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**Voice To The Voiceless**



**P:08** **Saptak Talwar leads strong field as Rs 1 crore Bengaluru Open tees off at KGA**

**HT BRIEFLY**

**J&K High Court allows medical termination of minor's pregnancy beyond 24-week limit**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, SEP 23:** The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh has allowed the medical termination of the pregnancy of an 11-year-old girl who was allegedly subjected to sexual assault, holding that the statutory 24-week gestational limit could not, in the circumstances of the case, override constitutional protection. Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal passed the order on a petition filed on behalf of the minor through her father. The court was informed that the pregnancy had been assessed at about 22 weeks and five days when a Medical Board examined the girl on September 11, but had crossed 24 weeks by the time the judgment was delivered.

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**Sumbal Police seize 2,400 litres of unauthorized petrol, two held**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**BANDIPORA, SEP 23:** Sumbal Police during naka checking at Sarai Dangerpora intercepted a Tata Ex-Mobio CR with CAB Goods Carrier (LGV) bearing registration number JK15A-0376 and seized approximately 12 barrels containing around 2,400 litres of unauthorized petrol. Police apprehended Ghulam Mohiuddin Hajam alias Pamba, son of Abdul Rashid Hajam

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**HDFC Bank unveils Digital Rupee applications**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**MUMBAI, SEP 23:** HDFC Bank has showcased multiple use cases for India's Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), or Digital Rupee, covering consumer rewards, promotional vouchers, corporate employee allowances, merchant payments and offline transactions. The initiatives, unveiled at an industry forum last week, include redemption of credit-card reward points against Digital Rupee, Digital Rupee gift vouchers for customer promotions and a corporate portal for disbursing meal, fuel and travel allowances. Under the proposed reward-point facility, customers will be able to redeem credit

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

**Kashmiri Law student killed in Chandigarh laid to rest**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**KUPWARA, SEP 23:** Thousands of people attended the funeral of 23-year-old law student Suhail Aijaz Langoo at Kralgund in Kupwara district on Wednesday, two days after he died in a road accident in Chandigarh. Langoo, a resident of Kralgund, was pursuing a law degree in Chandigarh. His body was brought back to his native village on Wednesday morning, where the last rites were performed in the presence of a

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

**J&K BJP pays tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on birth anniversary**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, SEP 23:** The Jammu and Kashmir unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday paid tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on his birth anniversary at the party headquarters in Jawahar Nagar here. J&K BJP General Secretary (Organisation) Ashok Koul, along with J&K Waqf Board Chairperson Dr Darakhshan Andrabi, MLAs, party Vice President Dr Shehnaz Ganie and other senior leaders, paid

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**“His ideals of public service, equality & inclusive development continue to guide us”**

**LG Sinha pays tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on birth anniversary**

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday paid tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on his birth anniversary, describing him as an “enlightened statesman and progressive thinker” who introduced far-reaching reforms for the welfare and empowerment of the people. In a post on X, Sinha said the Maharaja’s ideals of public service, equality and inclusive development continue to guide Jammu and Kashmir.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday paid



tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on his birth anniversary, calling him an “enlightened statesman and progressive thinker” who ushered in far-reaching reforms for the welfare and empowerment

of the people. In a post on X, LG Sinha said the erstwhile ruler’s ideals of public service, equality and inclusive development continue to guide the region.

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**“We will never let Maharaja Hari Singh’s holiday get cancelled”**

**Devyani Rana hails Dogra ruler’s legacy, defends September 23 government holiday**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23:** BJP MLA from Nagrota Devyani Rana on Wednesday paid tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh and said his contribution to Jammu and Kashmir and the country would continue to be remembered and celebrated. Referring to the September 23 government holiday, Rana described it as a long-pending public demand and recalled representations made to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha in 2022

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**“Banned books should not be in government schools or colleges”**  
**Chief Secretary says examination of books is a regular process**



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23:** Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Wednesday said books banned under provisions of law should not be kept in government schools or colleges, describing the examination of books as a regular process. Speaking to

reporters during his visit to Sheetal Nath Temple near Kral Khud, Dulloo also highlighted the heritage significance of the temple and called for collective efforts to preserve such sites for future generations, a day after the government informed the Legislative Assembly that 4,249 books had been withdrawn from government degree college libraries and 518 had been classified as banned. Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Wednesday said books banned under provisions of law should not be kept in government schools, describing the examination of books as a regular process. Speaking to

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**“Maharaja Hari Singh took the decision wisely”**  
**Darakshan Andrabi says accession decision benefited Jammu and Kashmir**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23:** Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson and BJP leader Dr Darakhshan Andrabi on Wednesday described Maharaja Hari Singh’s decision to accede to India as a wise decision that, she said, had benefited Jammu and Kashmir. On his birth anniversary, Andrabi also highlighted the Maharaja’s administrative legacy, citing education, healthcare, canals and what she described as equal rights for different communities under his administration.

The 131st birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh was observed across Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, with tributes and public events held in Jammu a day after a heated Assembly exchange over the



government holiday marking the former ruler’s birth anniversary. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha paid tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on his Janm-Jayanti, recalling his contribution to public welfare and social reforms. Sinha said the Maharaja had introduced reforms aimed at the welfare and empowerment

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**“Remain vigilant and ensure a prompt and effective response”**  
**IGP Kashmir reviews security, law and order and crime scenario in Bandipora**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 23:** Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar on Wednesday reviewed the security situation, counter-terrorism grid, law and order preparedness, crime scenario and operational readiness in Bandipora district. Accompanied by DIG North Kashmir Range Dr Vinod Kumar, the IGP stressed public-friendly policing, improved crime disposal and enhanced operational preparedness, while calling upon police personnel



to remain vigilant and ensure a prompt and effective response to emerging security and law-and-order challenges. Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar-IPS, today visited District Bandipora and reviewed the security situation, counter-terrorism grid, law & order preparedness, crime scenario and operational readiness of the district. IGP Kashmir was accompanied by DIG North Kashmir Range, Dr. Vinod Kumar-IPS. The review meeting was held at Conference Hall, DPL Bandipora, wherein SSP Bandipora, Ajaz Ahmed

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**HT BOTTOM NEWS**

**“Maharaja Hari Singh’s ideals continue to inspire generations”**

**Birth anniversary observed across J&K amid Assembly row over government holiday**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 23:** The 131st birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh was observed across Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday with tributes and public programmes, a day after a heated exchange in the Legislative Assembly over the government holiday marking his birth anniversary. In Jammu, the Yuva Rajput Sabha organised a Maharally that culminated at the Maharaja Hari Singh statue near Tawi Bridge, while the September 23 holiday became the subject of political debate after demands were raised in the Assembly concerning holidays associated with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and July 13.

The 131st birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh was observed across Jammu and Kashmir on



Wednesday, with tributes and public events held in Jammu a day after a heated Assembly exchange over the government holiday marking the former ruler’s birth anniversary.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha paid tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on his Janm-Jayanti, recalling his contribution to public welfare and social reforms. Sinha>>> **MORE ON P 02**

**“In the Larger Interest of Peace, Public Tranquility and Social Harmony”**

**LG Ladakh approves withdrawal of criminal cases against 20 individuals linked to Leh violence**

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR :** Ladakh Lieutenant Governor has approved the withdrawal of criminal cases against 20 individuals in connection with the violence that erupted in Leh on September 24 last year, saying the decision was aimed at promoting peace, public tranquility and social harmony in the Union Territory. The LG said that following a comprehensive review, Ladakh Police had recommended a closure report in the case, registered at Police Station Leh, and that the decision would

allow the individuals to move forward with their lives and careers while prioritising justice



and healing over prolonged litigation. He also expressed gratitude to

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## Continue from Front Page.....

### J&K High Court

The court directed the authorities to take immediate consequential steps for termination, subject to medical assessment and the safeguards recommended by the Medical Board.

The court considered the minor's age, the circumstances in which the pregnancy had occurred and the medical opinion placed before it while examining whether termination could be permitted after the statutory gestational limit.

The judgment also records that the person allegedly responsible for the sexual assault had not been identified or arrested at the time of the court's decision.

The court directed that the minor's identity and medical particulars be protected and that necessary medical and psychological support be provided.

The case underscores the court's exercise of constitutional jurisdiction in exceptional circumstances where application of the statutory gestational limit was considered alongside the minor's fundamental rights and medical circumstances. [KNT]

### Sumbal Police

of Hajam Mohalla, Hajin, who was driving the vehicle, and Aijaz Rasool Malla, son of Ghulam Rasool Malla of Hajam Mohalla, Hajin, who was travelling as co-driver/passenger.

In connection with the seizure, FIR No. 215/2026 has been registered at Police Station Sumbal under relevant sections of law. [KNT]

### HDFC Bank

-card rewards against Digital Rupee for categories including dining, fuel, apparel and electronics, with redemption available down to the last paise.

The bank also plans to offer Digital Rupee gift vouchers as part of customer promotional campaigns. Once triggered by a qualifying event, the voucher will be loaded into the customer's HDFC Bank Digital Rupee wallet and can be used by scanning UPI QR codes at merchants.

For corporate customers, HDFC Bank plans to enable organizations to disburse meal, fuel and travel allowances through Digital Rupee using its Corporate Net Banking platform. The bank said programmable payouts can restrict the use of funds to their intended purposes and reduce reconciliation requirements for finance teams.

HDFC Bank Digital Rupee wallets will also be made available on the BHIM platform, enabling customers to make UPI-style payments from their CBDC wallets and widening access to merchant payments.

Another use case showcased by the bank is offline CBDC payments for air travel. Customers will be able to tap their phones on HDFC Bank point-of-sale devices onboard flights to pay for food, beverages and seat upgrades without an internet connection.

"Digital Rupee combines the trust of sovereign money with programmability, transparency and stronger controls," said Ashish Parthasarathy, Group Head, Branch Banking, Payments, Treasury, Liability Products, Marketing, Virtual Channels and Infrastructure, HDFC Bank.

Rajanish Prabhu, Senior Executive Vice President, HDFC Bank, said the next phase of Digital Rupee adoption would be driven by scale and everyday utility, with applications across UPI, merchant acceptance, rewards, employee benefits and offline payments. [KNT]

### Kashmiri Law

large gathering from Kralgund and the wider Qaziabad area.

Langoo was the only son of his parents, according to local sources. His death in Chandigarh had been reported on Tuesday, with Handwara MLA Sajad Lone also expressing condolences to the bereaved family.

The funeral was attended by local residents, traders, religious representatives and members of various community and business groups. [KNT]

### J&K BJP pays

floral tributes to the former ruler on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Koul said the contribution of Maharaja Hari Singh to Jammu and Kashmir would always be remembered.

He described Maharaja Hari Singh as a man of "sheer will and determination" who pursued progressive policies for his citizens.

Referring to the Maharaja's rule over a Muslim-majority state, Koul said it was important to recognise that he rose above communal stereotyping and stood by his words, "Justice is my religion", which he said was his first statement after assuming the high office in 1925.

Koul said Maharaja Hari Singh did not discriminate between his Hindu and Muslim subjects.

Dr Darakhshan Andrabi highlighted Maharaja Hari Singh's decision to accede to India, saying the erstwhile ruler's "wisdom" had benefited the region immensely.

"Today is the day of Maharaja Hari Singh's birthday. At that time, he decided that when our whole India became free, the princely status would go with India," Andrabi said.

"And the decision he took, today we are seeing how wisely he took the decision and

how much we have benefited from it. Today, we are with India and our country," she said.

MLAs Ranbir Singh Pathania and Devyani Singh Rana said the people of Jammu and Kashmir were observing the birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh with pride.

They said, "Today, we are an inseparable and proud part of the great Indian nation due to his vision and courage."

The MLAs described Maharaja Hari Singh as a social reformer who, according to them, ruled not for power but to serve his people.

They said he promoted education for women and the underprivileged, provided rights of worship to Dalits and initiated Panchayati Raj reforms.

"His philosophy was clear: as a ruler, he had no religion; justice was his religion," they said.

BJP state secretaries Arif Raja and Mudasir Wani, state spokespersons Altaf Thakur, Sahil Bashir and Manzoor Bhat, Media Incharge Advocate Sajid Yousuf Shah, Salinder Singh, Imtiyaz Bhat and other senior party leaders were present on the occasion. (KNS)

### "His ideals

"Humble tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh Ji on his Janm-Jayanti. An enlightened statesman & progressive thinker, he introduced far-reaching reforms for the welfare & empowerment of the people," the LG said.

"His ideals of public service, equality & inclusive development continue to guide us all," he added. (KNS)

### "We will never

before the holiday was announced, while criticising the Assembly controversy over the issue a day earlier.

BJP leader and MLA Nagrota Devyani Rana on Wednesday paid rich tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on his birth anniversary, saying his contributions to Jammu and Kashmir and the entire nation will be remembered and celebrated for generations to come.

Speaking to news agency Kashmir News Service (KNS) BJP leader said, "On the occasion of Maharaja Hari Singh's birth anniversary, we wish the whole of Jammu and Kashmir and the whole of India and hope that every generation, generation after generation, remembers the contribution which Maharaja Hari Singh Ji has made, not only in Jammu and Kashmir but in the whole of India."

The BJP MLA said the legacy of the erstwhile Dogra ruler would not only be remembered but also celebrated for years to come.

Describing the holiday declared on Maharaja Hari Singh's birth anniversary as a "long-pending demand" of the people, MLA Devyani recalled that in 2022, delegations led by Vindasingh Rana Sahib took up the matter with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

"And at that time, it was decided that keeping in mind the contributions of Maharaja Hari Singh Ji and the historical context, this holiday should be announced," she said.

MLA Devyani also hit out at the opposition over the proceedings in the Assembly a day earlier, calling the developments "very sad."

"We said that if you want to keep your topic, you can, we have no objection to that. But to say that Maharaja Hari Singh Ji's holiday should be cancelled — we said this yesterday and we will say it today also through you — that this holiday, people have taken it with a lot of effort, and we will never let it get cancelled, nor will it ever get cancelled," she said. (KNS)

### "Education is the

incorporate emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence into the curriculum and equip students with the knowledge and skills required for the future.

Highlighting the challenge of student retention, the Chief Minister said Jammu and Kashmir performs well at the primary and middle-school levels in comparison with the national scenario, but the retention rate declines significantly as students progress to higher classes.

The chief minister emphasised that secondary schools need to take concrete steps to bring down school dropout rate, underscoring the need for concerted efforts to ensure that children remain within the education system through the higher secondary level. The Chief Minister also stressed that government and private schools should work together rather than view each other as competing systems. He said children studying in both government and private schools are equally the future of Jammu and Kashmir and called for policies that enable private educational institutions to contribute effectively to the education ecosystem.

Referring to the legislation on private universities this year, Omar Abdullah said the initiative was aimed at creating opportunities within Jammu and Kashmir so that students do not have to leave the region in search of quality private higher education.

The Chief Minister expressed appreciation for the enthusiasm and performance of the participating students at a large gathering at SKICC and the participation of children from different parts of Jammu and Kashmir, other parts of the country and abroad.

He said the participation of students from places such as Kerala, Karnataka and Rajasthan, along with international participants, in the competition in Srinagar was a positive indication of the growing educational and cultural connect with Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister appreciated the mental arithmetic abilities demonstrated by the young participants.

He said the achievements of the students were a credit to their parents, teachers and ALOHA International, and congratulated all participants, emphasising that participation itself was an achievement.

"You are all winners. Whether you took back a trophy from here or not, just being here and being able to compete is a victory and is a win," he said.

Omar Abdullah said the government would explore taking the ALOHA programme forward in government schools to give students wider access to such learning opportunities.

"This is something that we need to incorporate into the government school system as well, so that we give our children a level playing field," he said, adding that efforts would be made to expand the ALOHA family in Jammu and Kashmir.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Director School Education Kashmir Naseer Ahmed Wani, Founder and President ALOHA Loh Mun Sung, Director International ALOHA Kiran Motwani, MD ALOHA J&K Mubashir Wafai, besides teachers, students and parents, were present on the occasion.

### "Banned books

the government's action concerning books and whether more books could be listed.

"Banned books, which the government has banned under provisions of law, should not be in government schools or colleges. The government has taken this decision," he said.

Dulloo said the examination of books was a regular process and maintained that books that had been banned could not be retained in government educational institutions.

The Chief Secretary also described Sheetal Nath Temple as an important part of Srinagar's heritage and said it was the collective responsibility of society to preserve such sites for future generations.

He said the temple is believed to be one of the eight Bhairavas associated with the protection of Srinagar and had historically served not only as a place of worship but also as a venue for community and religious gatherings.

Dulloo said the temple had been burnt in 1991 and was subsequently repaired by the Sanatan Dharma Sabha. The shrine was reopened for devotees in 2021 after remaining closed for several decades.

His remarks on books came a day after the Jammu and Kashmir government informed the Legislative Assembly that 4,249 books had been withdrawn from circulation in government degree college libraries, apart from 518 books that had been classified as banned. [KNT]

### "Maharaja Hari

of people and that his ideals of public service, equality and inclusive development continued to be relevant.

In Jammu, the Yuva Rajput Sabha organized a Maharally to mark the occasion. The rally began from the Ban Talab area and proceeded through several parts of the city before concluding at the Maharaja Hari Singh statue near Tawi Bridge, where tributes were paid.

The celebrations followed a cultural program organized by the Yuva Rajput Sabha on Tuesday evening near the Maharaja's statue at Tawi Bridge and at Prem Nagar Park, featuring presentations on Dogra culture, traditions and the life and legacy of Maharaja Hari Singh.

September 23 is a government holiday in Jammu and Kashmir marking Maharaja Hari Singh's birth anniversary. The holiday was added to the official calendar in 2022 and continues to be observed across the Union Territory.

The observance this year followed a political controversy in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, when National Conference MLA Abdul Majid Larmi demanded restoration of holidays associated with party founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and said that, if those holidays were not restored, the government should withdraw the holiday marking Maharaja Hari Singh's birth anniversary.

The remarks triggered protests from BJP legislators, who opposed any move to withdraw the September 23 holiday and raised slogans in support of Maharaja Hari Singh. BJP MLA Devyani Rana said the holiday represented a long-standing demand and should not be cancelled.

PDP MLA Waheed Ur Rehman Para also called for restoration of the holiday associated

with Sheikh Abdullah and raised the issue of restoring July 13 as a public holiday. Congress supported restoration of a Sheikh Abdullah holiday while maintaining a distinction between that demand and the existing holiday for Maharaja Hari Singh.

Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather told members that he did not have the authority to grant or withdraw government holidays. The BJP members subsequently staged a walkout from the House.

The government holiday on September 23 was introduced in 2022, while the holidays on Sheikh Abdullah's birth anniversary and July 13 were removed from the official holiday calendar in 2020. [KNT]

Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson and senior BJP leader Dr Darakhshan Andrabi has hailed Maharaja Hari Singh's decision to accede to India, saying the erstwhile ruler's "wisdom" has benefited the region immensely.

Speaking to news agency Kashmir News Service (KNS) on the birth anniversary celebrations of the erstwhile Dogra ruler, Dr Andrabi said, "Today is the day of Maharaja Hari Singh's birthday. At that time, he took the decision that when our whole India became free, the princely status would go with India."

And the decision he took, today we are seeing how wisely he took the decision, how much we have benefited from it, that today we are with India and our country, she said.

Highlighting the Maharaja's administrative legacy, the BJP leader said his governance model was built on inclusivity and equal rights for all communities.

At that time, the administration he had done, how he gave the education system, medical facilities, canals, and all the facilities given to people... in his court, there were Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and everyone had to get equal rights, Andrabi said.

All the ministers were with him — Muslims, Hindus — and the courtiers were with him, Hindus, Muslims. He did not have one party, but he kept all the parties equal, ran this Jammu and Kashmir, and with India, gave happiness to this Jammu and Kashmir, she added. (KNS)

### "Remain vigilant

Zargar-JKPS, briefed the IGP Kashmir on the overall security scenario, counter-terrorism measures, intelligence inputs, area domination, security of vulnerable locations, law & order preparedness and crime situation in the district. The meeting was attended by Addl. SP Bandipora and all DySPs of the district.

During the meeting, IGP Kashmir emphasized upon strengthening public-friendly policing, improving crime disposal and enhancing operational preparedness in accordance with field requirements. Shri Sujit Kumar called upon all ranks to remain vigilant and ensure a prompt and effective response to emerging security and law & order challenges.

IGP Kashmir appreciated the dedication

and professionalism of the police personnel and exhorted them to continue performing their duties with commitment to ensure the safety and security of the public. (KNS)

### "Maharaja Hari

said the Maharaja had introduced reforms aimed at the welfare and empowerment of people and that his ideals of public service, equality and inclusive development continued to be relevant.

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### "In the Larger

Union Home Minister Amit Shah for his guidance and sympathetic approach towards the victims and their families.

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## Speaker inaugurates macadamisation work on Nowgam Kanidajan Charar-i-sharief Road, PHC at Watkaloo

■ HT News Network

BUDGAMSEPTEMBER23:Speaker, Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather today inaugurated the macadamisation work of the Nowgam to Kanidajan Charar-i-sharief road, marking an important step towards strengthening road connectivity and improving transportation facilities for the people of the area. The 9 kilometre long road is being macadamised at an estimated cost of Rs 1.72 crore. The project is expected to significantly improve the condition of the road, facilitate smooth and hassle-free vehicular movement and provide better connectivity to the adjoining villages and localities. Speaking on the occasion, the Speaker underscored the importance of robust road infrastructure in promoting overall development and improving the quality of life of the people. He said that improved connectivity plays a vital role in facilitating access to education, healthcare, markets and other essential services besides providing impetus to local economic



activities. He emphasized that timely completion and proper execution of development works should remain a priority so that the intended benefits reach the people at the earliest. Speaker also visited Darekanjan and Braripathri, where he interacted with local residents and listened to their demands, grievances and issues

requiring government's attention. The locals apprised the Speaker of various issues concerning basic amenities, infrastructure and other developmental requirements of their respective areas. The Speaker gave a patient hearing to the people and assured them that their genuine demands and issues

would be taken up with the concerned authorities for appropriate consideration and necessary action. He stressed the importance of regular interaction with the public and directed that issues of genuine public concern should be addressed in a timely and coordinated manner. Later, the Speaker visited

Watkaloo, where he inaugurated a Primary Health Centre (PHC) aimed at strengthening healthcare services in the locality. The newly inaugurated PHC is expected to provide essential medical facilities closer to the people and reduce the need for residents to travel to distant health institutions for routine healthcare requirements.

On the occasion, the Speaker highlighted the importance of accessible and quality healthcare services, particularly for people living in rural and far-flung areas. He said that strengthening healthcare infrastructure at the grassroots level is essential for ensuring timely medical assistance to the public. The inauguration of the PHC is expected to benefit the local population by providing essential healthcare services in the vicinity and further strengthening the public health delivery system in the area. The Speaker reiterated his commitment to ensuring sustained development of the constituency and stressed that infrastructure, healthcare and other essential public services would continue to receive due attention.

## Ashok Koul pays tribute to Veer Balidanis of 1967 Parmeshwari Agitation

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, 23 September 2026: BJP J&K State General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul paid heartfelt floral tributes at the Samadhi Smarak of the Veer Balidanis of the historic 1967 Parmeshwari Agitation at the revered Shri Sheetal Nath Temple in Srinagar.

Remembering those who made the supreme sacrifice, Ashok Koul said their courage, commitment and sacrifice occupy an important place in the history of Jammu and Kashmir and will always be remembered with respect. He said that remembering such sacrifices is an important responsibility of the present generation and that the values of courage, dignity and commitment to society continue to inspire people. He also stressed the importance of preserving the region's historical and cultural heritage for future generations.

KDD District President Rajeev Pandita and other senior party leaders were also present on the occasion.

## CM Omar Abdullah meets IUST VC, KCCI delegation at Raabita

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today met Vice Chancellor of the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, and a deputation of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) at Raabita here.

During his meeting with Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, the Chief Minister discussed matters relating to higher education and academic development in Jammu and Kashmir. The interaction reflected the Government's continued engagement with academic institutions to strengthen educational initiatives and promote excellence in higher education.

The Chief Minister also met KCCI delegation led by its President Javid Ahmad Tenga and discussed matters concerning trade, business and the economic growth of the region.

The meetings provided an opportunity to exchange views on strengthening collaboration with academic and business stakeholders and advancing initiatives of wider public and economic significance. During his meeting with Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, the Chief Minister discussed matters relating to higher education and academic development in Jammu and Kashmir. The interaction reflected the Government's continued engagement with academic institutions to strengthen educational initiatives and promote excellence in higher education.

The Chief Minister also met KCCI delegation led by its President Javid Ahmad Tenga and discussed matters concerning trade, business and the economic growth of the region.

## BJP J&K Pays Tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh Ji on His Birth Anniversary in Srinagar.

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, 23 September 2026: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Jammu and Kashmir paid warm tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh Ji on his birth anniversary in Srinagar.

J&K BJP General Secretary (Organisation) Ashok Koul, along with J&K Waqf Board Chairperson Dr Darakhshan Andrabi, MLAs, Vice President Dr Shehnaz Ganie, and senior party leaders, paid floral tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh Ji on his Jayanti at the party headquarters in Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar.

Addressing the gathering, Ashok Koul said that the contribution of Maharaja Hari Singh Ji to Jammu and Kashmir will always be remembered. He said the Maharaja will be remembered as a man of sheer will and determination who pursued progressive policies



for his citizens. Maharaja Hari Singh, a Hindu king who ruled over a Muslim-majority state, is often described primarily in these terms. However, Koul said it is important, in the context of the present, to recognise how the Maharaja rose above communal stereotyping and stood by his words, "Justice is my religion," his first statement after assuming the high office in 1925. He said Maharaja Hari Singh did not discriminate between his Hindu and Muslim subjects. Dr Darakhshan Andrabi

hailed Maharaja Hari Singh's decision to accede to India, saying that the erstwhile ruler's "wisdom" had benefited the region immensely.

Dr Andrabi said, "Today is the day of Maharaja Hari Singh's birthday. At that time, he decided that when our whole India became free, the princely status would go with India."

"And the decision he took, today we are seeing how wisely he took the decision and how much we have benefited from it. Today, we are with India."

## DDC Anantnag reviews macadamisation works, stresses timely completion of 73 Km target

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 23: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive review of ongoing macadamisation and other related works in the district.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B), Chief Planning Officer, District Mineral Officer, Executive Engineers, Assistant Executive Engineers and other concerned officials.

At the outset, the Superintending Engineer apprised the Chair of the progress of ongoing macadamisation works. It was given out that against the total



target of approximately 73 km, 14.3 km has been macadamised so far and the low progress is primarily attributable to shortage of bitumen and key construction materials.

Taking note of the low progress, the DDC directed the concerned officers to take all necessary measures for

expediting the pace of execution on these important road connectivity works. He asked the District Mineral Officer to make immediate arrangements for ensuring availability of requisite construction materials to the concerned macadamisation plants in accordance with applicable.

## Rana reviews physical, financial progress of Jal Shakti, I&FC works in Kashmir

### Directs officers to ensure completion of projects before onset of winter

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a review meeting to assess the physical and financial progress of various schemes and developmental works being executed by the Jal Shakti Department and Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC) Departments in Kashmir Division.

The meeting was attended by Chief Engineers of the Jal Shakti and Irrigation & Flood Control Departments, besides all Superintending Engineers of the Hydraulic Circles of Kashmir Division. During the meeting, the concerned officers briefed the Minister on the progress of ongoing schemes, achievements recorded so far, bottlenecks and the status of expenditure against funds sanctioned and earmarked for different works.

While reviewing the progress, the Minister directed the officers to accelerate execution of works on the ground and



ensure that all projects nearing completion are completed within the prescribed timelines, particularly before the onset of winter.

Reviewing the functioning and progress of the Jal Shakti Department, Rana directed the officers to accord top priority to all incomplete drinking water

supply schemes and make every effort to commission them before the winter season sets in. He stressed the need for advance functional testing of pipelines, pumping arrangements, storage tanks and other associated infrastructure so that any technical deficiencies are identified and rectified well in time.

The Minister also called for close field-level monitoring of schemes and directed the concerned officers to undertake regular inspections of works, particularly those at advanced stages of completion, to ensure adherence to quality standards and approved timelines.

Reviewing the progress of works under the Irrigation & Flood Control Department, the Minister directed that de-silting of water channels and strengthening of flood-protection infrastructure and embankments along vulnerable stretches be undertaken and completed on priority.

Rana asked the Chief Engineer, I&FC, to furnish a river-wise status report detailing the progress of flood-protection works and the preparedness of vulnerable areas ahead of the winter season.

He stressed that physical progress and financial expenditure must move in tandem and that funds allocated for developmental works should be utilised judiciously, transparently and within the prescribed timelines.

## Ayurveda complements modern healthcare through prevention, healthy living: Sakeena Itoo

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 23: Minister for Medical and Health Education and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo, today said that a healthy society requires not only hospitals and medicines, but also awareness, prevention, healthy lifestyles and responsible use of natural resources. Sakeena Itoo made these remarks while speaking as Chief Guest at the 11th Ayurveda Day 2026 celebrations organised by the Directorate of AYUSH, Jammu & Kashmir, under the theme "Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow". The Minister said Ayurveda is an important part of India's traditional knowledge and is increasingly receiving global recognition, adding that the theme reflects the growing relevance of Ayurveda in preventive healthcare, wellness and community wellbeing. Sakeena Itoo emphasised the need to strengthen an integrative approach to healthcare in J&K, including greater co-location of AYUSH services in healthcare institutions. She appreciated the contribution of the Directorate of AYUSH through inter-sectoral convergence and its participation in programmes such as Nasha Mukti Bharat, Anaemia Mukti Bharat and prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. Highlighting the strengthening of AYUSH infrastructure, the



Minister referred to the 50-bedded Integrated AYUSH Hospital at Kulgam, progress of hospitals at Kathua and Samba and the Government Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital at Amargarh, Sopore. She said District AYUSH Officer posts have been created and filled to strengthen district-level functioning. The Minister also highlighted J&K's rich medicinal plant wealth and appreciated initiatives such as school herbal gardens, farmer training, buyer-seller meet and medicinal plant cultivation. She noted the participation of approximately 87,110 people in International Day of Yoga 2026 and the contribution of AYUSH services.

## HT EDITORIAL

### When One Click Opens the Door to Cybercrime

Digital convenience cannot come at the cost of basic caution India's digital revolution has transformed the way people communicate, shop, bank and conduct everyday transactions. But with every new convenience comes a new avenue for exploitation. The latest warning about malicious Android applications being circulated under the guise of adult-content services should therefore be viewed not merely as another cyber-security advisory, but as a warning about a much larger weakness in our digital ecosystem: inadequate public awareness.

Cybercriminals no longer necessarily depend on sophisticated deception that is easy to recognise. Increasingly, they exploit ordinary human behaviour. An attractive advertisement appears on a familiar social-media platform. A website looks convincing. A supposedly useful application is offered for download. A message claims that an update is required. Before the user has time to question any of it, malicious software may have entered the device.

The danger becomes particularly serious when such applications seek powerful permissions. Android's Accessibility features exist for legitimate and important purposes, but granting such access to an unknown application can potentially give it extensive control over a device. For an ordinary smartphone user, the technical implications of such permissions may not be obvious. That knowledge gap is precisely what criminals seek to exploit.

The answer cannot simply be to tell people to "be careful". Digital safety has to become part of everyday digital literacy. Users must understand why downloading APK files from unknown websites can be risky, why unfamiliar applications should not be granted sensitive permissions and why an unexpected request to install a secondary application or activate an unfamiliar service should immediately raise suspicion.

There is also a larger institutional responsibility. Social-media companies cannot wash their hands of advertisements that are used to direct users towards malicious websites and applications. Platforms that have developed sophisticated systems for targeting advertisements should also be expected to develop equally effective mechanisms for detecting fraudulent campaigns. The burden of cyber-security cannot be placed entirely on individuals while platforms continue to provide criminals with avenues to reach potential victims.

Financial institutions, too, have an important role to play in strengthening real-time alerts and rapid-response mechanisms. Yet even the strongest banking safeguards have limitations if a user's own smartphone has been compromised. A modern phone may contain banking applications, payment credentials, identity documents, photographs, contacts and authentication information. Protecting the device has therefore become almost as important as protecting the bank account itself.

The social dimension of this particular scam should not be ignored either. When fraud begins with adult-themed content, victims may feel embarrassed and avoid reporting the incident. This is exactly the response criminals benefit from. There is nothing shameful about being targeted by cybercriminals. Victims should report incidents promptly and seek assistance rather than allowing embarrassment to compound the damage.

India has moved extraordinarily quickly towards digital payments. UPI and mobile banking have made financial transactions faster and more accessible than ever before. But technological adoption has moved faster than public understanding of cyber-security. Many people know how to make a digital payment; considerably fewer know what Accessibility access means, what an APK file is or why an unfamiliar application should never be granted extensive control over a phone.

That gap needs urgent attention.

Schools, colleges, banks, government agencies and technology companies should make basic cyber hygiene a regular part of public education. Cyber-security should not be treated as a specialised subject relevant only to technology professionals. In an economy where an increasing number of people depend on smartphones for financial transactions, it is a basic life skill.

The specific malicious applications being circulated today may eventually disappear. Tomorrow, criminals will invent another name, another advertisement and another excuse to persuade users to click. The technology will change, but the strategy will remain familiar: create curiosity, establish trust and persuade the victim to surrender access voluntarily.

The most effective defence, therefore, is not fear but awareness. Before downloading an unfamiliar application, before granting a powerful permission and before believing an unsolicited digital offer, users should pause and ask one simple question: Why does this application need access to my phone?

Sometimes, that moment of hesitation can protect far more than a device. It can protect a person's money, privacy and digital identity.

## Mobile Phones and Our Children A Wake-Up Call for Parents

**Technology can enrich childhood, but without guidance, unrestricted access to smartphones and social media can expose young minds to influences they may not yet have the maturity to understand.**



By Altaf Hussain Peerzada

The growing use of mobile phones among children has become a serious concern for parents, teachers and society. Technology has transformed education, communication and access to information, offering children opportunities that were unimaginable a generation ago. Yet the same technology, when placed in young hands without adequate supervision, can expose children to content, language and behaviour for which they may not be emotionally or socially prepared.

Of particular concern is the increasing presence of children between the ages of 7 and 15 on social media and messaging platforms. Parents and teachers are encountering situations in which young students create messaging groups without parental knowledge, exchange inappropriate language, circulate unverified information, consume unsuitable videos and reels, and imitate expressions and behaviour picked up from the digital world.

Such behaviour should not simply be dismissed

as harmless childhood mischief. It can be an early warning sign that requires awareness, guidance and timely intervention.

When Childhood Meets the Digital World Children are naturally curious and highly impressionable. They often imitate what they see and hear without fully understanding whether it is appropriate or harmful. A child may watch a particular video because it is popular, repeat an offensive expression because friends are using it, or forward information without knowing whether it is true.

The concern becomes greater when such behaviour begins to appear normal within a peer group.

Smartphone provides access to a vast digital world within seconds. Alongside educational and creative material, children may encounter inappropriate language, violence, sexualised content, misinformation, cyberbullying and other material that can influence their attitudes and behaviour.

The central issue, therefore, is not the smartphone itself. It is unrestricted and unsupervised access to the digital world.

Parents Must Pay Attention

Many parents give children smartphones for online classes, educational purposes or communication. Over time, however, the device can gradually become a source of entertainment, social interaction and constant stimulation.

Parents should regularly ask themselves: Do I really know what my child is doing on the phone?

Knowing that a child is using YouTube, WhatsApp or another application is not enough. Parents should have a reasonable understanding of what their child is watching, who they are communicating with, which groups they have

joined and what kind of material they are sharing.

Parents should be alert to noticeable changes in:

- Language and choice of words
- Behaviour and attitude towards elders



Interest in studies, reading and other activities

Sleep patterns and daily routine

Secrecy surrounding the mobile phone

Excessive attachment to the device

Online friendships and groups

The nature of videos, reels and other content being consumed

The photographs, messages or information being shared with others

These signs do not automatically mean that something is seriously wrong, but they should encourage parents to talk to their children and understand what may be happening.

Do Not Wait for a Problem to Become a Crisis

One of the most dangerous assumptions parents can make is that a child is too young to be influenced by social media.

Young children may actually be more vulnerable because they are still developing the ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate content. They may also struggle to understand the long-term consequences of their online actions.

A child who casually creates an inappropriate messaging group may not appreciate its seriousness. A child who repeatedly consumes unsuitable content may gradually begin to regard it as normal. Similarly, a child who regularly uses abusive language online may eventually carry that language into everyday interactions.

Childhood is the period when habits, attitudes and patterns of behaviour begin to take shape. Guidance at this stage can therefore make a significant difference.

Technology Should Remain a Tool, Not Become the Master

The answer is not to completely isolate children from technology. Smartphones, computers and the internet can be valuable tools for education, creativity, research and communication.

What children need is responsible and supervised access, rather than unrestricted freedom.

Parents can establish clear and age-appropriate rules concerning screen time, applications, online communication and the kind of content children may access. For younger children, devices should preferably be used in common family spaces rather than behind closed doors.

Most importantly, parents must communicate with their children.

Altaf Hussain Peerzada  
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## An invitation, I will never forget



Sahil Manzoor

Literally, human beings are among the most beautiful creatures on this earth. Almighty Allah has created us and provided us with wonderful ways of learning.

Sometimes, I wonder why we learn so much from books when Almighty Allah has already blessed us with great qualities such as sympathy, empathy, attraction, love, and care for one another. This is truly great and incredible. We also gain a wealth of knowledge from one another.

Human beings are among the most wonderful creations of Almighty Allah. There is hardly any other living creature that can compete with human beings in terms of sympathy, empathy, love, and care for one another. Every day, we learn new and useful things for our future and solve problems on our own. We learn from one another, share our ideas, love each other, and care for one another.

Today, there should be no place for hatred.

People who spread hatred and create disputes among us only lead society towards conflict and destruction. We should stay away from hatred, greed, and unnecessary disputes and promote love, peace, and understanding.

I am a teacher at Government Middle School Kralapathri. Every Saturday, we observe a Games Day. Fortunately, I have found my students very happy and enthusiastic while taking part in various sports activities such as cricket, volleyball, badminton, kho-kho, carrom, and other games.

Games are not just a way of spending time. Sports activities provide students with opportunities to develop their cognitive and social skills. They learn how to manage a game, cooperate with their teammates, behave properly under pressure, and remain calm while being free from the stress of studies.

Sports also give students the opportunity to make decisions independently and accept the results of their decisions. They learn from their mistakes and remain willing to improve. A game is not only about winning or losing. Sometimes, we applaud the losing side when one or more participants show great energy, sportsmanship, and determination.

I have noticed that many of our students are developing their thinking and learning skills through games. They keep track of scores, runs, goals, and the number of games they have won. In short, providing students with a free

and enjoyable environment under proper supervision can help develop their learning and social skills.

Studying within four walls alone cannot make our students fully social and confident. We need to provide them with opportunities to learn outside the classroom so that their overall development improves and they can face future challenges with confidence.

I actually wanted to share something special that I noticed when some of my students called me while I was playing cricket.

Some girls from my Class 7, including Khushbu Amin, Uzma Mushtaq, Aabroo Qayoom, and others, called me and said, "Sir, please come. We have something delicious for you."

I replied, "Okay, I will come after some time."

But they did not accept my answer. They came to me and took me with them. They nicely spread a cotton sheet and said, "Please sit, Sir. We have something for you."

They offered me an omelette prepared by Bimsa Rashid, milk kahwa prepared by Inshah Majeed, and biscuits on a plate. They quietly observed how I was enjoying the food. Meanwhile, I interacted with them and asked how they had got the idea of inviting me.

They replied, "Sir, we were planning this yesterday when you told us that we were going to the stadium on Saturday for Games Day."

## Private Universities: A Call for Scientific Accountability



Dr. Vijay Garg

Private universities have become an important part of the higher-education landscape. They have expanded access to professional courses, introduced new academic programmes, invested in laboratories and infrastructure, and created opportunities for research and innovation. In many places, they have also helped students access emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, data science, renewable energy and advanced engineering.

With this expansion, however, comes a greater responsibility. A university is not merely a place that awards degrees. It is an institution entrusted with knowledge, scientific inquiry, young minds and, ultimately, the future of society. Therefore, academic freedom must go hand in hand with academic responsibility, and scientific ambition must be accompanied by accountability.

Science Requires Evidence

The foundation of science is evidence. Scientific claims must be testable, research methods should be transparent, data should be handled responsibly, and conclusions should remain open to scrutiny. Universities, whether public or private, have a special obligation to protect these principles.

Research cannot be reduced to the number of papers published, conferences attended or projects announced. Quality matters as much as quantity. A healthy research environment encourages researchers to ask difficult questions, report results honestly, acknowledge limitations and accept correction when evidence demands it.

Scientific accountability therefore begins with a simple principle: the pursuit of knowledge must remain more important than the pursuit of appearances.

Beyond Buildings and Rankings

Modern universities often highlight impressive campuses, sophisticated laboratories, international collaborations and attractive academic programmes. These facilities can certainly contribute to educational quality, but infrastructure alone does not create a strong university.

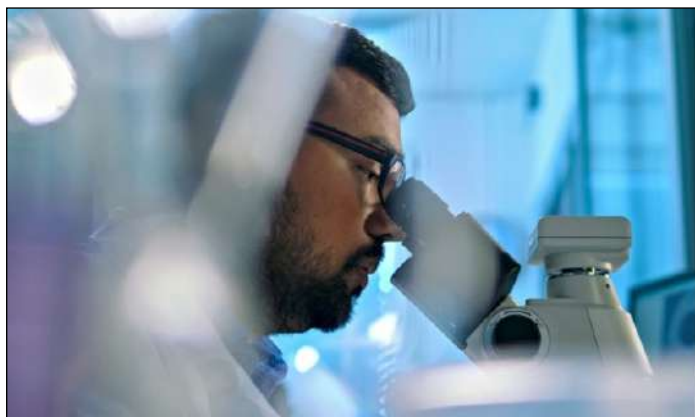
The real strength of an institution is reflected in the quality of teaching, research integrity, faculty expertise, student learning, laboratory practices, academic freedom, ethical

standards and the contribution its graduates and researchers make to society.

A university may have modern buildings and advanced equipment, but if students are not encouraged to question, investigate and think independently, the infrastructure has limited educational value.

Research Integrity Must Be Central

Scientific research carries a profound ethical responsibility. Fabrication of data, manipulation of results, plagiarism, inappropriate authorship and other forms of academic misconduct



can damage not only an individual researcher but also the credibility of an entire institution.

Private universities should therefore maintain strong systems for research ethics, plagiarism screening, data management, conflict-of-interest disclosure and independent investigation of serious allegations.

These systems should not exist merely to satisfy regulations. They should become part of the academic culture.

Young researchers learn not only from textbooks but also from the behaviour of their teachers and institutions. If honesty is treated as a principle in laboratories and classrooms, students are more likely to carry that value into their professional lives.

Accountability Does Not Mean Suppressing Academic Freedom

There is an important distinction between accountability and control.

Scientific accountability does not mean telling researchers what conclusions they must reach. On the contrary, genuine science requires intellectual freedom. Researchers should be

able to challenge established ideas, investigate unpopular questions and publish results that do not support an expected hypothesis, subject to legitimate ethical and legal requirements.

Accountability means that researchers should be able to explain how their work was conducted, what evidence supports their conclusions and what limitations affect their findings.

A university should create an environment in which researchers can say, "This is what the evidence shows," rather than feeling pressured to say, "This is what the institution wants to show."

Transparent Use of Research Funds

Research requires significant financial resources. Laboratories, equipment, field studies, scholarships and research personnel all require investment. When public or private funds are used for scientific work, transparency becomes essential.

Universities should maintain clear procedures for research grants, procurement, project expenditure and reporting. Researchers should also be encouraged to disclose relevant conflicts of interest.

Financial accountability and scientific accountability are closely connected. Misuse of resources can undermine research, while poor research practices can waste resources that could otherwise

support meaningful discoveries.

Quality of Faculty Matters

A university's scientific culture is strongly influenced by its faculty.

Recruitment and promotion should therefore place genuine emphasis on subject expertise, teaching ability, research quality, ethical conduct and meaningful academic contributions. Publication counts alone cannot provide a complete picture of a scholar's contribution.

Faculty members should be encouraged to remain intellectually active, update their knowledge and connect classroom teaching with contemporary developments in their disciplines. At the same time, universities should provide reasonable opportunities for faculty development. Accountability should be accompanied by institutional support.

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# Transfer pricing disputes 'disproportionately' burden developing nations: Sitharaman

■ HT News Network/UNI

NEW DELHI, Sept 23 Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said transfer pricing disputes "disproportionately" burden developing countries, as India advocated for setting up two new BRICS working groups dedicated to taxation.

Addressing a meeting of the BRICS heads of Tax authorities, Sitharaman said the meeting will look at the Scoping Documents for two new Working Groups -- on International Taxation and Transfer Pricing, and on Revenue Statistics. "Transfer pricing disputes cost developing-country administrations disproportionately. Revenue frameworks that don't fit our fiscal realities distort how we are seen and how we see ourselves. These



Working Groups exist because every country in this room has experienced these problems," Sitharaman said. The Minister added that the working groups would create sustained institutional space for progress over time, regardless of

who holds the Chair. "They are designed to outlast India's Chairship," Sitharaman said. China will take over the rotating BRICS Presidency in 2027. The Minister further said that the rules of international taxation

are being renegotiated through several multilateral tax negotiations, including the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation, under active negotiation.

"The decisions made in these processes over the next few years will shape cross-border taxation for a generation. BRICS economies -- as source jurisdictions, as large developing economies, as countries that have built significant domestic tax capacity from a low base -- have a perspective on those negotiations that is essential to their fairness and their durability," Sitharaman said. India's Chairship is not defined merely by today's decisions. It is meant to build on past achievements to establish a strong foundation for future leadership.

Sitharaman outlined the main outcomes of this year's BRICS tax

track: using technology to make tax administration more precise and reduce individual discretion, while prioritising shared governance standards and investment in people, especially youth.

Revenue Secretary Arvind Shrivastava said BRICS tax experts have spent two days reviewing the scope of work of the working group.

The International Taxation and Transfer Pricing Working Group creates a permanent BRICS platform for sharing experience on treaty interpretation, transfer pricing audit, APA (advance pricing agreement) and MAP (Mutual Agreement Procedure) mechanisms, and the multilateral negotiations including the UNFICITC (United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation) -- where our collective voice is needed and currently insufficient.

## Fitch raises India's FY'27 GDP growth projections to 6.9 pc

■ HT News Network/UNI



NEW DELHI, Sept 23 Fitch Ratings on Wednesday raised India's GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal year to 6.9 per cent, from 6.4 per cent, citing strong economic growth in the June quarter and overall economic resilience.

According to Fitch, India's economic momentum is likely to moderate over the remaining fiscal year, prompting the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to increase interest rates by 0.25 per cent in its October monetary policy meeting.

A growth rate of 7.8 per cent in the June quarter indicates that the "Indian economy has shown resilience in the face of the shock from the US-Iran war, despite the strong terms-of-trade deterioration seen in the first half of 2026," Fitch said.

It said that PMI survey data point to a slower pace of expansion in both manufacturing and services; below-normal monsoon rains will weigh on growth in agriculture and rural demand; and rising inflation will constrain real incomes and consumer dynamics.

"Private investment prospects look more buoyant, and we expect investment to rise by more than 10 per cent; non-food credit growth reached 19 per cent yoy in July," Fitch added.

Overall GDP growth will be 6.9 per cent (revised up from 6.4 per cent in June), Fitch added.

"Given the combination of strong demand, price rises, and adverse supply developments, we expect the RBI to raise rates by 25 bp in October this year to 5.5 per cent. We then expect a further rise to 5.75 per cent in early 2027 and then for rates to ease back to 5.5 per cent in 2028," Fitch said.

Earlier on Wednesday, S&P Global Ratings projected India's FY'27 GDP growth at 7 per cent -- the same rate Moody's Ratings projected last week.

The Indian economy grew at 7.8 per cent in the previous fiscal year (2025-26). "Private investment prospects look more buoyant, and we expect investment to rise by more than 10 per cent; non-food credit growth reached 19 per cent yoy in July," Fitch added.

Overall GDP growth will be 6.9 per cent (revised up from 6.4 per cent in June), Fitch added.

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## HDFC Bank unveils Digital Rupee applications

■ HT News Network

Mumbai, Sep 23, KNT: HDFC Bank has showcased multiple use cases for India's Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), or Digital Rupee, covering consumer rewards, promotional vouchers, corporate employee allowances, merchant payments and offline transactions.

The initiatives, unveiled at an industry forum last week, include redemption of credit-card reward points against Digital Rupee, Digital Rupee gift vouchers for customer promotions and a corporate portal for disbursing meal, fuel and travel allowances.

Under the proposed reward-point facility, customers will be able to redeem credit-card rewards against Digital Rupee for categories including dining, fuel, apparel and electronics, with redemption available

down to the last paise.

The bank also plans to offer Digital Rupee gift vouchers as part of customer promotional campaigns. Once triggered by a qualifying event, the voucher will be loaded into the customer's HDFC Bank Digital Rupee wallet and can be used by scanning UPI QR codes at merchants.

For corporate customers, HDFC Bank plans to enable organizations to disburse meal, fuel and travel allowances through Digital Rupee using its Corporate NetBanking platform. The bank said programmable payouts can restrict the use of funds to their intended purposes and reduce reconciliation requirements for finance teams.

HDFC Bank Digital Rupee wallets will also be made available on the BHIM platform, enabling customers to make UPI-style payments from their CBDC wallets and widening

access to merchant payments.

Another use case showcased by the bank is offline CBDC payments for air travel. Customers will be able to tap their phones on HDFC Bank point-of-sale devices onboard flights to pay for food, beverages and seat upgrades without an internet connection.

"Digital Rupee combines the trust of sovereign money with programmability, transparency and stronger controls," said Ashish Parthasarathy, Group Head, Branch Banking, Payments, Treasury, Liability Products, Marketing, Virtual Channels and Infrastructure, HDFC Bank.

Rajanish Prabhu, Senior Executive Vice President, HDFC Bank, said the next phase of Digital Rupee adoption would be driven by scale and everyday utility, with applications across UPI, merchant acceptance, rewards, employee benefits and offline payments. [KNT]

## Rupee falls 12 paise to close at 95.74 against US dollar

■ HT News Network/UNI

MUMBAI, Sept 23 The rupee fell 12 paise to close at 95.74 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, weighed down by the broad strength of the American currency and a slight recovery in crude oil prices from lower levels.

Forex traders said the dollar strengthened on hawkish comments from US Federal Reserve officials, raising expectations of a rate hike by the US Fed in 2026. However, positive domestic markets supported the rupee at lower levels.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.58 against the US dollar, then gained ground and touched an intraday high of 95.57 against the American currency in intraday trade. The domestic unit saw an intraday low of 95.76 and ended the trading session on Wednesday at 95.74 (provisional) against the American currency, lower by 12 paise from its previous close.

On Tuesday, the rupee appreciated 16 paise to close at 95.62 against the US dollar.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a positive bias as hopes of a diplomatic solution between the US and Iran amid indirect talks at the UNGA may improve global risk sentiment. Overall weakness in crude oil prices may also support the rupee," said Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Mirae Asset Sharekhan.

However, a strong dollar and any fresh tensions between the US and Iran may cap



sharp upside. Traders may take cues from flash manufacturing and services PMI data from the US. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 95.50 to 95.95, Choudhary added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 100.87, higher by 0.27 per cent.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading higher by 0.26 per cent at USD 99.51 per barrel in futures trade.

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex rose 299.17 points to settle at 74,828.25, while the Nifty closed 117.80 points higher at 23,446.80.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,809.99 crore on a net basis on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading higher by 0.26 per cent at USD 99.51 per barrel in futures trade.

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex rose 299.17 points to settle at 74,828.25, while the Nifty closed 117.80 points higher at 23,446.80.

## New clothing store 'Pratha Fashion House' inaugurated

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, Sept 23 Advocate Ankur Sharma and Zorawar Singh Jamwal, spokespersons of the J&K unit of BJP, today inaugurated a new clothing store 'Pratha Fashion House' in Jammu.

The store is owned and operated by Vivek Sharma and his wife, Pallavi Sharma, marking a new venture by the couple in the local retail and garment trade. Speaking on the occasion, the spokespersons congratulated the owners on the launch and expressed confidence that the venture would contribute to the growing commercial activity in the Talab Tillo area. They emphasized the importance of supporting local entrepreneurs and small businesses as part of the broader vision for economic growth and self-reliance in Jammu and Kashmir and praised Modi Government for introducing vision and schemes creating young entrepreneurs in line with countries' vision of Viksit Bharat of 2047.

## Oil firms face Rs 530 cr daily fuel losses as crude surges: ICRA

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, Sept 23 State-run oil marketing companies are facing mounting losses on petrol and diesel sales as a surge in crude prices outpaces unchanged domestic fuel prices, rating agency ICRA said.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) are losing Rs 8 a litre on petrol, and Rs 9 on diesel, while under-recoveries on domestic liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) stood at about Rs 300 per cylinder, ICRA said.

"At these levels, the daily loss to the OMCs is estimated at Rs 530 crore," ICRA said.



Crude oil prices have risen sharply in recent weeks amid escalating geopolitical tensions and supply disruptions in West Asia. The surge was driven by renewed US-Iran conflict, the shutdown of Saudi Arabia's East-West pipeline and heightened Houthi activities in the Red Sea. The price of the basket of crude oil India imports rose to

USD 117.4 per barrel on September 21, 2026, from the 2025-26 average of around USD 66 a barrel. "The escalation of the West Asian conflict and disruptions to key oil supply routes have led to a spike in crude prices," Prashant Vasishth, senior vice president and co-group head of corporate sector ratings at ICRA, said in the report.

The pressure on fuel marketers comes even as refining margins remain relatively strong. Singapore gross refining margins have stayed above USD 10 a barrel since the start of the West Asia crisis, supported by refinery outages, supply disruptions and inventory drawdowns, ICRA said.

## Jio shifts focus from telecom connectivity to indigenous technology

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, Sept 23 Ten years after transforming India's digital connectivity landscape, Jio is increasingly shifting its focus from being a telecom operator to becoming a technology company, with emphasis on indigenous intellectual property, artificial intelligence, enterprise platforms and global technology markets.

At the 10th anniversary of Jio, Akash Ambani, Managing Director of Jio Platforms, outlined the company's ambition to develop original technologies in India across connectivity, digital products, enterprise



solutions and AI, and take these capabilities to international markets.

Since its launch in 2016, Jio has developed an indigenous technology stack spanning 5G core, radio and OSS/BSS systems.

The company achieved pan-India 5G coverage within 15 months of launching the service in October 2022. As of March 31, 2026, Jio had 268.5 million 5G customers, while its overall customer base stood at 524.4 million. The company's technology push is also reflected in its growing intellectual property portfolio. According to Reliance Industries' FY2025-26 disclosures, Jio Platforms and its subsidiaries had cumulatively filed 6,817 patent applications by March 31, 2026, including technologies related to 4G, 5G, 6G, cloud and artificial intelligence. Of these, 1,009 patents had been granted globally.

## DoPT Cleared Over 23,000 Promotions In Last 12 Years: Dr Jitendra

■ HT News Network/UNI

NEW DELHI, Sept 23 A delegation of the Central Secretariat Group-C Employees' Association today thanked Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences and MoS in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, for frequently interacting with them and receiving their inputs on service-related matters. During the interaction, Dr. Jitendra Singh referred to the Department of Personnel & Training/ DoPT's sustained efforts to address promotion-related issues

and said that over 23,000 promotions have been cleared during the last 12 years. He said that timely career progression is important for keeping employees motivated and ensuring effective functioning of the administration. Responding to the representatives, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the Government is keen to provide a work-friendly environment to employees so that they remain motivated and are able to discharge their responsibilities effectively. He said that while employees may have a range of demands, their genuine issues would be looked into through the appropriate mechanism. He also said that inputs received from employees on service and cadre-



related matters are important and should continue to be brought before the concerned authorities.

The interaction was with representatives of the Central Secretariat Group-C Employees' Association, representing more than 8,000 Group-C employees working across 135 Ministries, Departments and Organisations under the Central Secretariat. The delegation placed before the Minister a detailed set of concerns relating to service conditions and career progression of its members.

The representatives placed their inputs regarding cadre review and the existing cadre structure, seeking consideration of issues affecting promotional avenues and career progression. Dr. Jitendra Singh said that such genuine inputs would be considered through the appropriate

institutional mechanism. Dr. Jitendra Singh said that regular interaction with employees and receiving their inputs provides an important channel for understanding genuine service-related concerns. He said that the Government's objective is to ensure that legitimate issues are considered while creating a conducive working environment in which employees can remain motivated and perform their responsibilities effectively.

The Minister's emphasis on employee motivation and timely career progression comes in the context of the Government's continuing efforts to address stagnation in Central Secretariat.



# KU, UGC–DAE CSR organise workshop on advanced research facilities

■ HT News Network

Srinagar September 23: The Department of Physics, University of Kashmir (KU), in collaboration with the UGC–DAE Consortium for Scientific Research (UGC–DAE CSR), Indore Centre, organised a two-day Awareness Workshop on "Utilization of In-House and Large-Scale DAE Facilities" at the Main Campus, aimed at promoting collaborative research and facilitating wider access to national scientific facilities.

The workshop familiarised faculty members and researchers from universities, colleges and research institutions with major Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) facilities, including the Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT), Dhruva Reactor and Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre (VECC), as well as advanced research infrastructure available at UGC–DAE CSR centres.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, emphasised the importance of strengthening linkages between universities and national research facilities.

"Access to advanced national research facilities can significantly expand the scope and quality of research being



undertaken in our universities. Such collaborations provide our researchers with opportunities to engage with cutting-edge infrastructure, build scientific networks and pursue research that can address emerging challenges," she said.

Director, UGC–DAE CSR, Prof. Kaustubh R.S. Priolkar, highlighted the Consortium's efforts to facilitate access to major DAE facilities for university and college researchers and encouraged participants to make greater use of the Collaborative Research Scheme (CRS). Centre Directors and senior scientists

from the Consortium interacted with participants and provided insights into facility access, procedural requirements and collaborative research opportunities.

The technical sessions highlighted the Indore Centre's capabilities in material synthesis and characterisation, spectroscopy, microscopy and physical-property measurements under low-temperature and high-magnetic-field conditions. Participants were also introduced to access protocols for INDUS Synchrotron beamlines at RRCAT, besides facilities available at the Consortium's Mumbai, Kalpakkam and Kolkata Centres,

including the Bhubaneswar Node.

The workshop also highlighted the role of UGC–DAE CSR as a UGC-established Inter-University Centre and its Collaborative Research Scheme.

Faculty members from the Physical, Chemical, Biological and Engineering Sciences participated in the workshop and explored potential collaborations and research proposals. The programme is expected to strengthen research linkages between KU and UGC–DAE CSR and promote wider utilisation of advanced scientific infrastructure among researchers. Director, UGC–DAE CSR, Prof. Kaustubh R.S. Priolkar, highlighted the Consortium's efforts to facilitate access to major DAE facilities for university and college researchers and encouraged participants to make greater use of the Collaborative Research Scheme (CRS).

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## DDC Anantnag reviews progress of RRP&MAH Scheme

Emphasises time-bound, quality execution

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 23: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, on Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the progress of projects being undertaken under Scheme for Revival, Restoration, Preservation and Maintenance of Architecture and Heritage (RRP&MAH) at various important places in the district.

At the outset, the SE PWD briefed the chair about the physical and financial progress achieved under the scheme in the district so far. He informed that under Phase III, 40 projects have been taken at key religious places including Aishmuqam, Mattan, Thajiwara Bijbehara, Khiram and Nagdandi Achabal in the district. He also apprised the chair of various issues and concerns being faced in the smooth execution of heritage preservation works.

Reviewing the status of these projects, the DDC emphasised close inter-departmental coordination for their timely completion. He directed the concerned officers to identify and resolve bottlenecks, if any, at the earliest and ensure that all works are completed within the stipulated timelines.

Dr. Bilal stressed that heritage projects hold significant importance in preserving the old architecture and called for regular monitoring of the works to expedite the pace of execution



besides maintaining quality standards and durability of the structures. He directed the concerned agencies to work in tandem and take prompt decisions on issues requiring inter-departmental intervention.

Concluding the review, the DDC stressed that minor issues should not cause unnecessary delays, instructing the officers to ensure timely and effective utilisation of resources.

The meeting was attended by Superintending Engineer R&B, Chief Planning Officer, Executive Engineers of R&B Divisions, CEO MCA, Executive Officers of Pahalgam, Mattan, Seer, Aishmuqam, Bijbehara and Achabal, Municipal Committees and other concerned officials.

## NZCC's Nukkad Natak Enthrals Students at Oasis Educational Institute Gogji Bagh



■ GULFAM BARJI

Srinagar/September:23 In an initiative to promote art, culture and social awareness among the younger generation, the North Zone Cultural Centre (NZCC), Patiala, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, organized an impactful Nukkad Natak (street play) at Oasis Educational Institute Gogji Bagh, Srinagar. Renowned cultural activist and Director of Kashmir World Film Festival (KWFF) Mushtaaque Ali Ahmad Khan attended the programme as the Chief Guest while Principal

of the Institute Sameena Wani presided over the event. The empanelled artists of NZCC presented a socially relevant street play highlighting the importance of social awareness and cultural values. The performance, featuring humour, music, powerful dialogues and energetic acting kept the students and faculty engaged throughout. Speaking on the occasion, Mushtaaque Ali Ahmad Khan appreciated the efforts of NZCC for taking meaningful cultural programmes to educational institutions. He said that Nukkad Natak is an effective medium of communicating social messages to the masses

and plays an important role in connecting the younger generation with their cultural roots and social responsibilities. Principal Sameena Wani expressed gratitude to NZCC and the Chief Guest for organizing the programme at the institution. She emphasized the importance of cultural and co-curricular activities in the overall development and personality building of students. The programme concluded with enthusiastic applause from the students and faculty, who appreciated the artists for their engaging and impactful performance.

## DC Rajouri reviews progress of development works in Vibrant Village Sariah

■ HT News Network



KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 22: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today reviewed the progress of Population Enumeration (PE) Phase-II of snow-bound areas of Devar and D.H. Pora tehsils here in a meeting held at the Mini Secretariat, Kulgam.

The meeting discussed the progress of enumeration work and the status of coverage in the snow-bound areas. The concerned charge officers (Tehsildars) briefed the DC about the progress achieved on the ground by census staff.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed on the accuracy of census data collection as it is crucial for effective planning and formulation of policies and programmes. He emphasised adherence to the prescribed Census guidelines and accuracy at every stage of enumeration.

Enumerators and supervisors were directed to ensure timely completion of the remaining enumeration work and maintain close coordination for smooth execution of the Census process. He further directed the concerned charge officers to closely monitor the field-level progress.

On the occasion, enumerators and supervisors tasked with the census, flagged off various issues regarding the uploading of census operations on the designated app which were addressed by technical and census officers from the Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

ADC Viqar Ahmad Giri, Tehsildars and other concerned officials attended the meeting. On the occasion, enumerators and supervisors tasked with the census, flagged off various issues regarding the uploading of census operations on the designated app which were addressed by technical and census officers from the Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

## J&K Students Association Delegation Meets Protesting Veterinary Students, Seeks CM's Intervention on Long-Pending Stipend Hike

■ HT News Network

Srinagar: A delegation of the Jammu & Kashmir Students Association (JKSA) on Wednesday met protesting veterinary students in Kashmir and urged the government to address their long-pending demand for enhancement of the internship stipend at SKUAST-Jammu and SKUAST-Kashmir.

The delegation was headed by JKSA National Convenor Nasir Khuehami and included National Spokesperson Dr. Zubair Reshi, Central Kashmir Coordinator Sameer Yousuf, and other members of the association. The delegation held detailed discussions with the protesting students, listened to their concerns and assured them that their genuine demands would be taken up with the concerned authorities.

The veterinary students have been protesting for nearly three years, seeking revision and enhancement of their



internship stipend. According to the students, a formal proposal for enhancement has remained pending with the Finance Department since 2023 despite repeated representations and follow-ups.

At present, veterinary interns at SKUAST-Jammu and SKUAST-Kashmir receive 6,000 per month for six months and 9,000 per month for the remaining six months, with the additional 3,000 during the latter period being contributed by ICAR. The students have pointed out that the stipend remains substantially lower than the rates offered at several

veterinary institutions across the country.

Khuehami said the issue deserves urgent attention as veterinary internship is a compulsory component of professional training and involves substantial clinical and field responsibilities. Interns undertake clinical duties, field visits, animal-health services, practical procedures, emergency responsibilities and community-level veterinary work, often involving extended working hours.

"Students pursuing professional education should not have to repeatedly protest for a basic and rational stipend.

## DLSA Srinagar organises Awareness Programme on NALSA SAMVAD Scheme 2025, Access to Justice in Human-Wildlife Conflict

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar organised an awareness programme on the NALSA SAMVAD Scheme, 2025 and the NALSA Scheme on Access to Justice for Victims of Human-Wildlife Conflict,

with the objective of creating awareness regarding free legal aid, legal rights and access to justice among vulnerable and tribal communities, at Check-Sangri, Khonmoh, Srinagar.

The programme, held under the 60-Day Mega Drive for implementation of NALSA Schemes at Grassroot level (Phase-I), conducted

through the Para-Legal Volunteers (PLVs) of DLSA Srinagar, who sensitized the participants about the objectives and benefits of the schemes, availability of free legal services and the role of Legal Services Authorities in facilitating access to justice. The resource persons for the programme included Sefa, Minhaaj Ur Rasool and Ayesha Showkat Assistant Legal Aid Defense

Counselors who elaborated on the key provisions of the schemes and addressed the queries of the participants. The participants were informed about the importance of seeking timely legal assistance, particularly in matters relating to tribal rights, welfare entitlements, displacement and rehabilitation, and issues arising from human-wildlife conflict.

# NIT Srinagar hosts lecture on Interface Engineering of 2D Hybrid Materials Director stresses interdisciplinary research and innovation

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Sept: 23: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar organised a special lecture on "Interface Engineering of 2D Hybrid Materials: From Energy Technologies to Sustainable Geopolymer Nanocomposites", bringing together researchers, faculty members and students to explore emerging developments in advanced functional materials and sustainable technologies.

The lecture was jointly organised by the Departments of Physics, Chemistry and Civil Engineering. Dr. Vijay Kumar from the Department of Physics, Dr. Ravi Kumar from the

Department of Chemistry, and Dr. Parameshwar from the Department of Civil Engineering coordinated the programme.

The lecture was delivered by Dr. Jayaramulu Kolleboyina, Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry and Dean, International Relations, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu.

The programme was attended by Director NIT Srinagar Prof. Anurag Misra, Dean R&C Prof. Roohie Naaz, Dean International and Academic Affairs Dr. M.A. Shah, Head Chemistry, Prof. Kowsar Majeed, senior faculty members, research scholars and students.

Director NIT Srinagar Prof. Anurag

Misra said the lecture reflected the institute's emphasis on strengthening academic interaction and research collaboration with leading institutions.

"Emerging materials science has applications across several important areas, including clean energy, environmental protection and sustainable construction. Lectures by researchers working at the forefront of these fields give our students and scholars an opportunity to understand current research challenges and explore new possibilities for interdisciplinary collaboration," Prof. Misra said.

During his lecture, Dr. Jayaramulu Kolleboyina discussed the potential



of two-dimensional materials in developing advanced functional

materials, highlighting their high surface area, tunable surface

chemistry and distinctive electronic, mechanical and physicochemical properties. He explained that practical applications of 2D materials can often be constrained by challenges such as restacking, poor dispersion and weak interfacial interactions.

He emphasised the role of interface engineering and interfacial chemistry in overcoming these limitations. The first part of the lecture focused on hybrid 2D porous materials developed by integrating two-dimensional materials with metal-organic frameworks, metal-organic polyhedra and other functional porous components. Such hybrid systems can enhance properties including porosity, charge transport,

stability and surface reactivity, with potential applications in catalysis, CO conversion, water purification and energy technologies.

Dr. Kolleboyina also discussed the development of 2D-material-reinforced geopolymer nanocomposites. He explained how surface chemistry, material dispersion and interfacial bonding can influence geopolymerisation and the resulting mechanical performance of these sustainable materials.

Dean International and Academic Affairs Dr. M. A. Shah said such programmes contribute to strengthening the institute's academic ecosystem and international and inter-institutional research linkages.



## PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as SHAFIYA ASHRAF D/O MOHAMMAD ASHRAF WANI on my Adhaar card bearing Adhaar No ..3934 6070 8466 while my correct name is SHAFEA ASHRAF WANI D/O MOHAMMAD ASHRAF WANI which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of concerned Adhaar authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name... SHAFEA ASHRAF  
D/O..MOHAMMAD ASHRAF WANI  
R/O..NAGBAL

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to correct my Ward's Mother's name in School records from SAHANAZ TO SHAHNAZA.Now I am applying for correction In this regard if anybody is having any objection may file the same to Concerned Department/Al Noor Model High School Dana Mazar Sakidafar Srinagar within the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. I

FAIZAN SAHIB  
S/O:ABDUL MAJEED DAR

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Mohd Hussain to (new name) Mohammad Hussain. In future I will be known as (new name) Mohammad Hussain. If any body is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 working days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted. Contact number 9906538723

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Abid Ashraf, son of Mohd Ashraf Khan, residing at Khonmoh, Srinagar, hereby inform the public that the original Registration Certificate (RC) of my scooty bearing Vehicle Registration Number JK01AQ6175 and Chassis Number MET0001LA1H007212 has been lost/misplaced while traveling from Khonmoh to Panthachowk. Any person having any objection or issue regarding the issuance of a duplicate RC for the aforementioned vehicle should contact the Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Srinagar or contact me within 2 to 3 days of the publication of this notice. No objections will be entertained after the expiry of the said period. If found, please return it to the above address or contact me. Abid Ashraf Phone: 9682605943

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as SAMIA BANO D/O GHULAM MOHAMMAD NAJAR on my Adhaar card bearing Adhaar No ..2103 8931 9395 while my correct name is SUMAYA AKHTAR D/O GHULAM MOHAMMAD NAJAR which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of concerned Adhaar authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name...SUMAYA AKHTAR  
S/O...GHULAM MOHAMMAD NAJAR  
R/O...KACHWA MUQAM

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I Parveen W/o Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh R/o Guzarbal, Chattabal, Srinagar do hereby inform the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded as "Parveena Akhter" in my J&K Bank Passbook. My J&K Bank Account Details are as under: Account No: 0006040100014714 Branch: J&K Bank, Branch Business Unit Safakadal, Srinagar Whereas my actual and correct name as per my Aadhaar Card is: Parveen W/o Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh R/o Guzarbal, Chattabal, Srinagar Aadhaar No: 8561 6356 6924 Now I want to correct my name in the Bank Record from Parveena Akhter to Parveen.If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may contact the Manager, J&K Bank, Branch B/U Safakadal, Srinagar within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After expiry of 7 days, no objection will be entertained and the bank shall correct my name accordingly. Parveen W/o Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh R/o Guzarbal, Chattabal, Srinagar

## Forestry Graduates Demand Recognition in Forester Recruitment Rules

Protesters Seek Weightage and Preference for B.Sc. Forestry Degree

■ DR. AB QAYOOM



Srinagar,Sept,23 : B.Sc. Forestry graduates have raised concerns over the existing recruitment rules for the post of Forester, demanding that specialized forestry education be given due recognition in the selection process.The protesting graduates said the present eligibility criteria allow candidates with general qualifications to compete for the Forester post, while a degree specifically in Forestry does not, according to them, carry any additional weightage or preference.

The graduates said they spend several years studying specialized subjects including Silviculture, Forest Management, Wildlife, Forest Mensuration, Agroforestry and Ecology, which they believe are directly relevant to the duties of a Forester.

"Everyone is eligible for the post, but a degree specifically in Forestry carries no weightage and no preference," the protesters said, arguing that their specialized academic training should be appropriately recognized in recruitment to forestry-related posts.They maintained that their demand is not aimed at depriving other eligible candidates of employment opportunities. Instead, they want the recruitment framework to acknowledge the specialized professional education of Forestry graduates.The protesters questioned the purpose of specialized Forestry education if graduates trained specifically in the subject receive no preference while applying for posts directly related to the profession.They have urged the concerned authorities to review and update the recruitment rules and introduce appropriate weightage or preference for B.Sc. Forestry graduates in the recruitment of Foresters.The graduates appealed to the government and the Forest Department to examine their concerns and take suitable steps to ensure that specialized forestry education receives due recognition in future recruitment processes.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as KHALIDA AKHTER S/O AB RASHID YATOO on my Adhaar card bearing Adhaar No ..6495 1205 4437 while my correct name is KHALIDA RASHID D/O ABDUL RASHID YATOO which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of concerned Adhaar authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name...KHALIDA RASHID  
D/O..ABDUL RASHID YATOO  
R/O..DAWLATPORA AUTHOORA

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Zanaib Bilal Sheikh D/o Bilal Ahmad Sheikh, R/o Patchar Chandoosa, declare that I have lost my original Class 10th Marks Card issued by JKBOSE, Srinagar. Details: Name: Zainab Bilal Sheikh Daughter of Bilal Ahmad Sheikh Exam: 10th Annual Regular 2025 Roll No: 1070360055 Reg No: 2307013000620097 I am intending to apply for a duplicate marks card. Any person having any objection in this regard may file his/her objection in the office of the J&K Board of School Education, Srinagar within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained.

Sd/-  
Zanaib Bilal Sheikh

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as KHALIDA AKHTER S/O AB RASHID YATOO on my Adhaar card bearing Adhaar No ..6495 1205 4437 while my correct name is KHALIDA RASHID D/O ABDUL RASHID YATOO which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of concerned Adhaar authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name...KHALIDA RASHID  
D/O..ABDUL RASHID YATOO  
R/O..DAWLATPORA AUTHOORA

## Lawoosa Families Suffer Lakhs in Losses After Thousands of Fish Die at Two Fish Farms

Allege Miscreants Blocked Water Supply; Police Register FIR

■ DR. AB QAYOOM

Kupwara, Sept 23: Two families in Chek Lawoosa area of Mawar in north Kashmir's Kupwara district have suffered losses running into lakhs of rupees after thousands of fish died at their separate fish farms.

According to the affected families, the fish died after the fresh water supply to the farms was allegedly disrupted. They have alleged that miscreants blocked or diverted the water supply, affecting the flow of fresh water into the fish ponds. One of the fish farms is owned by Sajad Ahmad, who established the farm in 2022 with assistance from the Fisheries Department. Another farm belongs to Altaf Ahmad Malla, who also established his unit during the same year.The families said the fish farming initiative was started with the hope of creating a sustainable source of livelihood, particularly for educated



unemployed youth in their households.Sajad Ahmad said the farm was established to support his family and provide livelihood opportunities to his two educated unemployed brothers."We built this farm hoping it would become a livelihood for our family. The death of thousands of fish has

caused losses worth lakhs. We believe the water supply was deliberately diverted. We want a fair probe, strict action against those responsible and support from the authorities," he said. The mother of Altaf Ahmad Malla said the family is solely dependent on the fish farm for its livelihood. She alleged that

the drainage supplying water to the farm was blocked, disrupting the flow of fresh water into the pond.She said the disruption allegedly resulted in the death of thousands of fish and caused substantial financial losses to the family.

The affected families said the fish farms were an important source of income and had been developed after considerable effort and investment.Following the incident, police have reportedly registered an FIR and initiated an investigation. The investigation is expected to ascertain the exact cause of the fish deaths and whether the water supply was deliberately blocked or diverted.The families have urged the police to identify those responsible and take action under law. They have also appealed to the Fisheries Department and the district administration to assess the losses and provide necessary assistance to the affected families.

## DC Kulgam Visits Historic Ganesh Asthapan Mandir at Batpora Hergam as Two-Day Ganesh Hawan Held After 36 Years

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 23: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam (IAS), today visited the historic Ganesh Asthapan Mandir at Batpora Hergam, Frisal, where a two-day Ganesh Hawan/Yagna was held on September 22 and 23 after a gap of 36 years.During his visit, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with devotees and reviewed the arrangements made by the district administration for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the



religious programme.The DC inspected the facilities at the temple and took stock of

arrangements regarding security, sanitation, uninterrupted power and

drinking water supply, healthcare, fire safety and other essential amenities for the devotees.Shahzad Alam appreciated the coordinated efforts of various departments in ensuring that all necessary facilities were put in place for the successful conduct of the religious event.The two-day religious programme witnessed the participation of devotees and members of the community at the temple premises.The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Tehsildar Frisal Javid Iqbal, Deputy SP Hattipora Rajit Chib, Executive Officer.

## Kulgam Police Recover Heroin-Like Substance During Naka Checking at Qazigund

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 23: Kulgam Police recovered 15 grams of a heroin-like substance during naka checking on the Qazigund-Dalwach Road near Dooru Crossing along NH-44, police said on Wednesday.

According to police, a team from Police Station Qazigund intercepted a Grand i10 car bearing registration number JK01BA-5293, which was travelling from Jammu towards Qazigund.



During the checking, police recovered 15 grams of a heroin-like substance from the driver-side door pocket of the vehicle. The driver was identified as Saqib Latief Dagga, son of M.

Latief Dagga, a resident of Maharaj Gunj, Srinagar.In connection with the recovery, FIR No.230/2026 under Sections 8/21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS)

Act has been registered at Police Station Qazigund, and investigation has been initiated.

Kulgam Police has appealed to the general public to remain vigilant and extend active cooperation to the police in combating drug abuse and trafficking. Police urged people to share information regarding drug-related activities, assuring that the identity of informers would be kept confidential.

Kulgam Police reiterated its commitment to protecting the community from the menace of drugs.

## DC Rajouri reviews progress under National Tuberculosis Elimination Program

■ Farooq Rather

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 23: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP).

During the meeting, the concerned officer presented a detailed overview of NTEP indicators, targets and achievements, performance parameters and progress recorded so far.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the block-wise status and examined gaps in TB case detection, notification and treatment outcomes. He directed all concerned to intensify efforts towards achieving the goal of



TB Mukht Rajouri. He directed the health institutions to increase presumptive TB X-ray screening and instructed all

BMOs to organize at least two screening and awareness camps daily in their respective blocks. The CMO was directed to closely

monitor daily NTEP progress and share regular reports with the DC Office.

The Deputy Commissioner further stressed active case finding, improvement of key performance indicators and focused intervention in low-performing blocks to ensure 100% target achievement.

Emphasizing inter-departmental convergence, community participation and timely reporting, the Deputy Commissioner called for concerted efforts to accelerate TB elimination in the district within the stipulated timeframe.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Malikzada Sheraz Ul Haq; CMO, Dr Manohar Lal Rana; DTO Dr Sajjad Rashid Mirza, all Block Medical Officers and other concerned officers.



# Ravindra ruled out of New Zealand's T20I series against India

United News Of India

**NEW DELHI, SEP 23** :New Zealand all-rounder Rachin Ravindra has been ruled out of the upcoming five-match T20I series against India after suffering a shoulder injury during a promotional shoot last week.

Ravindra is expected to take around six weeks to recover, with the New Zealand team management hopeful that he will be fit for the three-match ODI series against India, beginning November 4. The T20I series starts in Christchurch on October 22.

"We're gutted for Rachin," New Zealand head coach Rob Walter said. "He's going to play a big role for us this summer so it's important that he doesn't rush his rehab, but we're optimistic he'll be back for the ODIs." Bevon Jacobs, who has played 11 T20Is, has been added to the squad as a middle-order option. He scored an unbeaten 62 in his last T20I appearance against Bangladesh.

Fast bowler Adam Milne is also in line to return to the T20I side for the first time in more than a year. He joins a strong pace group that includes Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Jacob Duffy, Zak Foulkes and Nathan Smith. Ben Sears was not considered



as he continues to recover from an ankle injury.

Walter said New Zealand's depth in the pace department would allow the team to manage workloads during a busy season. After India's tour, New Zealand will travel to Australia for four Tests before hosting Sri Lanka early next year. "Our priority is winning games and putting the best team on the park, but we also have to keep in mind the volume of cricket in the coming months," Walters said. "We're very fortunate with the depth that we've got to call upon, so we'll look to use all 16 squad members throughout the series as we manage workloads."

Finn Allen and Tim Seifert, both

of whom hold casual contracts with New Zealand Cricket and are set to play in the Big Bash League later this year, will reunite at the top of the order for the first time since the T20 World Cup. Their inclusion means Tim Robinson misses out on the squad.

India is a quality team: Walter said New Zealand were looking forward to hosting the reigning T20 world champions. "It's going to be awesome to welcome India to our shores and get summer underway," Walter said. "India is a quality team and a challenging opposition, so to take them on in our own conditions in front of Kiwi fans is really exciting. We hear most of the games are going to be sold-

out and it should make for some incredible occasions.

"We've got a near full-strength squad that covers all bases and I'm excited to see how we compete against the current T20 world champions."

The five-match T20I series will be followed by five ODIs and two Tests between the teams.

New Zealand squad for T20Is vs India: Mitchell Santner (capt), Finn Allen, Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway, Jacob Duffy, Lockie Ferguson, Zak Foulkes, Matt Henry, Bevon Jacobs, Kyle Jamieson, Adam Milne, Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips, Tim Seifert, Nathan Smith India is a quality team: Walter said New Zealand were looking forward to hosting the reigning T20 world champions. "It's going to be awesome to welcome India to our shores and get summer underway," Walter said. "India is a quality team and a challenging opposition, so to take them on in our own conditions in front of Kiwi fans is really exciting. We hear most of the games are going to be sold-out and it should make for some incredible occasions." "We've got a near full-strength squad that covers all bases and I'm excited to see how we compete against the current T20 world champions."

## Panchkula shooter Raiza Dhillon wins Asian Games bronze in women's skeet team event

United News Of India

**PANCHKULA, SEP 23** :Panchkula shooter Raiza Dhillon won a bronze medal in the women's skeet team event at the Asian Games, with her mother crediting years of gruelling practice, discipline and family support for the achievement.

The Indian trio of Dhillon, Maheshwari Chauhan and Parinaaz Dhaliwal finished with an aggregate score of 331 to claim the bronze medal.

Dhillon also came close to an individual medal but finished fourth, missing the podium by one bird.

Her mother, Gul Dhillon, said Raiza had put in years of sustained training to reach the international level, spending five to six hours practising in the sun before evening fitness training.

"This medal is not just a piece of metal. It is the culmination of years of hard work, discipline and perseverance," she said.

Gul said the achievement was the result not only of Raiza's efforts but also of her family's support and the work put in by her coaches.

"There is some disappointment that she

missed an individual medal by just one bird, but finishing fourth at such a major international event is also an achievement," she said, expressing confidence that Raiza would win more medals for the country.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini



also telephoned Dhillon and her family to congratulate them on the medal, according to her mother.

Gul said the Chief Minister had also honoured Raiza after her return from the Olympics.

The bronze adds another international medal to the Panchkula shooter's career as she looks to build on her performance in future competitions.

## Asian Games badminton: India men's team settles for bronze



United News Of India

**NEW DELHI, SEP 23** :Lakshya Sen and Ayush Shetty struggled against their higher-ranked opponents as the Indian men's badminton team settled for a bronze medal after losing 1-3 to China in the semifinals of the Asian Games in Nagoya on Wednesday.

India had won silver at the 2023 Hangzhou Games, where they had also lost to China in the final. Once again, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were the only Indians to win their match as China ended India's title hopes.

World No. 14 Lakshya, who had played a key role in India's quarterfinal win over Japan, could not repeat that performance against world No. 6 Shi Yu Qi.

He lost 16-21, 18-21 in the opening singles, putting India 0-1 behind. World Championship medallists Satwiksairaj

and Chirag then produced a strong performance to beat Paris Olympic silver medallists and reigning world champions Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang 21-11, 22-20 in the first doubles. The victory brought India level at 1-1 at the Ichinomiya City Municipal Gymnasium.

The pressure was then on Ayush Shetty, but the world No. 20 could not maintain his composure against world No. 12 Li Shi Feng. He lost 19-21, 13-21 as China moved 2-1 ahead. Hariharan Amsakarunan and MR Arjun were then tasked with keeping India in the contest in the second doubles against China's scratch pairing of He Ji Ting and Liu Yi. The world No. 25 Indian pair fought hard but went down 16-21, 21-17, 9-21, allowing China to close out the tie and book its place in the final. Despite the defeat, India secured back-to-back Asian Games team medals for the first time in 40 years.

## Satwik-Chirag brilliance not enough as India settle badminton bronze

United News Of India

**ICHINOMIYA (JAPAN), SEPT 23** :India's men's badminton team secured a bronze medal at the Asian Games here on Wednesday despite a spirited fightback from Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who stunned the reigning world champions before China prevailed 3-1 in the semifinal.

Satwik and Chirag produced the defining performance for India, defeating Liang Weikeng and Wang Chang 21-11, 22-20 to level the tie after Lakshya Sen had lost the opening singles to former world champion Shi Yuqi 16-21, 18-21. The Indian pair kept their composure in a tense second game after China threatened to force a decider, handing India a crucial win over the reigning world champions and briefly reviving hopes of reaching the final. However, China regained control through defending Asian Games champion Li Shifeng, who defeated Ayush Shetty 21-19, 21-13 in the second singles.

With India needing to win the remaining matches, Hariharan Amsakarunan and M R Arjun fought back after losing the opening game but eventually went down 16-21, 21-17, 21-9 to He Ji Ting and Liu Yi, handing China an unassailable 3-1 lead.

## Asian Games: DPR Korea dominates opening day of weightlifting

United News Of India

**NAGOYA (JAPAN), SEP 23** :DPR Korea weightlifters made a dominant start to their Asian Games campaign, winning both women's gold medals on offer as three-time champion Ri Song Gum broke three world records.

Ri, the 28-year-old competing in the women's 49kg, lifted 94kg in the snatch, 121kg in the clean and jerk for a total of 215kg - all new world records. The gold was the DPRK's first of the Games.

"Words cannot describe how happy I am," Ri told Xinhua after the medal ceremony. It was her third consecutive Asian Games title, following wins in Jakarta and Hangzhou.

Asked for the secret to her success, Ri credited it to the support of her people. "It's not that I'm that great myself. I stand here because of the trust and expectations of our people," she said.

The women's 49kg is not an Olympic weight category for Los Angeles 2028. When asked if she would consider moving up a class to compete at the Olympics, Ri smiled at her coach and replied: "Yes!"

India's Mirabai Chanu took silver with 198kg, while Indonesia's Luluk Wiyajana claimed bronze with 191kg.

In the later session, Kang Hyon Gyong claimed the DPRK's second gold of the day in the women's



53kg. The 27-year-old lifted a total of 223kg, breaking five Asian Games records along the way. "Compared to previous Games, the level of the new generation has improved dramatically - even

have to be amazed," Kang said. "I won't be complacent with today's result. I'll keep working harder. I didn't break the world record today, but next time I'll go all out to set a new one," she added.

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