the marketing of their produce.

The Minister assured the representatives that all genuine demands and issues highlighted during the interaction would be examined

and addressed on priority, in coordination with the concerned officers. He directed the officers to maintain close coordination with the mandi associations and remain responsive to the genuine requirements of growers and traders.

Javid Dar emphasized that strengthening horticulture infrastructure and streamlining the marketing system is essential for safeguarding the interests of fruit growers, improving post-harvest management and giving further impetus to the horticulture economy of Jammu and Kashmir.

JKBOSE holds Consultative Meeting on Development of Vocational Courses

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) held a consultative meeting to deliberate on the development of vocational courses tailored to the local needs and emerging employment opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting, held at the JKBOSE headquarters at Bemina here, was organised as part of the Board's process for submission to the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVT) for Dual Recognition and as a step towards developing a new vocational course in the sector of Agriculture.

The consultation brought together experts from the vocational education and agriculture sectors, including Dr T. N. Giri, Director, Vocational

Education, NIOS, and Prof V. S. Mehrotra, Head, PSSCIVE, NCERT, Bhopal, besides experts from SKUAST-Kashmir, SKUAST-Jammu and the Department of Agriculture, J&K.

Addressing the gathering, the Chairman, JKBOSE, said the Board was among the few Boards in the country to have received a Letter of Intent (LoI) from NCVT, describing it as an important step towards strengthening vocational education and skill-based learning in school education. He said the Board was focusing on sectors having considerable potential in the Union Territory, particularly agriculture and tourism, with the aim of enabling students to acquire skills relevant to local employment and livelihood opportunities.

In his welcome address, Dr Parveen Singh, Director Academics,



JKBOSE stressed the need to establish stronger linkages between school education, skills and the requirements of the job market, while ensuring

that vocational courses remain relevant to the socio-economic context of Jammu and Kashmir. The initiative, he said, is aligned with

the vision of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which seeks greater integration of vocational education, experiential learning and skill

development into mainstream school education.

During the meeting, experts deliberated on various aspects of curriculum development, including competency-based learning, sectoral and industry relevance, practical skills, assessment and certification.

The participants also discussed the need for courses that respond to emerging employment opportunities and make vocational education more locally relevant, particularly in sectors with potential for employment and entrepreneurship.

The consultation is expected to contribute to JKBOSE's submission for Dual Recognition under NCVT and the development of a structured vocational education framework for schools across Jammu and Kashmir. In his welcome address, Dr Parveen Singh, Director Academics, JKBOSE

stressed the need to establish stronger linkages between school education, skills and the requirements of the job market, while ensuring that vocational courses remain relevant to the socio-economic context of Jammu and Kashmir. The initiative, he said, is aligned with the vision of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which seeks greater integration of vocational education, experiential learning and skill development into mainstream school education.

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HT EDITORIAL

Let Kashmir Become More Than a Backdrop for Cinema

‘THE SLEDGE’ Reaches Germany ;
J&K Must Now Turn Its Growing Film Interest Into a Sustainable Creative Economy

The journey of Kashmiri feature film The Sledge from the snow-covered landscapes of Kashmir to the International Competition of the 31st SCHLINGEL International Film Festival in Germany is not merely a matter of cinematic pride. It is a reminder of the enormous creative potential that exists in Jammu and Kashmir—and of the opportunity before the government to transform that potential into a sustained film and creative industry.

Written and directed by Raja Shabir Mohd Khan, The Sledge is a Kashmiri-language children’s film rooted in the Valley’s landscape, culture and everyday life. Its selection for an international competitive festival demonstrates that stories originating in Kashmir can travel beyond geographical and linguistic boundaries when they are told with authenticity and imagination.

This development assumes greater significance in the wake of the government’s recent initiative to organise the first-ever International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir. Such an initiative can be the beginning of a much larger cultural and economic movement. A film festival should not remain a once-a-year celebration of cinema; it should become a platform from which a permanent film ecosystem grows.

Kashmir has for decades attracted filmmakers because of its extraordinary landscapes. But there is a difference between being a location where others come to shoot and becoming a genuine centre of filmmaking. The real opportunity lies in creating an environment where films are conceived, written, produced and completed in Jammu and Kashmir, with local people participating at every stage.

That requires sustained institutional support. Film festivals, workshops, screenwriting programmes, acting laboratories, technical training, location facilitation and regular interaction between Kashmiri filmmakers and national and international production houses can gradually build the necessary ecosystem. The existing J&K Film Policy already provides a policy framework for encouraging film production in the Union Territory, including incentives linked to shooting and production.

Single Window System

The economic possibilities are considerable. Every film brings opportunities not only for actors and directors but also for writers, cinematographers, editors, musicians, technicians, costume designers, set workers, drivers, hotels, restaurants, local artisans and numerous other service providers. A vibrant film industry can therefore create employment far beyond the screen.

Most importantly, sustained engagement with the national and international film fraternity can give young people in Kashmir a reason to see filmmaking as a profession rather than merely an aspiration. Local talent needs opportunities to learn, collaborate and compete. A young actor should not necessarily have to leave Kashmir to find a professional opportunity, just as a local technician should be able to build a career by working on productions coming to the Valley.

At the same time, the industry must not be built only around Kashmir’s scenery. The greater strength of Kashmiri cinema lies in its stories, languages, people and cultural memory. Films such as The Sledge demonstrate the value of telling stories from Kashmir through Kashmiri voices. International recognition for such work can encourage more filmmakers to take that path.

The government’s role, therefore, should go beyond organising festivals. It should create the conditions in which the private sector, filmmakers, investors, production houses, artists and technical professionals can work together. The first film festival can be viewed as a beginning; the real test will be whether it leads to regular production, stronger local skills, wider investment and greater employment.

Kashmir has long been one of the world’s most recognisable cinematic landscapes. The time has come for it to become something more: a place where cinema is made, talent is nurtured, investment is attracted and local stories find audiences across India and the world. The Sledge has taken one Kashmiri story to Germany. The larger challenge and opportunity is to ensure that it is the beginning of many more such journeys.....



Sahil Manzoor

Education never simply means getting employment, handsome salaries, and all that comes with a job. Education simply means gaining control over everything within ourselves our anger, arrogance, dishonesty, jealousy, and other weaknesses. True education develops our character and teaches us how to deal with life.

How beautiful it is whenever I see educated people engaging in different livelihood activities. We know that in our country, almost everyone wants a government job. Yet, those who get into government service often start complaining: “What is so special about a government job?” I have a friend whose earnings are many times higher than mine. I also have a neighbour who earns in a few days what some people earn in an entire month.

My perspective regarding employment is quite clear. People who have zeal, enthusiasm,

and a thirst to do something in any field rarely complain about what they have achieved or what they have lost. Different people have different stories when it comes to their choices of employment.

Some people may not be highly qualified, yet they have positive smiles on their faces and live their lives happily. On the other hand, some highly qualified people, such as engineers, teachers, doctors, and lecturers, complain that their earnings are insufficient, that they cannot afford a luxurious lifestyle, or that they cannot live like princes.

How Can We Be Happy?
For me, earnings are not everything. I believe in satisfaction. The person who is satisfied with his or her qualifications, profession, and earnings is a successful person. No one can defeat such a person’s dreams or easily make them unhappy.

Actually, it is our own mindset that often creates problems. We keep looking at what others are doing without knowing their background. Different people have different strengths and different financial circumstances, so it is not possible for everyone to sail in the same boat.

Some people can make something great from very small things, while others have bigger opportunities because of their family background, financial status, education, or other advantages. Yet, they sometimes fail to make good use of

those opportunities. This raises an important question: why do some people have great opportunities but fail to use them to achieve their life goals?

Today, this thought came into my mind, and I decided to write about it.

Literally, I have been enjoying delicious masala (a mixture of gram) and lawasa (dandoori chapatti) for the last couple of decades, along with chutneys of different varieties, such as coriander, chilli powder, green chilli, curd, and pieces of salad.

One of the sellers from Parneva, Khansahib, Budgam, has been selling these items for a long time. I like his behaviour and the way he presents his masala and lawasa with delicious chutney. He keeps the chutney in copper utensils, which adds to the traditional charm. What attracts me most is his behaviour. Even when members of the community call him “Sir,” he remains humble and gentle.

Today, I see similar food items being sold outside colleges, schools, sports stadiums, and other busy places. Such efforts by our educated youth to earn a livelihood should be appreciated. The government should support them by providing financial assistance and suitable permanent spaces so that they can earn with dignity and with proper governmental support.

There are great minds in the government, and I hope such initiatives for employment and

self-reliance among our youth will be appreciated and supported.

How Can We Generate Employment with Little Financial Support?

We can start a business from a footpath and gradually build it into a successful enterprise within a few years through honesty, hard work, and enthusiasm.

Anyone can become what he or she wants to become, but proper guidance and a great vision are necessary. Willingness plays a vital role and can uplift a person from any situation. There is no need to start a business with millions. When you start small, you remain calm because you have less fear of bankruptcy and fewer financial pressures.

Always try to learn from zero and then move higher. The higher you go, the calmer and wiser you should become.

Education
We should never claim that we are educated and then ask why we are unemployed.

For your kind consideration, an educated person should never give up simply because employment opportunities are limited. How is it possible that you spend 20 or 30 years learning how to tackle life’s issues and deal with problems, but when it comes to employment, you give up?

Sahil Manzoor Bhatti
sahilmanzoor9419@gmail.com

The Scope Of Alternative Medicine In The Digital Age



SURINDERPAL SINGH

The twenty-first century has witnessed remarkable advancements in medical science, yet alongside modern hospitals, sophisticated surgeries and advanced pharmaceuticals, alternative medicine continues to hold an important place in human healthcare. From Ayurveda and Homeopathy to Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani and traditional healing practices, alternative systems of medicine are increasingly attracting attention in the digital age. The internet, smartphones and artificial intelligence have transformed how people access information about health, creating both unprecedented opportunities and serious responsibilities for the future of alternative medicine. Alternative medicine broadly refers to healthcare approaches that originate outside conventional Western medicine or are used alongside it. In India, systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homeopathy have deep historical and cultural roots. Practices including Yoga, meditation, acupuncture and herbal therapy are also becoming popular globally because of their emphasis on preventive care, lifestyle balance and overall well-being.

The digital revolution has dramatically expanded access to healthcare knowledge. A person living in a remote village can now watch a video explaining yoga techniques, consult an Ayurvedic practitioner through telemedicine or learn about traditional dietary

practices using a smartphone. Digital platforms have reduced geographical barriers and connected patients with practitioners across regions and countries. Telemedicine has emerged as one of the most promising developments. Online consultations enable alternative medicine practitioners to reach patients who may otherwise struggle to



access specialised services. Mobile applications can help users monitor meditation, yoga exercises, sleep patterns and dietary habits. Artificial intelligence can potentially assist practitioners by organising patient histories, identifying patterns and supporting personalised wellness programmes.

Social media has also played a significant role in popularising alternative medicine. Millions of people now follow content related to herbal remedies, mindfulness, nutrition and natural lifestyles. However, popularity should not automatically be confused with scientific validity. The digital world offers information freely, but it also allows misinformation to spread rapidly.

One of the major reasons behind the growing scope of alternative medicine is the increasing global interest in preventive healthcare. Modern lifestyles are often associated with stress, sedentary habits, irregular sleep, processed food consumption

and mental health challenges. Many people are therefore exploring approaches that focus on maintaining wellness rather than treating illness only after it develops.

Yoga and meditation, for example, are increasingly recognised as useful components of stress management and physical fitness. Similarly, traditional dietary knowledge

and certain herbal practices are being investigated for their potential role in supporting general health.

The future of alternative medicine may not necessarily lie in replacing conventional medicine but in developing responsible integrative healthcare systems. When evidence-based practices from different medical traditions work together, patients may benefit from a broader range of healthcare options. Despite its growing popularity, alternative medicine faces an important challenge: scientific validation. Not every traditional remedy is automatically safe or effective simply because it has been used for centuries. Historical use provides valuable knowledge, but modern healthcare also requires systematic research, clinical trials, quality control and transparent evidence. Digital platforms frequently promote exaggerated claims about miracle cures, immunity boosters or treatments for serious

diseases. Such claims can mislead vulnerable patients and sometimes discourage them from seeking necessary medical treatment. This is particularly dangerous when alternative remedies are promoted as substitutes for proven emergency or life-saving interventions. Therefore, practitioners and digital content creators must adopt ethical standards. Health information shared online should be accurate, evidence-based and transparent about its limitations.

Artificial intelligence is likely to influence alternative medicine in several ways. AI-powered systems can analyse large volumes of traditional medical literature, assist in documenting herbal properties and identify potential areas for scientific research. Digital databases may preserve ancient knowledge that could otherwise be lost over generations. However, AI cannot replace qualified medical professionals. Traditional knowledge must be carefully evaluated before being converted into digital recommendations. Issues such as dosage, drug interactions, allergies and individual health conditions require professional judgement. The combination of traditional knowledge and modern technology offers exciting possibilities, but innovation must always be accompanied by responsibility. The expansion of alternative medicine in the digital age requires appropriate regulation. Governments, medical institutions and educational organisations have an important role in ensuring that practitioners meet professional standards and that consumers receive reliable information.

Digital literacy is equally important. People should learn to distinguish between authentic medical advice and commercial advertisements disguised as healthcare information. Before adopting any treatment, individuals should consider consulting qualified professionals, especially when suffering from serious or chronic illnesses.

Surinderpal Singh
Faculty In Science Department
Sri Amritsar Sahib
Punjab.

The Woman Behind the Word “Mother”



By Bisma Ashraf

A mother is often introduced to us through familiar words—love, sacrifice, tenderness, patience and care. We grow up hearing that a mother is the heart of the family, the first teacher and the person who stands beside us through every difficulty. These descriptions are true, but they do not tell the whole story. Behind the word mother is a woman with her own dreams, emotions, struggles, ambitions and imperfections.

Motherhood is not simply a biological relationship. It is a lifelong journey of giving, learning, adapting and caring. Much of this journey takes place quietly, away from public attention. A mother may wake before everyone else, prepare meals, organise the household, care for children, look after elderly family members and still find time to ask everyone how their day was. Her work may never appear in an official record, yet the smooth functioning of a family often depends upon it.

The beauty of motherhood lies precisely in these ordinary acts.

A cup of tea prepared according to someone’s preference, a lunch packed before school, a blanket pulled over a sleeping child, medicine placed beside an elderly parent’s bed or a reassuring hand placed on a troubled forehead may appear insignificant. Yet such gestures become the language through which love is expressed. Mothers often communicate affection not through grand declarations but through routines repeated so many times that the family begins to take them for granted.

This is one of the great contradictions of motherhood. The more consistently a mother performs her responsibilities, the less visible her effort can become.

Society has traditionally celebrated mothers as symbols of sacrifice. They are described as angels, saints and selfless figures who put everyone else before themselves. While such praise may be well intentioned, it can create an unrealistic image of motherhood. A mother is also a human being. She can become exhausted, impatient or frustrated. She may have professional ambitions, personal interests and dreams that have nothing to do with her children.

Recognising these realities does not make motherhood

less beautiful. It makes our understanding of it more honest.

For generations, women have been expected to perform a large share of unpaid domestic and caregiving work. Cooking, cleaning, raising children and caring for elderly relatives are often regarded as natural extensions of a woman’s responsibilities rather than as valuable forms of labour. Yet these tasks require time, knowledge, patience and considerable emotional energy.

Care is not simply instinct. It is an expertise developed over years. A mother learns to recognise the difference between a child’s ordinary silence and a troubling one. She knows when a fever requires attention, when a child needs advice and when the better response is simply a hug. She remembers countless details about the people around her. This knowledge is rarely measured, but its importance becomes obvious when it is absent.

That is why respect for mothers should extend beyond emotional appreciation. Families and societies need to recognise the practical value of caregiving. Affordable childcare, parental leave, healthcare, flexible employment and social security can help ensure that caring for a family does not come at the cost of a woman’s economic independence and personal development.

But meaningful change does not always begin with government policy. It can begin in the kitchen.

When household responsibilities are shared between men and women, children learn that caring for a family is a collective responsibility. A father who cooks, cleans, attends a parent-teacher meeting or cares for a sick family member is not merely helping his wife. He is challenging an old assumption about who is supposed to perform domestic work.

Children observe these things closely. They learn about gender, responsibility and respect from what happens at home long before they learn about these concepts from books.

Motherhood also plays an important role in preserving culture. In many families, mothers are the keepers of traditions that might otherwise disappear. Recipes, lullabies, stories, expressions and languages are often passed from one generation to another through everyday interactions.

In Kashmir, for example, familiar household traditions can carry memories of generations. A bowl of noon chai, a traditional recipe, a particular phrase in Kashmiri or an old song sung to a child can become much more than a daily habit. Such practices connect the present with the past.

A mother does not pass on only genetic inheritance. She also passes on memory.

This role becomes particularly important for families living away from their ancestral homes. When migration and

changing lifestyles threaten traditional languages and customs, mothers can become important links to cultural continuity. Speaking a mother tongue at home or teaching children an old family recipe can become a quiet form of preservation.

Motherhood, however, is not always a story of happiness. Mothers experience grief, disappointment and loss like everyone else. Yet their grief often has to coexist with responsibility. Even when a mother is hurting, children still need food, attention and reassurance. The household still has to function.

This can create a kind of silent strength that outsiders may never fully understand.

But mothers should not be expected to suffer silently simply because they are mothers. They deserve emotional support, companionship and the freedom to acknowledge their own pain. Strength should not mean suppressing every feeling.

There is another important aspect of motherhood that deserves greater recognition: the right of a mother to remain an individual.

A woman does not stop being a person when she becomes a mother. She may want to study, work, write, paint, travel, start a business or simply spend time doing something she enjoys. Her children can be central to her life without becoming her entire identity.

In fact, when mothers pursue their own interests, they can provide powerful lessons to their children. A mother returning to education teaches perseverance. A mother developing a career teaches independence. A mother setting healthy boundaries teaches self-respect. A mother admitting her mistakes teaches humility.

Children do not need perfect mothers. They need mothers who are present, honest and human.

Modern society is also expanding its understanding of what it means to mother. Families take many forms today. Single mothers, adoptive parents, foster parents, grandparents and other caregivers may all perform the emotional and practical work traditionally associated with motherhood. What connects these experiences is not merely biology but the commitment to nurture another human being.

Technology has also changed motherhood. A mother separated from her children by distance can now read a bedtime story through a video call, check on them through a message or remain connected throughout the day. Yet technology cannot entirely replace physical presence. A screen can transmit a voice, but it cannot reproduce the warmth of a hand placed on a child’s head.

Perhaps the greatest mistake we make is expecting mothers to be perfect.

The voice of humanity. -

The Indian Army’s Dagger Division supports and engages with the School for Blind, Deaf and Dumb located in Baramulla, Kashmir.



By M S Nazki

If you are deaf, dumb, and blind to what's happening in the world, you're under no obligation to do anything. But if you know what's happening and you don't do anything but sit on your back side, then you're nothing but a punk

-Kahlil Gibran: "You are blind and I am deaf and dumb, so let us touch hands and understand!

-Frederick Lenz: "We're blind, deaf and dumb. It is only that Self, which is our life force that makes who and what we are. The realization of that is self-realization.

-Mark Twain: "Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see." – A classic reflection on how empathy transcends physical limitations.

-Being preoccupied with our self-image is like being deaf and blind. – Highlighting how ego isolates people from reality

-None so blind, so deaf, as those that will not hear, that will not see ..A traditional proverb about wilful ignorance

-If Every one of us is blind and deaf until our eyes are opened to our fellowmen, until our ears hear the voice of humanity. -A reminder that true awareness comes from community connection.....

-Some Historical examples:

-1882"

-Enthusiasm in the heart of a young deaf man, a state appropriation, and donated land set the stage for the creation of what is now the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB). In 1882, Thomas Hines Coleman, a deaf man, was preparing to graduate from Gallaudet College (now Gallaudet University) in Washington, DC. Coleman had previously graduated from the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind and knew that he wanted to make education his life's work. Florida was one of the few states that had not yet made provision for the education of children who were deaf or blind. Coleman wrote to Florida Governor William Dunnington Bloxham and found that he supported the concept of such a school.

-Governor Bloxham

-1883

Governor Bloxham agreed and convinced the state legislature to set aside \$10,000 for each of the years 1883 and 1884 to begin the work of the school. The state requested bids from interested towns for the site and accepted a \$1,000 cash bid from the City of St. Augustine. Five acres of land between San Marco Avenue and the Intracoastal Waterway were donated by Captain Edward Eugene Vaill, who owned the St. Augustine Hotel. The property was described as a "very desirable one that commands a magnificent view."

-1884

Contractor William A. MacDuff erected the first three Wooden School Buildings on the south campus on Genoply Street, completed in December at a cost of \$12,749. The first floor of each building served as classrooms, with dormitories and teacher/staff living quarters on the second floors. Three original wood buildings

-1885:

The school opened on February 2, 1885, as the Florida Institute for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb. The word "dumb" at that time meant someone who was mute or did not speak. Tuition was to be "absolutely free," and the indigent were to be provided with clothes as well.

When Thomas Coleman declined to become principal for health reasons, C.H. Hill, a teacher at the Maryland Deaf-Mute Institute, was offered the job. When he did not accept, Park Terrell, an educator from Columbus, OH was hired as the first principal (1885-1890) at a salary of \$1,800. Coleman became the head teacher, and Mrs. M. D. Taylor was the matron. Park Terrell was appointed as the first principal (1885-1890). Previously, he had taught at the Michigan School for the Deaf and the Ohio School for the Deaf. He resigned in 1890 and became a municipal bond specialist in New York, where he gave speeches and authored feature articles on the subject.

The opportunities the school afforded were tremendous; however, it was several years after the school opened before parents could be induced to enroll their children. During the first year, there were 11 pupils in attendance. At that time, there were about 119 children in the state who were deaf or blind, and it was estimated that 78 of these children were of school age. Gradually, the fears of parents were reduced, their prejudices were allayed, and they saw the value of the work being done by the school.

The school operated under a Board of Managers from 1885 to 1903, which consisted of the Florida governor, the state superintendent of public instruction, the state attorney general, and the state treasurer

-The story which we got went something like this

which was just a few lines:

-The Indian Army's Dagger Division organized a welfare drive at the School for Blind, Deaf and Dumb, distributing ration and essential commodities to specially-abled students. GOC Dagger Division Major General Manoj Joshi visited the school and interacted with the students

-The Indian Army's Dagger Division supports and engages with the School for Blind, Deaf and Dumb located in Baramulla, Kashmir.

-Key Details Location: Baramulla, Jammu and Kashmir.

-Recent Activities: The Dagger Division regularly organizes welfare drives, distributes essential commodities and rations, and arranges special educational excursions (such as visits to the Kaman Aman Setu) for the specially-abled students.

-Leadership Involvement: General Officer Commanding (GOC) Dagger Division, Major General Manoj Joshi, has visited the institution to interact with the students and support community welfare efforts.

-Related Institution: The Dagger Division also works closely with the nearby Dagger Parivaar School in Baramulla for specially-abled children, run in partnership with the Indrani Balan Foundation.

-Remarkable stories of blind individuals highlight incredible feats of courage, innovation, and resilience across history and modern times.

-Historical Icons and Trailblazers Helen Keller: Lost her sight and hearing at 19 months old, later graduating with honors from Radcliffe College and becoming a world-renowned The First Deaf-Blind Graduate |

-Modern Adventurers and Achievers Erik Weihenmayer: Overcame progressive vision loss to become an accomplished adventurer, famously climbing the highest peak on every continent—the Seven Summits. Daniel Kish: Mastered human echolocation using tongue clicks, achieving complete independence and teaching his unique navigation techniques to others through his organization

-The story which will impress you:

"The Last Leaf" by O. Henry is a famous short story about hope, sacrifice, and friendship.

-The Illness: Two young artist friends, Sue and Johnsy, live in Greenwich Village, New York. Johnsy falls terribly

ill with pneumonia during a cold winter. The Delusion: Weak and depressed, Johnsy stares out the window at an old ivy vine losing its leaves. She counts the remaining leaves and convinces herself she will die when the very last leaf falls.

-The Sacrifice: Mr. Behrman, an old, struggling painter who lives downstairs, hears of Johnsy's morbid belief. On a night of fierce wind and freezing rain, Behrman paints a realistic ivy leaf onto the brick wall outside.

or complex ideas. Check if the other person understands your point. Stay Calm and Polite Keep your emotions controlled during disagreements. Avoid insults, mocking, or angry outbursts.

-Set Healthy Boundaries Limit the time and energy you spend on difficult talks. Walk away from repetitive or toxic arguments. Focus your attention on your own tasks and goals.

How-do-you-deal-with-stupid-or-unmotivated-people-in-your-life) Focus on Practical Solutions Create simple systems or checklists to reduce mistakes instead of blaming the person. Offer private, gentle corrections rather than calling someone out in public.

Now a few lighter moments:

-Here are some of the most baffling, bizarre, and hilariously disastrous decisions made by military commanders throughout history.

-The General Who Forgot His Reading Glasses. During the Battle of Karásebes (1788), the Austrian army managed to completely defeat itself without the enemy ever showing up. The Setup: A vanguard of Austrian hussars bought a large amount of schnapps from local traders and got drunk.

-The Mix-up: When infantrymen demanded a share of the alcohol, a brawl broke out. Someone fired a shot. In the darkness and confusion, someone shouted "Turks! Turks!" (the enemy they were expecting).

-The Disaster: The drunk troops panicked and fled. The main army heard the commotion, believed the Ottoman Empire was attacking, and began firing wildly at their own men.

-The Punchline: Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II lost control of the situation, fell off his horse into a ditch, and the army suffered thousands of casualties before realizing no enemies were present.

-The General Who Let a Cat Dictate Strategy: During the Sui Dynasty's invasion of Goguryeo (612 AD), Chinese General Yuwen Shu led an army of over 300,000 men into enemy territory.

-The Issue: The supply lines were stretched thin, making the soldiers' packs incredibly heavy because they had to carry months of rations.

-The "Genius" Idea: To lighten their load, the soldiers secretly began dumping their heavy bags of rice and burying them.

-The Failure: Yuwen Shu found out but didn't want to slow down or punish them. Instead, he ordered that anyone who discarded grain would be executed.

-The Reality: The soldiers kept dumping the food anyway. By the time they reached the enemy capital, the entire army was literally starving.



-The Twist: The painted leaf stays firmly in place despite the storm. Seeing that the leaf survived, Johnsy regains her will to live and slowly recovers. However, Behrman caught pneumonia while painting in the cold wet night and passes away, leaving behind his true masterpiece.

-The Leaves Story: A children's classic by Henry Ward Beecher (from his novel Norwood) about a nervous little leaf learning to accept the changing autumn seasons and the natural cycle of life.

-A Tale of Leaf: A short inspirational story exploring a leaf's realization that every small part of nature has an important purpose.

-O Henry died of alcoholism!

-How to help handicapped people:

-People perceived as lacking intelligence or making poor judgments should be treated with patience, clear communication, and basic respect. Interactions can be managed constructively through several practical approaches. Communicate Clearly Use simple and direct words. Keep your sentences short. Avoid confusing jargon

Cities growing on garbage heaps



Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

While rapid urbanization in India is creating opportunities for economic growth, employment, and improved living standards, the scientific management of the resulting solid waste remains a major challenge. Unplanned urban expansion, growing population, changing lifestyles, consumerism, and the increasing use of single-use items have increased both the quantity and variety of waste in cities. In many cities, waste collection, transportation, and disposal are still primarily based on the "collect-transport-dump" model. This results in open dumping and burning, water source pollution, foul smell, air pollution, and increasing landfill pressure. Therefore, the challenge facing India is not just waste removal, but also its transformation into a resource.

India's solid waste is extremely diverse. Municipal solid waste from domestic and commercial activities constitutes the largest portion, including food and other organic materials, as well as paper, plastic, glass, metal, textiles, and packaging materials. The large volume of organic waste presents both a challenge and an opportunity for India, as it can be used to produce fertilizer and biogas. Plastic waste is another major problem. Multi-layer packaging and single-use plastics, in particular, are difficult to recycle and are likely to end up in drains, rivers, and oceans. Construction and demolition debris, including concrete, bricks, stone, tiles, wood, and metal, is also rapidly increasing. Scientific recycling can be used for road construction and new construction.

Additionally, biomedical waste, e-waste, and hazardous industrial waste require special care. Infected materials, needles, contaminated plastics, and pharmaceutical residues from hospitals, if mixed with general waste, can pose a serious threat to healthcare workers, waste pickers, and the general public. Similarly, e-waste from computers, mobile phones, batteries, and other electronic devices can contain precious metals, as well as lead, mercury, and other harmful substances. Hazardous waste such as chemicals, solvents,



in large cities can also reduce transportation costs and unnecessary waste transfer.

Material recovery facilities are extremely useful for dry waste. They use conveyor belts, magnetic separation, air classifiers, optical sorting, and modern sensor technology to separate paper, metal, and various types of plastic. Artificial intelligence and computer vision-based systems may make automated sorting even more effective in the future. However, mixing wet waste with recyclable materials reduces its quality and economic value. Therefore, source separation is fundamental to this entire technology chain.

Mechanical recycling for plastic waste is effective for relatively clean and uniform plastics. Some chemical recycling and pyrolysis technologies can be used for harder plastics. These technologies offer the potential to yield fuel or chemical raw materials, but a life-cycle assessment of their energy

requirements, costs, and environmental impact is necessary. Simply being technically feasible does not automatically make a solution sustainable.

Energy production from waste is also an important option. Through controlled combustion and refuse-derived fuel technologies, energy can be obtained from residual waste that cannot be recycled or bioprocessed. Modern emission control systems help control pollutants. However, India's mixed and high-moisture municipal waste often has a low calorific value. Therefore, burning all mixed waste without separation is not a viable strategy. Energy production should not be considered a substitute for recycling and bioprocessing, but rather a means of managing the residual waste that remains.

Finally, the need for scientific landfills remains, as recycling of all types of waste is not possible. Engineered landfills, including liners, leachate collection, gas capture, and groundwater monitoring, limit pollution. Biomining and bioremediation are also useful technologies for reclaiming old waste sites in India, allowing recyclable materials to be extracted from old waste and the land reused.

India must now move from a linear "produce-use-throw" economy to a circular economy. "Reduce, reuse, repair, recycle, and resource recovery" must become the cornerstone of urban policy. Producer responsibility, reasonable fees for waste producers, the integration of waste pickers into formal systems, accountability of bulk waste generators, and enhancing the technical capacity of local bodies will be important steps in this direction.

In fact, solid waste management is not just an engineering problem, but a question of urban governance, social behavior, and resource management. Technology can separate, process, and recover waste, but its proper use requires citizen participation, effective institutional arrangements, and rigorous monitoring. Indian cities must move beyond a "waste removal" mindset to a "waste-to-resource" approach. This approach can become the foundation for a clean, sustainable, and resource-efficient India amid growing population and urbanization.

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

Cinema: In an Era of Change



Dr. Vijay Garg

Cinema has always been more than entertainment. It reflects society, shapes conversations and captures the dreams, fears and aspirations of different generations. Today, however, cinema is undergoing a remarkable transformation. Changing technology, new viewing habits, diverse storytelling and the rise of digital platforms are reshaping the way films are produced, distributed and experienced.

For decades, the cinema hall was the primary destination for watching a new film. Audiences planned their weekends around theatrical releases, bought tickets and experienced movies collectively on the big screen. Today, the situation is very different. Streaming platforms have brought thousands of films and series directly into homes and onto smartphones. A viewer can watch content from different countries, languages and cultures at almost any time.

Technology has become one of the strongest forces behind this change. High-quality cameras, computer-generated imagery, artificial intelligence, digital editing and advanced sound technologies have expanded the possibilities of filmmaking. Stories that once seemed impossible to visualise can now be presented with remarkable realism. At the same time, affordable digital equipment has enabled independent filmmakers and young creators to experiment outside traditional studio systems.

The audience itself is also changing. Modern viewers have access to content from across the world and are becoming more selective about what they watch. They are increasingly interested in original stories, realistic characters and subjects that connect with contemporary life. Films dealing with social issues, personal struggles, regional identities, history, science and ordinary human experiences can find audiences far beyond their traditional markets. Another important development is the growing recognition

of regional cinema. Films made in languages such as Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Bengali, Marathi and Kannada are reaching national and international audiences through subtitles, dubbing and digital distribution. This has created greater visibility for local cultures, traditions and storytelling styles while demonstrating that good stories can cross linguistic boundaries.

The relationship between cinema and the box office is changing as well. A film's success is no longer measured only by theatrical collections. Streaming rights, digital viewership, international audiences, television rights and long-term cultural impact have become important parts of the modern film economy. Some films may have modest theatrical runs but later develop a large following through digital platforms. Artificial intelligence is likely to bring another major transformation. AI can assist in areas such as visual effects, editing, dubbing, translation and production planning. It may also help filmmakers reach audiences across language barriers. At the same time, its growing use raises important questions about creativity, copyright, employment, consent and the role of human artists. Technology can provide powerful tools, but storytelling ultimately depends on human imagination and emotional understanding.

Cinema is also becoming more interactive and accessible. Mobile phones have turned millions of people into both viewers and content creators. Short films, web series and independently produced videos can reach large audiences without traditional distribution networks. This has lowered some barriers to entry and opened opportunities for new voices.

Yet the transformation has challenges. The enormous volume of digital content can make it difficult for quality work to stand out. Short attention spans may encourage superficial storytelling, while commercial pressure can sometimes favour formulas over originality. Concerns about piracy, misinformation, excessive screen consumption and the protection of creative rights also remain significant.

Dr Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational columnist Eminent Scientist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab -152107

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Rana inaugurates ₹6.53 cr water project in Channi Himmat, Bahu; lays foundation for ₹5.90 cr scheme for Bathindi, Sunjwan

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 19: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today inaugurated a water supply project for the areas of Channi Himmat and Bahu and laid the foundation stone of a water supply augmentation project for Bathindi and Sunjwan, with the two projects having a combined estimated cost of 12.43 crore.

MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa, along with senior officers of the Jal Shakti Department and other concerned departments, were present on the occasion.

The Minister inaugurated the water supply project for Channi Himmat and Bahu, executed at an estimated cost of 652.78 lakh. The project is aimed at ensuring regular and daily water supply to residents of the areas that have been facing



shortages.

The project included the drilling of new tubewells and allied works to augment the availability of drinking water and strengthen the existing supply arrangements.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister said the completion of the project marks an important step

towards resolving the water deficit in the affected areas and providing households with a more reliable supply of drinking water.

He said that ensuring access to safe, adequate and dependable drinking water remains a key priority of the government, adding that the newly commissioned infrastructure

would provide much-needed relief to residents and improve the overall water supply position in the area.

Later, the Minister laid the foundation stone of the water supply improvement and augmentation project for Bathindi and Sunjwan, under SASCI, at an estimated cost of 590.50 lakh. The project is aimed at strengthening the existing water supply infrastructure and augmenting its capacity to meet the present and emerging requirements of the rapidly developing areas.

Once completed, the scheme is expected to improve water availability and enhance the reliability of supply for residents of Bathindi and Sunjwan.

The Minister directed the concerned officers to ensure that the Bathindi and Sunjwan augmentation project is completed within the stipulated timeline, while maintaining the prescribed standards of quality.

He also stressed the need for proper operation and maintenance of the newly commissioned tubewells to ensure that the benefits of the completed project reach residents without interruption.

The two projects form part of a broader series of inaugurations and foundation stone-laying ceremonies undertaken during the past week to strengthen and expand water supply infrastructure across Jammu.

MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa expressed gratitude to the Minister for taking up the projects and said the initiatives would provide significant relief to residents who had been facing difficulties due to inadequate water supply.

Later, the Minister chaired a meeting with senior officers of the Jal Shakti Department to take stock of the water supply situation in the area and review the progress of ongoing and proposed works.

DC Kathua reviews Youth Empowerment & Engagement Plan

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today chaired a meeting to review the Youth Empowerment and Engagement Plan, with focus on strengthening youth participation in constructive, developmental and community-oriented activities.

The meeting also reviewed the progress on uploading and documenting youth-oriented activities on the designated portal.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for coordinated efforts by all concerned departments to create opportunities for youth and encourage their active participation in sports, cultural activities, skill development, awareness programmes, community engagement and other initiatives aimed at their holistic development.

The DC directed the concerned officers to ensure regular and timely uploading of details of all eligible activities on the designated portal. He emphasized accurate and timely reporting so that initiatives being undertaken at the district and grassroots levels are properly documented and reflected on the portal.

The meeting was attended by PO ICDS, GM DIC, CPO, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, DIO and other district officers. The meeting was attended by PO ICDS, GM DIC, CPO, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, DIO and other district officers.

DDC Poonch reviews progress of road projects in rural areas

■ HT News Network



POONCH, SEPTEMBER 19: District Development Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma, chaired a meeting to review the progress of ongoing road development works being executed in the district. The DDC reviewed the physical progress of various road and related developmental works, particularly in remote and far-flung areas including Mandi, Mendhar, Surankote, Balakote and adjoining areas. The status of ongoing works, pending activities and issues affecting their timely completion were discussed in detail. The DDC directed the concerned Assistant Commissioners Development and Block Development Officers to closely monitor the works in their respective areas and ensure that all ongoing road development works are completed at the earliest. Emphasising the importance of connectivity in remote and snow-bound areas, the DDC stressed that the works should be expedited and completed.

Deputy Commissioner addresses Ex-Serviceman Darbar at Surankote

■ HT News Network

POONCH, SEPTEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma today addressed an Ex-Servicemen Darbar organised by the Indian Army at Surankote with an aim to address the grievances of Ex-Servicemen related to local administration and to further strengthen civil-military cooperation. The Darbar was hosted by 16 Rashtriya Rifles Battalion under the aegis of Headquarters 6 Sector Rashtriya Rifles and Headquarters Counter Insurgency Force (Romeo).

The event was attended by Brigadier HSDhillon, Commander 6 Sector Rashtriya Rifles, Mohd Farooq, SDM Surankote along with civil administration and officials from Power, Agriculture, Horticulture, Revenue, Social Welfare and Zila Sainik Welfare Departments. During the Darbar, a fruitful and constructive interaction was held between the Deputy Commissioner, civil administration officials and the



Ex-Servicemen. Various issues and problems being faced by Ex-Servicemen pertaining to pension documentation, land records, power and water supply, benefits under agriculture and horticulture schemes and social welfare schemes for Ex-Servicemen and their families were discussed in detail.

The Deputy Commissioner gave a patient hearing to all grievances and assured prompt and time-bound redressal. He directed the concerned departmental representatives present on the occasion to provide

on-the-spot assistance and to extend all possible support for welfare of Ex-Servicemen.

The Ex-Servicemen expressed sincere gratitude to the Indian Army and district administration for providing a common platform to voice their concerns and for their continued commitment towards their welfare. The Darbar witnessed enthusiastic participation of 241 Ex-Servicemen from Surankote and adjoining areas. The event concluded on a positive and cordial note, further strengthening the bond of trust.

International Snakebite Awareness Day observed across medical blocks of district Doda

■ HT News Network

DODA, SEPTEMBER 19: Under the guidance of Chief Medical Officer Doda Dr. Vinod Sharma, the International Snakebite Awareness Day was today observed across all Medical Blocks of district Doda with the objective of spreading awareness regarding snakebite prevention, first aid and the importance of timely medical treatment.

On the occasion, dedicated awareness programmes were organized at various health institutions across the district. A major awareness programme was held at CHC Thathri under the supervision of BMO Dr Shaleel Ahmed Kichloo, while another programme was conducted at SDH Gandoh under the supervision of BMO Dr Farooq Saleem. Similar awareness programmes were also held across other Medical Blocks of the district, wherein healthcare professionals sensitized the public and staff about preventive measures, early detection of snakebite cases, appropriate first aid and the importance of seeking immediate medical attention.

The participants were advised against harmful traditional practices and unnecessary delays in reaching a health facility. The importance of immediate referral to the nearest healthcare facility for appropriate



management and administration of anti-snake venom, wherever indicated, was also emphasized. Similar awareness programmes were also held across other Medical Blocks of the district, wherein healthcare professionals sensitized the public and staff about preventive measures, early detection of snakebite cases, appropriate first aid and the importance of seeking immediate medical attention. The participants were advised against harmful traditional practices and unnecessary delays in reaching a health facility. The importance of immediate referral to the nearest healthcare facility for appropriate management and administration of anti-snake venom, wherever indicated, was also emphasized.

Div Com Kashmir chairs High-Level Meeting on Traffic Management System

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg today chaired a high-level meeting of the Multidisciplinary Committee/Regional Transport Authority (RTA) to review the progress of various projects and interventions aimed at easing traffic congestion in Srinagar city.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, SSP Traffic, RTO Kashmir, Chief Engineer KPDC and Executive Engineers of R&B, besides other



concerned officers.

During the meeting, a detailed review was undertaken regarding the progress of key road infrastructure projects including Development of Natipora to Chanapora road, Development of T-Junction at

Natipora crossing, Construction of flyover from Shaleng to Parimpora, Construction of footbridge at Pediatric Hospital, Bemina, Construction of underpass at Nowgam, Development of Shopping Complex at Noorbagh,

Development of road along Doodhganga River Bank from Barzulla to Sanat Nagar.

On the occasion, the Div Com also reviewed the status of Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL) projects, including identification of 10 additional junctions for installation of ITMS cameras, painting of zebra crossings and stop lines, implementation of IT-based parking system, and status of e-bus charging stations at Zoonimar and Batamallu.

He also reviewed the Action Taken Report submitted by R&B, SSCL, RTO and Traffic Police on the decisions taken in previous meetings.

University of Jammu Organises Panel Discussion on “BRICS 2026: The Delhi Declaration”

■ HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 19: The Department of Strategic and Regional Studies (DSRS), University of Jammu, organised a panel discussion on “BRICS 2026: The Delhi Declaration” at the Seminar Hall of the Department, bringing together eminent academicians and a senior civil servant to deliberate on the evolving significance of BRICS and its implications for India and the changing world order.

The discussion was moderated by Prof. Dipankar Sengupta, Department of Economics, University of Jammu. The panellists included Prof.



Baljit Singh Mann, Head, Department of Political Science, University of Jammu; Prof. Falendra K. Sudan, Department of Economics, University of Jammu; and Sh. Nagendra Singh Jamwal, JKAS, J&K UT Government.

Prof. Baljit Singh Mann focused on the geopolitical and political dimensions of BRICS. He noted that the expansion

and institutional evolution of the grouping reflect wider changes in international power relations. He emphasised the importance of examining BRICS in the context of India's foreign-policy priorities and its engagement with major global powers. He also pointed out that the Delhi Declaration provides an important framework for understanding

the emerging priorities of BRICS and its possible contribution to a more representative international system.

Speaking from an economic and developmental perspective, Prof. Falendra K. Sudan underlined the importance of economic cooperation, trade, investment, financial institutions and development partnerships within BRICS. He discussed the opportunities and challenges associated with greater economic integration among member countries and stressed the need to examine BRICS in terms of its implications for developing economies and the Global South. He also drew attention to the importance.

DC Kishtwar reviews implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules- 2026

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting in the Meeting Hall of the New DC Office Complex to review the implementation and monitoring of the Solid Waste Management Rules- 2026 in the district.

Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Neeraj Sharma apprised the chair of the current status of implementation across all eight prescribed data points.

He informed that the District Committee has already been constituted and the compliance report for the month of August has been submitted. As many as 12 Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs) have been identified in the district so far.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the authorities of Pakal Dul, Kwar, Kiru and Rattle HEPPs, besides the District Police Line, District Jail and all 12 Bulk Waste Generators, to lay special emphasis on ensuring completion of registration of all contractors / Bulk Waste Generators

associated with their projects on the centralized CPCB portal, as per the directions of the Supreme Court of India in Civil Appeal No. 6174 of 2023.

The DC further directed that action under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, including snapping of power and water connections, shall be initiated against non-compliant establishments.

Reviewing the status of processing infrastructure, the ACP informed the chair that a full-fledged processing plant is not available in Kishtwar. The status of Plastic Waste



Management Units (PWMUs) and the Material Recovery

Facility (MRF) was also reviewed.

In the case of MRF, the EO, MCKishtwar apprised the chair that the shed work of the MRF is complete, while the protection wall work is in progress and the issue of the approach road is also being addressed.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed on adopting a self-sustaining model and ensuring the functional status of all hopper trucks, with all trucks to be utilized for the collection of waste from all blocks.

Regarding four-way segregation, it was informed that 12 Panchayats have started

segregation of waste as per SWM rules 2026.

On Single-Use Plastic (SUP) enforcement, it was informed that enforcement drives were conducted, with 25 kg of plastic seized in urban areas and handed over to the Divisional Office, JK PCC, Kishtwar, for further disposal and 45 kg seized in rural areas. The DC directed that all seized single-use plastic be immediately handed over to the JK Pollution Control Board.

The ACP was directed to serve one more final notice to all non-registered BWGs and

to seek an immediate explanation regarding non-compliance from the concerned BDOs, if they fail to comply by Monday.

It was further informed that 152 capacity-building programmes have been held across the district and 129 vulnerable hotspots have been identified for cleanliness.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized that all concerned shall follow the directions of the SWM Rules, 2026, in letter and spirit without any ifs and buts, and ensure time-bound compliance.

J&K's first Street Food Vendor Training Programme held at Jammu

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 19: In a first for Jammu & Kashmir, street food vendors from Jammu and adjoining districts were today trained and certified at a one-day Street Food Vendor Training Programme.

The programme was organised at PSPS Government College for Women, Gandhi Nagar by the Northern Regional Office of FSSAI in coordination with the Food and Drug Administration, J&K under FoSTaC and Eat Right India campaign.

It was announced that eight such sessions will be held in every district of the Union Territory.

Member of Parliament Jugal Kishore Sharma- the Chief Guest- presented FoSTaC training certificates

to the participants. He also administered an oath to them to uphold and implement safe food practices. He said vendors carrying the certificate will enjoy an edge over their peers in the marketplace, as it testifies to the quality and safety of their food. The initiative, he added, reflects the government's vision of dignified workplace practices, clean and healthy food and stronger public health outcomes. He announced that more such programmes would follow across J&K.

Announcing the district-wise roll-out, Joint Commissioner Food Safety, Jammu & Kashmir Sanjeev Kumar reiterated the department's commitment to public health and the upskilling of street food vendors. He outlined plans for wider public



awareness, including social media outreach.

Joint Director, FSSAI, Ankeshwar Mishra said street food is a vital

part of any region's identity and for Jammu's street food to earn wider recognition, its vendors must be equipped with the best training and practices alongside certification. Held as per the directions of the Government of India, the session covered personal and stall hygiene, waste disposal, procurement and storage of raw material and safe handling and storage of cooked food. He also informed vendors that FSSAI provides a free-of-cost registration facility to them.

Participating vendors shared their experiences and assured compliance. Manager FSSAI- Northern Regional Office Nimanshi and President, Chamber of Commerce and Industries Jammu Arun Gupta were among the dignitaries present.

Folk dance programme held on eve of Mela Pat in Bhaderwah

■ HT News Network

BHADERWAH, SEPTEMBER 19: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), Sub-Office Doda, organised a vibrant Folk Dance Programme at Bhaderwah on the eve of Mela Pat, the other day showcasing the rich folk traditions and cultural heritage of the region.

The programme was organised on the directions of Secretary JKAACL Harvinder Kour and under the supervision of Special Secretary JKAACL Sonali Arun Gupta.

The event featured captivating performances by local artists, who presented the traditional Bhaderwahi Dekku Dance and Sarazi Kuda Dance, enthraling the audience and highlighting the diverse folk culture of the Chenab Valley.

Cultural Officer JKAACL Doda Sub-Office Slah-ud-Din was the Programme In-charge and coordinated the proceedings of the event.

DLSA Committee reviews performance of Panel Lawyers in Udhampur

■ HT News Network



UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 19: The Mentoring and Monitoring Committee of District Legal Services Authority Udhampur met today in the Conference Hall District Court Complex under the direction of Chairman (Pr. District & Sessions Judge) Kalpana Revu.

The meeting was chaired by Secretary DLSA Sumati Sharma. The Committee took stock of the Panel Lawyers' performance over the past year, with focus on their achievements, the challenges they face and the overall quality of legal services rendered.

The Secretary DLSA actively inquired about any difficulties being faced by the Panel Lawyers related to court facilities, administrative support or other requirements. She listened carefully to the issues projected by Panel Lawyers and assured that their needs would be met. Some concerns were addressed on the spot.

In addition, the Secretary DLSA reminded the Panel Lawyers about their pending liabilities and urged them to promptly update their case details on the LACMS Portal to ensure transparency and better monitoring of legal aid cases.

The meeting concluded with encouraging directions for the Panel Lawyers to continue their good work, maintain high standards of legal aid services and swiftly address any issues that may arise in the future.

DC Poonch inaugurates JKRLM-run Food Service Enterprise at SDH Surankote

■ HT News Network

POONCH, SEPTEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma today inaugurated a Food Service Enterprise (FSE) at Sub-District Hospital Surankote, being run by a women Self Help Group (SHG) associated with the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) Surankote Block. The move aims to provide livelihood opportunities to rural SHG women by engaging them in the food service sector and developing a sustainable community-based enterprise.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by SDM Farooq Khan; ACD Shakeel Ahmed; DPM JKRLM Mohammad Nadeem, BPOs, BMO and other officers. While appreciating the initiative, the Deputy Commissioner commended JKRLM and the women SHG for taking up the innovative



enterprise and creating a sustainable livelihood opportunity at the local level. He appreciated the efforts being made to empower rural women through community-based enterprises and observed that such initiatives have the potential to generate employment while strengthening the economic participation of SHG members.

The Deputy Commissioner encouraged the enterprise members to expand services, increase income and make the venture sustainable in the long run. The BPM Surankote Mudasi Ganai said the Food Service Enterprise was established in collaboration

with NRO Kudumbashree to create better livelihood opportunities for women SHG in the food service sector.

The DPM JKRLM said that JKRLM is focusing on strengthening the skills of the women associated with the enterprise. He informed that the women will be sent to the Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) Srinagar, where they will receive specialised training in different culinary skills, food preparation and service.

He added that such initiatives are part of JKRLM's efforts to facilitate sustainable livelihood opportunities for SHG members and help rural.

FICCI FLO JKL announces Marathon 4.0 in Collaboration with Jammu Tourism, with a purpose to set up Jammu's First Women's Skilling Centre

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 18: A one-day Jammu, September 19, 2026: FICCI FLO Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh held a press conference today to announce Marathon 4.0, scheduled for 4 October 2026, with the core objective of supporting the establishment of Jammu's first exclusive Women's Skilling Centre.

The marathon will start and finish at Four A Resort, following the scenic Four A Resort-Parmandal-Four A Resort circuit. Organised in collaboration with Jammu Tourism, the event will feature 21 KM Half Marathon, 10 KM, 5 KM and 3 KM categories. Manjal Auto is the Prime Platinum Sponsor. With 600+ registrations already received, the marathon is witnessing an encouraging response from runners across the region.

Speaking at the press conference, Varsha Bansal, Chairperson, FICCI FLO JKL, said, "Marathon 4.0 is a marathon with a heart. It is not just about running; it is about creating opportunities for women to learn, become skilled and build sustainable livelihoods. Every step taken on this route will contribute to a larger purpose of women's empowerment."

She highlighted that the route was consciously selected in collaboration with Jammu Tourism to showcase and promote the Four A Resort-Parmandal circuit, a beautiful



tourism circuit of Jammu. The initiative complements the Government's efforts towards developing and promoting new tourism circuits in the region.

Kanupriya Garg, Race Director, elaborated on the runner-focused arrangements, including multiple hydration points, medical and safety support, route management and measures to ensure the wellbeing of participants. She also highlighted the significance of introducing this distinctive route and giving runners an opportunity to experience Jammu beyond its conventional city routes.

The press conference was attended by Varsha Bansal, Chairperson, FICCI FLO JKL; Varuna Anand, National Initiative Head - Textiles & Handicrafts; Ruchika Gupta, Past Chairperson; Rupika Sahai, Senior Vice Chairperson; Sona Mehta, Vice Chairperson; Kanupriya Garg, Race Director; and Shipra Agarwal, Treasurer.

DC Kishtwar flags off Census-2027 Publicity Vehicle

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner/Principal Census Officer Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today flagged off a Census-2027 publicity vehicle deputed by the Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir, to generate widespread awareness among the public regarding the ongoing Population Enumeration of Census-2027. The publicity vehicle will cover different areas of the district and disseminate key messages regarding the Census process, encouraging citizens to extend full cooperation to the census functionaries and ensure complete and accurate enumeration. The Deputy Commissioner urged the general public to actively participate in the Census exercise and emphasized that every household and every person counts. ADC (DCO) Pawan Kotwal, ACR Idrees Lone, DSEO/ CPO (ADCO) Suresh Kumar Sharma, besides staff of the concerned departments were also present.

CII Northern Regional Council Meeting in Srinagar Highlights Investment, Tourism and Climate Resilience Opportunities in J&K

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, 18 September 2026: The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organised its Northern Regional Council Meeting at Hotel Taj Dal View, Srinagar, bringing together more than 30 industry members from across the Northern Region and Jammu & Kashmir. The meeting focused on investment, infrastructure, tourism, skill development, and industrial growth in the Union Territory, with interactions between industry representatives and government officials. Mr. Puneet Kaura, Chairperson, CII Northern Region and Managing Director & CEO, Samtel Avionics, said that J&K offers opportunities across sectors and that continued



engagement between industry and government will support investments and economic activity in the region. Ms. Shraddha Suri Marwah, Deputy Chairperson, CII Northern Region and Chairperson & Managing Director, Subros Ltd, said that the discussions during the Regional Council meeting provided industry with insights into opportunities available in J&K and the measures being undertaken to support industrial and tourism development. During the meeting, Mr

Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner/ Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Government of J&K, provided an overview of the investment landscape in Jammu & Kashmir and presented the government's industrial policies and incentive framework. He also interacted with industry leaders and addressed their queries. He informed the delegation that the Government of J&K is formulating a new Industrial Policy covering all sectors, which is expected to be released soon.

"MLA Mankotia Lays Foundation Stone for 1.95 Crore Dhakdu (Ossu) Bridge; 71 Lakh to be Spent on Maintenance of Laddan Morh-Pakhlai Road"

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 18: Udhampur/Chenani, September 19: MLA Chenani-Ghori, Balwant Singh Mankotia, today laid the foundation stone of the Dhakdu (Ossu) Bridge. The bridge had been washed away during the heavy rains and floods last year, causing considerable difficulties for local residents in commuting.

MLA Mankotia stated that the reconstruction of the bridge is being undertaken at an estimated cost of 1.95 crore and is targeted to be completed within approximately six months, as per the scheduled timeline. The reconstruction



of the bridge will improve road connectivity for the people of Dhakdu (Ossu) and adjoining areas and provide smoother and safer movement, particularly during the rainy season.

He further informed that 71 lakh will be spent on the maintenance of the Laddan Morh-Pakhlai road. The bridge construction and road

maintenance works are being considered important steps towards strengthening connectivity and improving infrastructure in the area.

After inaugurating the development works, MLA Mankotia, along with officials, held a public darbar at the site and listened to the issues and demands of local residents. Officials from various departments were present and the issues raised by the people were taken up on the spot. MLA Mankotia directed the concerned officers to take necessary action for their early resolution.

The residents apprised the MLA Mankotia and officials of various issues related.

JMC lays foundation stone for 36 new shops at Bhagwati Nagar to rehabilitate displaced shopkeepers

■ By Irfan Attari

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 19: In a significant step towards the rehabilitation of shopkeepers affected by major infrastructure development works, the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) today laid the foundation stone for a new shopping complex at Bhagwati Nagar, which will provide alternative commercial space to shopkeepers displaced from Satwari Chowk and Nai Basti due to the construction of the flyover.

The foundation stone was laid by MLA Jammu West Arvind Gupta, MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa and MLA Jammu

South Dr. Narinder Singh, in the presence of Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation Dr. Devansh Yadav and Deputy Commissioner Jammu Rakesh Minhas.

The rehabilitation initiative has been undertaken to address the concerns of shopkeepers whose existing shops had to be removed to facilitate the development of the Satwari Flyover. The affected shopkeepers had been operating from JMC-allotted shops and were regularly paying rent to the Corporation. With the removal of these commercial establishments for the infrastructure project, the

shopkeepers were faced with the challenge of relocating their businesses and sustaining their livelihoods.

Recognising the need to provide a structured and permanent rehabilitation solution, the JMC has taken up the construction of new shops at Bhagwati Nagar. The project is intended to provide the displaced shopkeepers with organised commercial space where they can resume their business activities in a planned environment.

A total of 36 shops, each measuring 8 feet by 10 feet, will be constructed under the project.



The proposed complex will also include parking space in front of the shops, ensuring better accessibility for customers and

visitors. In addition, a toilet facility will be provided at the site for the convenience of shopkeepers and the general

public.

The development of the shopping complex is also expected to create a more organised commercial environment, with proper provision for essential public amenities. The project reflects the Corporation's approach of combining urban infrastructure development with measures aimed at safeguarding the livelihood interests of people affected by such development works.

On the occasion, the officials stated that the land for the rehabilitation project had been handed over to the Jammu

Municipal Corporation by the Deputy Commissioner Jammu, facilitating the Corporation in taking forward the construction of the proposed shopping complex.

The foundation stone-laying ceremony marked the commencement of an important rehabilitation initiative for the affected shopkeepers. The project is expected to provide them with a dedicated commercial space and enable them to restart their business activities with greater stability and security.

The initiative also underscores the coordinated

efforts of the district administration and the Jammu Municipal Corporation in addressing the concerns of affected stakeholders while advancing important urban infrastructure projects in the city.

The JMC reiterated its commitment to undertaking development works in a manner that remains responsive to the needs of citizens, traders and other stakeholders and to providing appropriate rehabilitation measures wherever existing commercial or public spaces are affected by infrastructure development.

Why caffeine makes some people buzz - and others barely notice

"Coffee just doesn't have much effect on me," says 20-year-old Emily, who is leaving a cafe in central London at 18:00 BST.

"I'll normally have two cups a day and then maybe an energy drink too. And then I can drink coke all night and feel completely fine."

We've all got a friend like Emily. The one who can knock back a double espresso or even an energy drink in the evening and still drift off to sleep an hour or so later.

For many people, though, the effects of caffeine can linger for far longer.

Why then can some people drink coffee before bed and sleep like a baby, while others lie awake staring at the ceiling? What exactly is caffeine?

Caffeine is by far the most used psychoactive substance in the world.

More than two billion cups of coffee are drunk each day and that's before we start talking about cola, energy drinks, plus some chocolate, chewing gum and sports supplements, which also contain the chemical.

It can make us feel more alert, improve concentration and stave off tiredness. Too much can cause headaches, jitters, a racing heart and restless nights.

Caffeine doesn't give your body extra energy, it helps mask tiredness, experts

us feel sleepy.

Why does it affect people differently?

One key factor is how long caffeine stays in the body.

After drinking a cup of coffee, it is absorbed into the bloodstream, where it quickly reaches the brain.

All this time it's also being broken down – or metabolised – by an enzyme in the liver and then flushed out in our urine.

That clean-up process can take between six and 20 hours depending on the individual, says Dr Marilyn Cornelis, an associate professor of nutrition at Northwestern University in Chicago.

"It's possible to have a first cup of coffee and maybe not feel the effects," she says.

"But then two or three hours later, the caffeine is still lingering in the system, and, if you add a second cup, that might be enough to tip the scales and you start feeling a little anxious."

How quickly the liver can processes the caffeine depends on a single gene – known as CYP1A2.

Intriguingly it might be influenced, at least to some extent, by your ancestry.

A study published this year found that Europeans and South Americans tend to break down caffeine more quickly on average.

caffeine much more quickly, speeding up the process by as much as 65%.

That may help explain why smokers tend to drink more coffee and why people who quit can suddenly find their usual

helpful, because it doesn't really allow for the intricacies and the individualisation of what's really going on."

The NHS advises pregnant women to keep caffeine intake below 200mg a day,



cup feels much stronger than before.

Some antibiotics, contraceptive pills and other prescription medicines can have the opposite effect, allowing caffeine to stay trapped in the body for longer and prolonging the effects.

That's also the case during pregnancy, when hormonal changes suppress the liver enzyme that breaks down caffeine.

Then there is the question of tolerance. Regular coffee drinkers become less sensitive to caffeine as the body adapts to the presence of the chemical.

If you then go without the drink for a few weeks, those adaptations in the brain begin to reverse, meaning the first coffee back might leave you feeling unusually wired or jittery.

What do experts advise?

leep researchers often recommend avoiding caffeine for at least six hours before bedtime.

Dr Lindsay Browning, a psychologist and sleep expert, says the evidence suggests caffeine might not just stop you dozing off but can affect the quality of sleep as well.

"I'll suggest to people that they might want to avoid caffeine after about 2pm if they are going to bed around 10pm," she says.

"But a blanket hard-and-fast rule isn't

about two mugs of filter coffee, as studies have linked it to low birth weight and other complications.

For other adults the key message is moderation, as sensitivity to caffeine varies so much from person to person.

"Caffeine is relatively safe," says Peter Rogers, emeritus professor of nutrition at the University of Bristol.

"If you consume a great deal of it, you just start feeling jittery and unpleasant and you start

realising, 'I need to stop this, there's no point taking any more'."

Caffeine overdoses are very rare and severe poisonings almost always involve concentrated caffeine products, where several grams can be swallowed in a matter of minutes.

For coffee lovers the good news is that, if anything, that regular (if expensive) morning habit is linked to better health outcomes.

While researchers cannot prove that coffee is the only reason, decades of studies suggest that people who drink it in moderation tend to have lower risks of several major diseases and may even live slightly longer than non-drinkers.

(BBC NEWS)



say.

It does this by blocking the action of adenosine, a chemical that builds up in the brain throughout the day and makes

What other factors are at play?

Your DNA is far from the whole story. Smoking, but probably not vaping, appears to stimulate the liver to break down

Do you feel guilty when calling in sick at work? This might be why...

You wake up feeling unwell but there's a big day at work ahead. What do you do? If the answer is to go in (or log on), you're not alone.

Research suggests anywhere between a third to a half of people in the UK work even when sick - something experts call presenteeism.

And your approach to sickness says a lot about you as an individual and where you work.

Young workers less likely to be sick

"The younger generation get the snowflake tag thrown at them, but it's not true," says University of Manchester psychologist Prof Sir Cary Cooper, who is one of the world's leading experts on workplace wellbeing.

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Data from the Office for National Statistics supports this view.

Workers aged 16 to 24 took an average of 2.4 days off sick last year, compared to 6.2 days for those aged 50 to 64.

Sir Cary, who has advised the UK government on employment policies in this area, says there are several reasons for this.



Younger workers are more likely to work in roles where there is little security, such as zero-hours contracts.

They are also less likely to suffer from long-term health conditions and joint problems that are major contributors to sickness absence.

ata from the Office for National Statistics supports this view.

Workers aged 16 to 24 took an average of 2.4 days off sick last year, compared to 6.2 days for those aged 50 to 64.

But Sir Cary adds: "I think younger generations do have higher expectations about how employers should treat them and consider their wellbeing.

"Older generations have perhaps been more willing to put up with things, but that doesn't necessarily make that approach healthy.

"When it comes to taking time off, younger workers seem more willing to view mental wellbeing as part of their overall health rather than something that should simply be pushed

through."

What it says about you

There are a variety of factors that influence someone's approach to sickness absence.

For some, work is closely tied to identity. Occupational psychologists call this work centrality - and research links this to greater engagement, commitment and willingness to go the extra mile.

If work is central to who you are, being absent can feel like temporarily losing part of yourself.

"These people feel a strong desire to keep showing up," says Dr Audrey Tang, a psychologist who writes about workplace wellbeing.

She says those working in caring professions such as medicine, nursing and teaching have a particular tendency towards this.

"They often report they would rather have a physical accident to have a reason not to show up than just take the day off."

Others fear being seen as weak or lazy. Younger workers are particularly susceptible to this, says Tang.

"They're more likely to be early in their profession and they don't want to leave a negative impression."

What it says about where you work

Workplace culture and behaviour can have a significant influence on people's willingness to take time off sick, says psychologist Dr Tara Quinn-Cirillo.

When teams are stretched and there is little or no cover, employees know their absence will increase the workload for colleagues. "The role of guilt and shame is significant in a toxic organisation that prioritises productivity over health and wellbeing," says Quinn-Cirillo.

(BBC NEWS)



Asian Games shooting: Bhaker, Esha headline India's contingent in Aichi-Nagoya

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, SEP 19 :India will look to build on its strong recent record in shooting at the Asian Games, with 30 shooters set to compete across rifle, pistol and shotgun events at the Aichi-Nagoya Games from September 20 to October 1.

The contingent features Olympic medallists, Asian champions and emerging international performers, with Manu Bhaker, Esha Singh and Rahi Sarnobat among the key names in the pistol squad.

Bhaker, a double Olympic bronze medallist from the Paris 2024 Games and a gold medallist in the team event at the Hangzhou Asian Games, will compete in both the 10m Air Pistol and 25m Pistol events.

Esha, who won silver medals in the individual and team events at the 2023 Asian Games, will also feature in the 10m Air Pistol and 25m Pistol. She is a 2023 World Champion. Suruchi, Kamaljeet, Kedarling B. Uchaganve and Aakash Bhardwaj will join the 10m Air Pistol field, with Suruchi also set to compete in the Mixed Team event. In the 25m Pistol, Bhaker and Esha



will be joined by veteran Rahi, who won gold at the 2018 Asian Games. Anish will represent India in the men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol event. The rifle squad includes Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Rudranksh B. Patil and Elavenil Valarivan, alongside a number of younger shooters who have already made their presence felt at international competitions.

Aishwary will compete in the 50m Rifle 3 Positions event. He is a silver medallist from the Hangzhou Asian Games, as well as a former World Cup

gold medallist and Asian champion.

Niraj Kumar will also compete in the men's 50m 3P event. Ashi Chouksey, Tilottama Sen and Vidarsa K. Vinod will feature in the women's 50m 3 Positions event.

Rudranksh, who has extensive major championship experience, will compete in the 10m Air Rifle and 50m Rifle 3 Positions events.

Elavenil, Parth Rajesh Mane, Himanshu Dhillon, Sonam Uttam Maskar and Vidarsa K. Vinod will represent India in the 10m Air Rifle events. Elavenil

is a former World Cup gold medallist and Asian champion, while Parth is a former Junior World Champion.

The shotgun squad will also have a combination of established names and younger shooters. Kynan Chenai, Ahvar Rizvi and Shapath Bharadwaj will compete in men's Trap, while Aashima Ahlawat, Manisha Keer and Neeru will represent India in the women's event. Chenai won gold in the men's Trap team

event and bronze in the individual category at the 2023 Asian Games. He will compete in men's Trap as well as the Trap Mixed Team event. Neeru heads to Aichi-Nagoya after winning gold in women's Trap at the 2025 Asian Championships and a World Cup gold in Lonato, Italy, in 2026. She also became the first Indian woman to win an individual gold medal in a trap event at the ISSF Shotgun World Cup. Anantjeet Singh Naruka, a silver medallist at the Hangzhou Asian Games, will compete in Skeet and the Mixed Team event.

Mandaviya, OCA chief Al-Musallam discuss strengthening sporting ties

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, SEP 19 :union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Saturday held talks with Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) Director General and World Aquatics President Capt. Husain Al-Musallam on expanding India's sporting cooperation with Asian federations and strengthening the country's aquatic sports ecosystem.

Mandaviya and Al-Musallam discussed closer coordination between India's National Sports Federations and their respective Asian federations, while also exploring ways to boost grassroots participation and create pathways for young talent in aquatic disciplines. "Held a meeting with Capt. Husain Al-Musallam, Director General of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) and President of World Aquatics, on the sidelines of the 20th Asian Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026 in Nagoya, Japan," Mandaviya shared on social media. "We discussed strengthening cooperation between India's National Sports Federations and their respective Asian federations and explored ways to further

develop aquatic sports in India, with a focus on grassroots participation and nurturing young talent," he added. The discussions also covered ways to increase grassroots participation and build a stronger talent-development pathway



in aquatic sports. Mandaviya said the OCA had welcomed India's readiness to host various Asian-level championships, which he said reflected a shared commitment to strengthening sporting cooperation and development across the continent. "OCA welcomed India's readiness to host various Asian-level championships, reflecting our shared commitment to strengthening sporting cooperation and development across the continent," he wrote.

Asian Games hockey: Olympic qualification at stake as Indian teams begin campaign on Sep 20



United News Of India

NEW DELHI, SEP 20 :India's men's and women's hockey teams begin their Asian Games 2026 campaigns on Sunday with Olympic qualification on the line, as both sides look to make a strong start after contrasting outings at the recent World Cup.

The women's team will open India's hockey campaign when it takes on Uzbekistan in Pool B at the Gifu Prefectural Green Stadium. Later, the men's side will follow against Indonesia in its Pool A opener at the same venue.

The Asian Games carry added significance this time, with the gold medallists in both men's and women's hockey earning direct qualification for the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles.

The Harmanpreet Singh-led men's team enters the competition looking to put its disappointing World Cup campaign

behind it. India finished eighth at the 2026 World Cup after failing to reach the semifinals and will now aim to address the shortcomings that surfaced during the tournament.

Head coach Craig Fulton said the team has already assessed its World Cup performance and must now turn those lessons into action.

"These are lessons, and the only way to treat them as lessons learned is to turn that learning into action. That's what we've got to do now. We've discussed everything, gone through everything and highlighted areas needing improvement. At the same time, it's now about action," said Fulton, as quoted by Hockey India. India are four-time Asian Games gold medallists, having won the title in 1966, 1998, 2014 and 2022. They are also the reigning two-time Olympic bronze medallists and will be keen to secure their place at the Los Angeles Games at the earliest opportunity.

Blueband Sports Rally of Coimbatore set to host Round 2 of INRC 2026 with 64 Cars on Grid

United News Of India

COIMBATORE, SEP 19 :The FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) 2026 heads to Coimbatore for Round 2 this weekend, with 64 cars and 128 competitors set to take on a predominantly gravel challenge across September 19 and 20. The Blueband Sports Rally of Coimbatore 2026 is being conducted under the aegis of the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI), with Blueband Sports as the Official Promoter and the Coimbatore Auto Sports Club (CASC) as the organising club.

The ceremonial flag-off took place on Friday, marking the formal start of the second round of the championship.

The event was attended today by the Minister of Backward Classes Welfare of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. V. Sampath Kumar, and Shri Vijaya Kumar, Inspector General, CRPF, who witnessed the proceedings in Coimbatore. The championship arrives in Coimbatore following an action-packed opening round at the 49th South India Rally, where three-time FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship winner and seven-time National Champion Gaurav Gill made a strong return to competitive rallying.

Brendan Doggett looks to add to Australia's pace bowling depth

United News Of India

SYDNEY, SEP 19 :With an experience of over 200 first-class wickets, Brendan Doggett is no stranger to trials of competitive cricket, which involve missing out on a berth in the side due to injuries or competition.

For years, Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood along with Nathan Lyon have been the face of Australia's bowling attack. To add Scott Boland, who has achieved cult status due to his exploits at home in recent years - averaging merely 16.2 in Australia, to the equation means that other promising pacers have more often than not missed out on a Test berth.

Doggett's own Test experience is of two Tests, which came during the last home season courtesy of injuries to senior pacers. Part of the Australia 'A' setup for the upcoming first-class tour of India, Doggett is planning to be in the right headspace ahead of Australia's important ICC World Test

Championship 2025-27 assignments, which will see them face-off against South Africa (away), New Zealand (home), and India (away).

"I think it's probably what (player missing out) happens when you have such quality fast



bowlers who have played for such [Hazlewood] long time in Josh [Hazlewood], Pat [Cummins], Starc [Mitchell Starc]," Doggett said at [Hazlewood] Big Bash League event in Chennai. "These guys have just probably built [Hazlewood] backlog of young fast bowlers who are trying to emulate everything that they've done and what they've achieved."

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7889959854

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