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Voice To The Voiceless



HT BRIEFLY

J&K High Court reduces accident compensation from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 50,000

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 25: The Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court has reduced the compensation awarded to a motor accident victim for pain, suffering and loss of amenities from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 50,000, holding that compensation must be fair and reasonable and correspond to the circumstances of the individual case.

Justice Rajesh Sekhri passed the judgment while partly allowing an appeal filed by Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company against an award of the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, Srinagar, in the case of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company versus Aijaz Ahmad Najar and others. The case arose from a road accident involving a motorcycle and a Tavera vehicle.

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

J&K govt says no rigid timeframe for regularization of temporary workers

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 25: The Jammu and Kashmir government has said it cannot set a rigid timeframe for finalizing a policy on regularization of casual, seasonal, temporary, contractual and need-based workers, citing legal, administrative and financial considerations.

In a written reply to a question by CPI(M) MLA Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, the government said

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

J&K govt acknowledges shortage of medical, paramedical staff

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 25, : The Jammu and Kashmir government has acknowledged shortages of medical and paramedical staff in certain healthcare institutions across the Union Territory, while informing the Legislative Assembly that health services were functioning without adverse impact on patient care.

In a written reply to a starred question, the Health and Medical Education Department said staffing gaps varied from institution to institution depending on sanctioned strength and functional requirements. The government said the manpower position was being continuously

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

Flash floods, cloudbursts damage 24,000-plus houses and 5,000 roads across J&K

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 25,: Flash floods and cloudbursts damaged more than 24,000 residential structures and over 5,000 roads across Jammu and Kashmir during 2025-26 and 2026-27, the government informed the Legislative Assembly. According to a written reply furnished by the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

Waste reportedly dumped in pits at Sonamarg treatment plant despite crores spent on facility

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SONAMARG, SEP 25: Questions have been raised over the functioning of the Solid Waste Management Plant at Sarbal in Sonamarg after garbage collected from the tourist destination was allegedly being dumped in large pits at the site instead of being processed through the machinery installed there. The Sonamarg Development Authority established the facility at Sarbal for

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

“More made in India. More investment in India. More exports from India.” : Narendra Modi

PM Marks 12 years of Make in India, highlights manufacturing and export expansion

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday marked 12 years of the Make in India initiative by highlighting increased domestic production, investment and exports as key indicators of the country's economic transformation. In a social media post, Modi said, “More made in India. More investment in India. More exports from India. A transformation visible across sectors!” The initiative, launched in September 2014, was aimed at promoting India as a global manufacturing hub, attracting domestic and foreign investment, encouraging innovation and generating employment. Over the years,



government measures including production-linked incentive schemes have sought to strengthen manufacturing across sectors such as electronics, automobiles, defence, pharmaceuticals and renewable energy, while increasing

India's integration with global supply chains.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday marked 12 years of the Make in India initiative by highlighting what he described as a visible transformation across

sectors, with greater domestic production, investment and exports emerging as key indicators of the country's economic shift.

In a post on social media platform X, Modi said, “More made in India. More investment in India. More exports from India. A transformation visible across sectors!” and tagged the post with #12YearsOfMakeInIndia. Launched in September 2014, Make in India was conceived as a major initiative to promote India as a global manufacturing hub, attract domestic and foreign investment, encourage innovation and generate employment. Over the years, the government has sought to strengthen manufacturing capabilities across

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

“We are ready to debate statehood”
LoP Sunil Sharma opposes inclusion of Article 370, autonomy references in Assembly resolution



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 25: Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Sunil Sharma on Friday said the BJP was ready to debate restoration of statehood but opposed the inclusion of references to Article 370 and the 2000 autonomy resolution in the latest resolution moved by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. Speaking

to reporters, Sharma questioned the government's decision to refer to earlier resolutions and sought clarification from the Congress on its position regarding the references. He said BJP legislators were prepared to participate in a discussion specifically on statehood but would oppose what he described as an attempt to bring the issues of Article 370 and autonomy into the House through the present resolution. Sharma also referred to Omar Abdullah's earlier tenure as a Union minister and questioned his present position on the autonomy resolution, while alleging that the statehood issue was being prolonged.

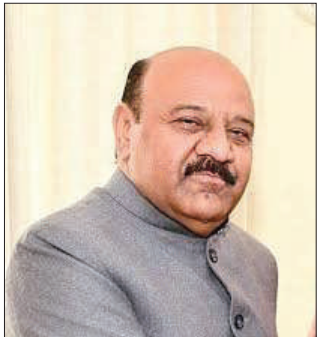
Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Sunil Sharma on Friday accused Chief Minister Omar Abdullah of using

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

Additional Assistance Will be Initiated as Required
Govt Steps up Relief and Restoration in Rajouri, Poonch; Seeks Central Team Assessment

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 25: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has intensified relief and restoration measures in rain- and landslide-hit Rajouri and Poonch districts and has sought an on-the-spot assessment by an Inter-Ministerial Central Team, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary informed the Legislative Assembly on Friday. Responding to a Calling Attention Motion, Choudhary said Rs 300 lakh had been released to Rajouri under SDRF and Rs 281 lakh under CMRF, while Poonch received Rs 400 lakh under SDRF and Rs 137 lakh under CMRF, besides an additional Rs 5 crore each for priority restoration and reconstruction. The government reported extensive damage to roads, bridges, power infrastructure,



drinking-water schemes, agricultural land and houses in both districts and said the matter had been taken up with the Ministry of Home Affairs for deputation of an Inter-Ministerial Central Team to assess damage caused by floods, flash floods, cloudbursts and landslides during the 2026 monsoon.

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“We Want a Full State Back” : Omar Abdullah

CM moves resolution seeking immediate restoration of full statehood to J&K

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 25: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday moved a resolution in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly calling upon the Government of India for the immediate and urgent restoration of full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, urging members across the political spectrum to support it unanimously and asserting that



statehood was an issue concerning the entire people of J&K. Referring to the earlier Assembly resolutions of June 26, 2000 and November 6, 2024, Omar said the latest resolution was in addition to, and did not replace, those resolutions. He said delimitation and elections had already been completed and the people had participated willingly in the electoral process, while the promised restoration of statehood remained pending. Rejecting any partial arrangement, the Chief Minister said, “We have been promised a full state and we want a full state back,” while also citing areas such as the Power Development Corporation and SKIMS where he said the elected government does not exercise the same authority available under full statehood.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today moved a resolution in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly calling upon the Government of India for the immediate and urgent restoration of full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

The resolution, moved during the ongoing Autumn Session of the Assembly, seeks to build upon the resolutions passed by the House on June 26, 2000 and November 6, 2024.

“In addition to the Resolutions passed by this House on 26th June 2000 and 6th November 2024, this House calls

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

We discussed J&K's heritage and conservation initiatives

Dr Karan Singh, Vikramaditya Singh call on PM Modi in New Delhi

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 25: Former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Dr Karan Singh, accompanied by his son and former MLC Vikramaditya Singh, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Friday and discussed current affairs as well as religious and heritage conservation initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir. Dr Karan Singh briefed the Prime Minister

about the completion of digitisation of rare manuscript archives held by the Dharmarth Trust in Jammu and shared details of his ongoing literary works, including commentaries on the Mandukya, Kena and Mundaka Upanishads. Vikramaditya Singh congratulated Modi on the successful hosting of the BRICS Summit and also apprised him



of restoration work undertaken by the Dharmarth Trust at key Hindu temples in Jammu and Kashmir, including temples in Pahalgam and Gulmarg.

Statesman, scholar and former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Dr Karan Singh, accompanied by his son and former MLC Vikramaditya Singh, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on

Friday.

During the meeting, discussions were held on current affairs as well as religious and heritage conservation initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir.

Dr Karan Singh briefed the Prime Minister on the completion of the digitisation of rare manuscript archives held by the Dharmarth Trust in Jammu, of which he is the custodian.

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

HT BOTTOM NEWS

“J&K has immense potential to generate carbon credits”

Govt explores green revenue streams as Chief Secretary seeks comprehensive carbon credit policy

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 25: Jammu and Kashmir is exploring the potential of its agriculture, hydropower, forestry, solar and other green assets to generate revenue through carbon credits, with Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo calling for a comprehensive policy, capacity building and a digital monitoring platform. Reviewing the proposed Carbon Credit Framework, Dulloo directed officials to prepare a detailed policy and Standard Operating Procedure and suggested collaboration with BISAG-N for an integrated digital monitoring system and carbon registry.



The framework envisages carbon markets, a Green Cess, convergence of existing schemes and a dedicated Green Fund, while officials proposed a revenue-sharing mechanism under which a share of carbon proceeds would go directly to primary growers or community project owners. The proposed roadmap also includes identification of priority pilot projects and integration of carbon screening

into programmes including CAMPA, MGNREGS and the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme.

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting to review the proposed Carbon Credit Framework for Jammu and Kashmir, aimed at unlocking the economic potential of the Union Territory's ecological assets and creating

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

“His Gentle Disposition Will Always be Remembered”

DIPR officials condole demise of driver Abdul Ahad Bhat

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 25: Director Information Shreya Singhal and officers and employees of the Department of Information and Public Relations have expressed grief over the demise of Abdul Ahad Bhat, driver of the Joint Director Information, Kashmir, who passed away on Thursday after a brief illness. In her condolence message, Singhal described the deceased as a kind, humble and warm-hearted person who was held in high regard by colleagues and others who knew him, saying his sincere service and helpful nature would be



remembered with respect and affection. She conveyed sympathies to the bereaved family and prayed for strength and fortitude to bear the irreparable loss, while officers and employees

>>> **MORE ON P 02**

Continue from Front Page.....

J&K High Court

Two persons travelling on the motorcycle sustained injuries.

One of the motorcycle occupants, who was driving the vehicle, suffered 50 percent permanent disability, while Aijaz Ahmad Najar, who was riding pillion, was assessed to have suffered 5 percent disability.

The Motor Accident Claims Tribunal had awarded Rs 5 lakh each to the two claimants towards non-pecuniary damages for pain, suffering and trauma, besides interest at the rate of 9.5 percent per annum.

The insurance company challenged the award insofar as it related to the Rs 5 lakh compensation granted to Najar and the rate of interest.

The High Court observed that perfect compensation was difficult to achieve but said the guiding consideration for a tribunal should be to restore an accident victim, as far as money can reasonably do so, to the position occupied before the accident.

The court said compensation must be determined in a fair and reasonable manner and should reflect the actual circumstances and consequences of the injuries suffered.

The High Court noted that Najar's assessed disability was 5 percent and that the evidence did not establish that the disability was permanent or that it adversely affected his livelihood.

The court also observed that the Tribunal had applied the same amount of Rs 5 lakh towards pain, suffering and loss of amenities for both claimants despite a substantial difference in the nature and extent of their disabilities.

The High Court consequently held that the compensation awarded to Najar was not justified in the circumstances of the case.

The court modified the award and reduced the non-pecuniary damages payable to Najar from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 50,000.

It also reduced the interest rate from 9.5 percent to 6 percent per annum, directing that the compensation be paid with interest from the date of filing of the claim petition until realization.

The judgment emphasized that compensation under the Motor Vehicles Act has to be "just and reasonable" and cannot be determined by applying an identical figure mechanically to claimants whose injuries and disabilities differ materially. [KNT]

J&K govt says

a committee headed by the Chief Secretary was examining the issue.

The committee was constituted in March 2025 to examine various aspects of the engagement and regularization of such workers across departments.

The government said the workers belonged to different categories and had been engaged at different points of time under varying terms and conditions.

It said the proposed policy would have to conform to statutory provisions, the prevailing legal position and the prescribed recruitment framework while taking into account the financial implications.

The committee is examining the matter with the objective of formulating a uniform framework that is legally enforceable and administratively implementable across departments, the government said.

It added that consultations with departments and examination of the issue from administrative, legal and financial perspectives were required before a final policy decision.

On the timeframe for submission of the committee's report and final policy decision, the government said it would not be appropriate to indicate a rigid deadline at this stage.

The government said the issue remained under active consideration and that a considered decision would be taken after completion of the examination and receipt of inputs from the concerned departments and authorities. [KNT]

J&K govt acknowledges

monitored and available human resources were being utilized optimally.

It said vacancies were being addressed through recruitment and other permissible arrangements, while staff under the National Health Mission was being deployed or engaged wherever permissible to supplement existing manpower.

The government also said healthcare services at SKIMS were functioning smoothly despite vacancies among doctors, nurses and allied staff.

It said vacancies in various medical and paramedical categories were proposed to be filled on priority, subject to the availability of selection panels and recommendations from competent recruiting agencies. [KNT]

Flash floods, cloudbursts

, 23,470 residential structures and 5,084 roads were damaged in Jammu division.

Udhampur recorded the highest number of damaged houses at 6,997, followed by Rajouri with 4,781 and Jammu with 2,718.

In Kashmir division, 946 residential structures and 289 roads were reported damaged, besides 513 water-supply schemes.

The disaster-related damage also affected agriculture. Around 99,300 hectares of crop area was affected in Jammu division and 7,021 hectares in Kashmir division.

Jammu district accounted for around 30,728 hectares of affected crop area, while Kulgam and Budgam recorded 3,472 hectares and 1,764 hectares respectively in Kashmir division.

The government also reported the loss of 5,244 livestock across the two divisions.

It said infrastructure damaged during 2025-

26 had been temporarily restored and permanent restoration was under way. Infrastructure affected during 2026-27 had been partially restored, with permanent restoration work continuing.

The government said no special financial package or separate relief package had been sanctioned for rehabilitation, adding that assistance admissible under SDRF norms was being provided to affected persons.

The Chief Minister's Relief Fund was also used for structural damage in affected areas, including assistance released to beneficiaries in Kishtwar, Poonch and Rajouri. [KNT]

Waste reportedly dumped

scientific processing and disposal of solid waste generated in Sonamarg, including waste from hotels, markets and government establishments.

According to reliable sources, the Sonamarg Development Authority collects a sanitation fee of Rs 160 per room every month from major hotels for collection of waste. Separate tenders are also floated for collection of waste generated in the Sonamarg area, with the SDA providing funds to the Roads and Buildings Department for the tendering process.

Sources told the news agency Kashmir News Trust that the collected waste is transported to the Sarbal facility, where it is supposed to undergo segregation and treatment through the machinery installed at the plant.

The SDA has also transferred funds to the Mechanical Development Department for operation of the facility. Sources said approximately Rs 65 lakh was provided for one year to outsource operation of the plant, which was subsequently outsourced.

However, instead of processing the collected waste through the plant's machinery, large pits are reportedly being dug at the site and the waste dumped into them, according to sources familiar with the matter.

The reported practice has raised questions over the utilization of funds spent on operation of the facility as well as its environmental impact, particularly given the location of the plant in the ecologically sensitive Sonamarg area.

The issue has also been subject to environmental scrutiny in the past. A Pollution Control Committee inspection conducted in May 2025 found the Sarbal facility operational but noted that it was not being operated regularly and required regular monitoring. The inspection recorded that the facility had an electro-magnetic disintegrator, an auto-composter and a segregator.

A report placed before the National Green Tribunal had earlier recorded concerns over solid waste management in the Sonamarg area, including unsegregated waste and untreated waste around the Sarbal facility. The facility is located close to the Sindh Nallah.

The latest tender records also show that the Public Works Department initiated a fresh process in August 2026 for operation and maintenance of the Sarbal Solid Waste Management Plant, indicating continued expenditure on operation of the facility.

Members of the public have urged the Sonamarg Development Authority and the Mechanical Department to ensure that the waste is processed and disposed of in accordance with applicable solid waste management and environmental requirements instead of being dumped untreated at the site. [KNT]

“More made

sectors such as electronics, automobiles, defence, pharmaceuticals and renewable energy, while integrating Indian industry more closely with global supply chains.

Policy measures, including production-linked incentive schemes for selected sectors, have also been introduced to encourage domestic production and attract investment. Modi's message placed the emphasis on three broad pillars of the initiative - manufacturing more within India, bringing in greater investment and expanding exports.

The anniversary comes as the government continues to focus on manufacturing-led growth and strengthening India's role in global production networks, with investment and export expansion remaining important elements of its economic agenda.

“We Want a

upon the Government of India for the immediate and urgent restoration of full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and resolves that this Resolution be forwarded to Government of India,” the resolution states.

Moving the resolution, the Chief Minister urged members across the political spectrum to support it unanimously, emphasising that statehood was not an issue belonging to one side of the House or another, but an issue concerning the entire people of Jammu and Kashmir.

“I would like to request the House to pass this Resolution, because without statehood, Jammu and Kashmir has suffered immensely. A promise was made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir,” the Chief Minister said.

Referring to the sequence of delimitation, elections and restoration of statehood, he said the first two steps had been completed and the people of Jammu and Kashmir had participated in the electoral process willingly.

“There was an election. People took part in the election. And they took part willingly,” he said, adding that people had hoped that the third step of restoration of statehood would follow the elections.

The Chief Minister said the Government of India had been reminded publicly, privately and at various forums that the commitment to restore

statehood remained to be fulfilled.

“Today, through this House, we want to remind the Government of India that something should be done about your promises,” he said.

Referring to the commitment made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Chief Minister said, “When the Prime Minister was giving his speech, he said that this is not an ordinary promise. This is the promise of Modi.”

Omar Abdullah also emphasised the need for unanimity on the issue, saying that statehood should not be viewed as belonging to either the Treasury or Opposition benches.

“Statehood is neither of this side nor that side. It is not only of this House. If there is statehood, then it is of the whole of Jammu and Kashmir,” he said.

Explaining the practical implications of the present constitutional and administrative arrangement, the Chief Minister cited the functioning of the Power Development Corporation and SKIMS as examples of areas where, according to him, the elected government does not exercise the same decision-making authority it would have under full statehood.

Referring to a discussion in the House on a hydroelectric project, he said that as Chief Minister and Power Minister, he did not have the Power Development Corporation under his control, despite the elected government being responsible for development-related matters.

He also referred to SKIMS, stating that while the elected government provides budgetary support, decisions relating to the premier health institution are not entirely within the purview of the elected government.

“There are many other instances like these, which I will present at the end of this discussion in front of the House,” he said.

The Chief Minister clarified that the resolution had been carefully worded so that it would not replace or undermine earlier resolutions passed by the Assembly.

“We discussed

He also shared details of his latest ongoing literary works, including commentaries on the Mandukya, Kena and Mundaka Upanishads, a foreword to the Ramcharitmanas, and a general introduction to the nine texts of Tantra under the Jammu Series of Texts and Studies.

Vikramaditya Singh congratulated the Prime Minister on the successful hosting of the BRICS Summit in New Delhi, which brought together world leaders on a single platform. He described the occasion as a proud moment for the nation and all Indians.

He also apprised Modi of the restoration of key Hindu temples across Jammu and Kashmir, including temples in Pahalgam and Gulmarg, undertaken by the Dharmarth Trust. (KNS)

“Additional Assistance

The Jammu and Kashmir government has intensified relief and restoration measures in rain- and landslide-hit Rajouri and Poonch districts and sought an on-the-spot assessment by an Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT). Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary said in the Legislative Assembly on Friday.

Choudhary was responding to a Calling Attention Motion moved by MLA Muzaffar Iqbal Khan over extensive damage caused by heavy rains, flash floods and landslides in Thanamandi constituency and various parts of Poonch.

The Deputy Chief Minister was replying on behalf of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the portfolio of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction.

He said Rs 300 lakh had been released to Rajouri under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and Rs 281 lakh under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF). For Poonch, Rs 400 lakh had been released under SDRF and Rs 137 lakh under CMRF.

In Thanamandi, Rs 75.52 lakh had been disbursed to 149 affected families under SDRF norms, while Rs 120.50 lakh had been provided to 138 families under CMRF, he said.

In Poonch, Rs 216.379 lakh had been disbursed to affected families under SDRF, the minister informed the House.

He said an additional Rs 5 crore each had been provided to Rajouri and Poonch under the UT Capex Budget for priority restoration and reconstruction of damaged infrastructure. The funds are being utilised through the concerned executing agencies, he added.

According to the government, Thanamandi constituency reported damage to 182 roads, 25 HT poles/33 KV line infrastructure, 70 transformers, 72 drinking-water schemes, 51.98 hectares of agricultural land, 1.90 hectares of horticulture land and 149 houses.

In Poonch, 388 roads, 55 bridges, 29 power stations/transformers, 72 drinking-water schemes, 217.7 hectares of agricultural land and 379 houses were affected.

The final damage assessment for infrastructure restoration in Thanamandi stands at Rs 13,025.94 lakh for roads and bridges, Rs 1,360.43 lakh for power stations and transformers, Rs 4,149 lakh for water supply schemes and Rs 6,024 lakh for khuls.

For Rajouri district, the final assessment totals Rs 46,022.57 lakh, including Rs 18,517.50 lakh for roads and bridges, Rs 3,144.32 lakh for power infrastructure and Rs 24,360.75 lakh for water supply schemes.

For Poonch, the final assessment amounts to Rs 18,185.95 lakh, comprising Rs 18,185.95 lakh for roads and bridges, Rs 233.75 lakh for power infrastructure and Rs 2,315.07 lakh for water supply schemes and Rs 186.97 lakh for khuls.

On the demand for a special inter-departmental mechanism, the government said an existing institutional mechanism involving concerned line departments and district administrations was already in place for coordinated assessment, restoration and rehabilitation of affected infrastructure and essential services.

The situation is being closely monitored and additional assistance will be initiated as required, it said.

The government also informed the House that the matter had been taken up with the Ministry of Home Affairs, seeking deputation of an Inter-Ministerial Central Team for an on-the-spot assessment of the situation arising from flash floods, floods, cloudbursts and landslides during the 2026 monsoon in Jammu and Kashmir.

It said all reported cases of damage were being examined and verified by designated committees as per the prescribed procedure to ensure that genuine and eligible cases were covered and relief reached affected persons in a timely and transparent manner. (KNS)

“We are ready

references to Article 370, autonomy and earlier resolutions in the statehood resolution to recreate political sentiments among Kashmiris and regain the government's strength amid what he described as its failures on governance.

Speaking to reporters, Sharma said the BJP rejected the move in its present form, alleging that the references had been deliberately brought into a resolution that was otherwise meant to seek restoration of statehood.

“Today, when the government has lost its strength in Jammu and Kashmir on the issue of governance, to restore its strength again, you have brought such words with which this so-called sympathy, so-called sentiments, so-called emotions, should be re-created in Kashmiris,” Sharma said.

He said the BJP would not accept what he described as an attempt to bring the issues of autonomy and Article 370 into the House under the cover of the statehood resolution.

“At any cost, the so-called autonomy, the so-called resolution of 370, will not be allowed to be admitted here. There will be no debate on this. If you want to discuss statehood, we challenge you,” he said.

Sharma said every BJP MLA was ready to debate the restoration of statehood but alleged that the government was linking it with earlier resolutions to prolong the issue.

The LoP also questioned the Congress over its position on the resolution, asking the party leadership to clarify whether it supported the references to Article 370 and autonomy or stood with the government.

“Congress should clear its position. From Rahul Gandhi to the state chief of Congress, they should clear their position. Are they with this resolution, the position of pre-53? Are they with 370, or are they with the government?” Sharma said.

“His Gentle

of the department also expressed solidarity with the family.

Director Information, Shreya Singhal has expressed deep shock and profound grief over the demise of Abdul Ahad Bhat, Driver of Joint Director Information (JDI) Kashmir, who passed away yesterday after a brief illness.

In her condolence message, the Director Information conveyed heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family and described the deceased as a kind, humble and warm-hearted person who was held in high regard by his colleagues and all those who had the opportunity to know him.

The Director Information said that the demise of Abdul Ahad Bhat is an irreparable loss to his family as well as to the department, where he rendered his duties with sincerity and dedication. She added that his gentle disposition, helpful nature and cordial relations with colleagues will be remembered with respect and affection.

Meanwhile, the officers and employees of DIPR also expressed solidarity with the bereaved family during this difficult hour and prayed for strength and fortitude for them to bear the irreparable loss.

“J&K has immense

sustainable revenue streams through carbon markets and green financing.

The meeting besides ACS, Finance was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology; MD, JKPDC; Commissioner, JMC/SMC; DG, Resources; DG, A&T; DG, Budget; CEO, CITaG concerned officers and technical experts from CITaG.

The framework, presented by the Centre for Innovation and Transformation in Governance (CITaG) in collaboration with the Finance Department, envisages a comprehensive strategy built around four key pillars constituting Carbon Markets, Green Cess, Convergence and a dedicated Green Fund.

Appreciating the preliminary work undertaken by CITaG, the Chief Secretary called for developing a comprehensive policy document supported by a well-defined Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to ensure seamless implementation across the Union Territory.

He directed CITaG to organise a specialised capacity-building workshop for all concerned departments to familiarise officers with carbon accounting, data standards and their respective implementation responsibilities.

Emphasising technology-driven monitoring and transparency, the Chief Secretary suggested exploring collaboration with the Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N) for developing an integrated digital monitoring platform and carbon registry.

During the deliberations, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar, highlighted the immense potential of J&K's agriculture, hydropower and forestry sectors in generating carbon credits and attracting green investments.

He asked CITaG to prioritise these sectors while also incorporating emerging opportunities arising from rooftop solar installations under PM Surya Ghar Yojana and the growing adoption of electric vehicles across the Union Territory.

The ACS Finance also advocated the early establishment of a dedicated Green Fund to pool carbon proceeds and green revenues, safeguard their utilisation and leverage these resources for financing future climate-resilient development initiatives.

Earlier, the presentation by CITaG highlighted the considerable untapped potential of J&K's ecological assets, observing that the Union Territory has yet to generate revenue from global carbon markets despite substantial investments in environmentally sustainable activities.

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Div Com directs for resolution of issues for timely rollout of healthcare services at AIIMS Awantipora

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, September 25: To ensure the timely rollout of healthcare services at AIIMS Awantipora from October 31, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Friday chaired a meeting to review the status of pending issues and expedite their resolution. The meeting took up several critical matters concerning the operational readiness of the institution, including electricity supply for the running of water supply system, commissioning of the dedicated power sub-station, land-related issues and the fire safety measures. On the occasion, the Divisional Commissioner directed the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department and Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDC) to resolve the pending inter-departmental issues by Monday and ensure electricity supply for the



water supply system.

Regarding the commissioning of the power station, the Div Com directed KPDC to issue the requisite No Objection Certificate (NOC) to the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) at the earliest so that the uninterrupted electricity shall be provided to the institute.

He further directed the Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, to provide necessary assistance and guidance to CPWD engineers for the expeditious resolution of land-related issues pertaining to the facility.

The Divisional Commissioner also directed DC Pulwama to make adequate arrangements for transportation facility of the general public up to the entrance of AIIMS Awantipora, ensuring convenient access to the hospital. Regarding issuance of NOC for fire safety, the Div Com directed concerned officers to conduct joint inspection of the

facility and issue the certification by 5th October.

The meeting was attended by the Executive Director, AIIMS Awantipora; SSP Traffic; and concerned officers and engineers from PHE, KPDC and different wings of CPWD. He further directed the Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, to provide necessary assistance and guidance to CPWD engineers for the expeditious resolution of land-related issues pertaining to the facility. The Divisional Commissioner also directed DC Pulwama to make adequate arrangements for transportation facility of the general public up to the entrance of AIIMS Awantipora, ensuring convenient access to the hospital.

Regarding issuance of NOC for fire safety, the Div Com directed concerned officers to conduct joint inspection of the facility and issue the certification by 5th October.

Govt to extend financial assistance to eligible hailstorm affected farmers

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, September 25: The government will extend financial assistance to all eligible farmers affected by the hailstorm that occurred during the intervening night of September 18 and 19, 2026 in various areas of Srigufwara and Bijbehara.

This was stated by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary who was replying, on behalf of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, to a Calling Attention Motion moved by Legislator Dr. Ashir Ahmad Shah Veeri.

The Dy CM stated that the government has put in place a mechanism to assess the crop damage and extend financial assistance to the eligible affected farmers under the applicable relief and crop insurance mechanisms.

"The farmers enrolled under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) will receive financial settlement directly from the designated insurance companies after proper verification. Besides, the farmers who have not registered themselves under PMFBY may be compensated under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)," he stated.

Director Information, DIPR employees condole demise of senior Photojournalist Waseem Andrabi's father

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, September 25: Director Information, Shreya Singhal has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of the father of senior photojournalist of Hindustan Times, Waseem Andrabi, who passed away today.

In her condolence message, the Director Information expressed solidarity with Waseem Andrabi and his bereaved family at this difficult hour, conveying heartfelt sympathies over the irreparable loss. She prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and also prayed for the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss. Meanwhile, the employees of Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) also expressed deep grief over the demise of the father of senior Hindustan Times photojournalist, Waseem Andrabi.

The employees also prayed for strength, patience and courage to the bereaved family to bear this profound loss with fortitude.

Dr Karan Singh, Vikramaditya Singh call on PM Modi

■ **HT News Network**

New Delhi, Sep 25 (KNS): Statesman, scholar and former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Dr Karan Singh, accompanied by his son and former MLC Vikramaditya Singh, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Friday.

During the meeting, discussions were held on current affairs as well as religious and heritage conservation initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir. Dr Karan Singh briefed the Prime Minister on the completion of the digitisation of rare manuscript archives held by the Dharmarth Trust in Jammu, of which he is the custodian. He also shared details of his latest ongoing literary works, including commentaries on the Mandukya, Kena and Mundaka Upanishads, a foreword to the Ramcharitmanas, and a general introduction to the nine texts of Tantra under the Jammu Series of Texts and Studies.

DC Ganderbal reviews implementation of Green India Mission

■ **HT News Network**

Ganderbal, September 25: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today chaired a meeting of the District Steering Committee for Green India Mission (2026-2031) at the VC Room, DC Office Ganderbal, to review the proposed activities under the Mission in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the proposed interventions under the Green India Mission and emphasised the need for effective convergence among the concerned departments for timely implementation of afforestation, nursery development, medicinal plant cultivation and livelihood oriented activities.

The DC directed the concerned departments to ensure proper planning, plantation and post-plantation



care for achieving sustainable green cover in the identified areas. He further directed the Forest Department to focus on the development and strengthening of nurseries in the district and called for their effective utilisation for raising quality planting material to support afforestation and other plantation activities in the district.

The DC also stressed upon the concerned departments to promote the cultivation and development of medicinal plants and explore suitable interventions for encouraging

medicinal plant-based activities in the district. The DC directed the concerned department to work towards establishment and strengthening of a training centre for tribal and artisan communities, with focus on skill development and livelihood opportunities related to forest-based activities, including forest produce. He emphasised that the interventions under the Green India Mission should not remain confined to plantation activities but should also contribute towards livelihood generation, capacity building and sustainable utilisation.

DC Budgam chairs MY Bharat DAC Meeting, reviews Youth Engagement initiatives

■ **HT News Network**

Budgam, September 25: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today chaired the second meeting of the District Advisory Committee (DAC) of MY Bharat to review progress on various youth-centric initiatives and programmes. The Committee reviewed the proceedings and action points of the first DAC meeting, followed by discussions on the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue (VBLYD) Quiz, Mission Yuva, TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan and Experiential Learning Programme (ELP). The Deputy Commissioner directed concerned officers to undertake coordinated efforts to maximise participation of students and youth in VBLYD and other MY Bharat activities. He stressed the need for greater



convergence among departments to provide young people opportunities in leadership, cultural, social, developmental and youth empowering initiatives.

The DC also directed departments to ensure nomination of Youth Chapters and Campus Ambassadors in schools, colleges and other educational institutions, besides registering more youth volunteers and involving them in government programmes.

Emphasising the role of youth in community development, the Deputy Commissioner called for effective implementation of youth-focused initiatives at the grassroots level and coordinated follow-up by all concerned departments.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Vivek Agarwal, ADC Mehraj-ud-Din Shah, Chief Planning Officer, General Manager DIC.

DC Bandipora reviews preparations for 3rd Edition of "BSF Wular Ultra Run 2026"

■ **HT News Network**

Bandipora, September 25: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today chaired a meeting at the Mini Secretariat to review preparations for the 3rd Edition of the "BSF Wular Ultra Run 2026", scheduled to be held on October 4, 2026, under the theme "Save Wular, Run With Bordermen."

The event is being organised by BSF under the aegis of Frontier HQ BSF Kashmir, with the objective of promoting fitness, community engagement and tourism in the Kashmir Valley.

The run will feature four categories of 50 km, 25 km, 10.5 km and 5 km, with designated start and finish points and routes covering various stretches around Bandipora and Wular Vantage Park.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on route management, security, traffic regulation, medical preparedness, hydration, sanitation, accommodation, fire and emergency preparedness, cultural programmes, cleanliness, beautification and publicity arrangements.



The DC directed all concerned departments to ensure close coordination with BSF and other stakeholders for timely completion of all arrangements. She directed the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) to convene a meeting with concerned medical staff, sensitise them regarding their roles and ensure adequate preparedness of hospitals and emergency

medical services.

The DC stressed the need for adequate medical points, hydration points and portable toilets along the routes. The concerned agencies were directed to ensure effective Fire and Emergency preparedness, including availability of necessary equipment and personnel at critical locations.

The DC directed the District Information Officer (DIO) to ensure extensive publicity and dissemination of the event, including publication of the traffic advisory through Print and Electronic Media and other appropriate platforms, besides creating awareness among the public regarding traffic diversions and event-related arrangements.

Emphasis was also laid on proper accommodation and transportation facilities for participants, cleanliness and sanitation along the routes and venue, beautification of the venue, and organising cultural programmes to enhance the overall experience of participants and visitors.

The Deputy Commissioner called upon all stakeholders to maintain close coordination and ensure that all arrangements are put in place well in advance for the safe, smooth and successful conduct of the 3rd Edition of the BSF Wular Ultra Run 2026.

The meeting was attended by senior officers of BSF, Police, CRPF, Army, Civil Administration and other concerned departments.

Sakeena Itoo distributes appointment orders to 27 AYUSH Medical Officers at Srinagar

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, September 25: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, today distributed appointment orders among 27 newly appointed AYUSH Medical Officers, marking their formal induction into government healthcare services in Jammu and Kashmir.

Congratulating the newly appointed Medical Officers, the Minister said that joining the public healthcare system was not merely a professional milestone but also an opportunity to serve people, particularly those living in rural, remote and underserved areas.

She emphasised that the appointment orders carried with them a responsibility towards the people and called upon the appointees to discharge their duties with sincerity, professionalism, empathy and a strong sense of public service.

"Healthcare is ultimately about serving people with dignity and compassion. Every patient who approaches a healthcare institution places trust in the system and in the medical professional attending to



them," the Minister said, urging the new AYUSH Medical Officers to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct.

Underscoring the importance of health department for public welfare, the Minister said that doctor is a very noble profession and you should understand the importance of health department.

The Minister underscored the significance of strengthening healthcare delivery mechanisms at the grassroots level and called upon the newly appointed officers to work with utmost dedication and commitment towards addressing the healthcare requirements of the people, particularly in rural, remote and far-flung areas. She stressed that effective delivery of public health services requires accessibility, accountability and a



DC Anantnag reviews ATR on stray dog issue, calls for effective implementation of Supreme Court directions

Emphasizes accelerated focus on dog sterilisation, vaccinations

■ **HT News Network**

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 25: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, today chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC) to review the Action Taken Report (ATR) and the measures being undertaken by various departments for prevention of dog bites, stray dog management, sterilization and vaccination.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, ARTO, Chief Education Officer, District Informatics Officer, NIC, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council Anantnag, Executive Officers of Municipal Committees, representatives from various departments and other concerned officials.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the Action Taken Report of the concerned departments and took stock of the measures being implemented for prevention of dog bites, stray dog management, sterilization and vaccination. He directed all concerned officers to ensure effective and time-bound implementation of the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and subsequent GAD instructions. He stressed that all departments must accord due



priority to the issue and ensure regular monitoring and inspection of vulnerable and important locations.

Dr. Bilal instructed the departments to prepare a comprehensive inventory of their infrastructure, including government buildings, hospitals, schools,

colleges and other public institutions, and ensure that such premises are adequately secured through proper fencing, boundary walls and gates. He further directed that gaps identified during inspections be incorporated in the relevant departmental plans for

necessary action.

The Deputy Commissioner further called for identification of suitable land and buildings at feasible locations for establishment of animal shelters/kennels in the district. He stressed the need for adequate infrastructure for housing and managing dogs undergoing sterilization and other related activities.

Reviewing the availability of Anti-Rabies Vaccines (ARV), the DC directed the health authorities to maintain adequate and uninterrupted stocks of ARV at healthcare institutions across the district so that dog-bite victims receive timely treatment.

The DC directed the Chief Animal Husbandry Officer to undertake the Animal Birth Control/sterilization programme on a regular basis and constitute dedicated veterinary teams for the purpose. He stressed that adequate veterinary manpower, equipment and teams should be deployed to ensure accelerated focus on sterilization and stray dog management in accordance with the SOPs and approved procedures.

The DC also called for systematic updating of data relating to dog-bite cases, sterilization, vaccination, dog-catching teams, availability of kennels and shelters, veterinary manpower, inspections and field visits.

Shilpa Thakur, First Female Photojournalist from Jammu and Kashmir, Felicitated at JIFF Media Conclave

■ **HT News Network**

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 25: Shilpa Thakur, Jammu and Kashmir's first female photojournalist, The Mandate was among the media personalities felicitated at the Media Conclave & Felicitation Ceremony organised ahead of the 5th Jammu International Film Festival (JIFF) at the Writers Club, Abhinav Theatre, Jammu.

The event brought together members of the media fraternity, filmmakers, artists and cultural personalities to celebrate the contribution of media professionals in promoting journalism, cinema, art, culture and regional talent.

Shilpa Thakur, an award-winning journalist and photojournalist from Jammu, has contributed to journalism and visual storytelling for several years, covering stories and events from Jammu and Kashmir through photography, reporting and digital media. Her work has helped bring diverse stories and visual narratives from the region to wider audiences.

The felicitation recognised her contribution to the media fraternity and her journey as a woman working in the field of photojournalism and visual journalism from Jammu and Kashmir.

Neha Jalali, Director, Press Information Bureau (PIB), was the Chief Guest at the event, while Dr. Arvind Karwani, Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants), J&K, attended as the Guest of Honour.

Festival Director Rakesh Roshan Bhat highlighted the journey of JIFF and its vision of establishing Jammu as a platform for global



cinema, filmmakers and creative exchange.

Festival Advisor Dr. Amit Wanchoo emphasised the important role played by the media in promoting art, culture and regional talent and in connecting local creative voices with wider audiences.

The 5th Jammu International Film Festival is set to showcase more than 200 films from 35 countries, offering audiences a diverse cinematic experience featuring international, national and regional films.

The festival will bring together filmmakers, artists, cinema enthusiasts and cultural practitioners, providing a platform for creative exchange and celebrating the power of storytelling.

The Media Conclave and Felicitation Ceremony marked a significant prelude to the 5th JIFF, recognising the contribution of the media fraternity while highlighting Jammu's growing role as a destination for cinema, culture and creative expression.

District Admin Bandipora to hold Awareness Programmes on Drowning Prevention along Nallah Madhumati

■ **HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 25: The District Administration Bandipora is set to conduct an extensive awareness campaign in vulnerable areas along Nallah Madhumati to sensitize the local population about the risk of drowning incidents and necessary precautions to be taken around the Nallah.

The campaign shall focus on educating residents, particularly children and youth, about discouraging swimming or bathing in the Nallah and venturing out near the dangerous stretches of the Nallah.

The awareness programmes shall include school students, teachers, religious leaders, local Masjid Committees, AWWs, ASHAs, inhabitants of the respective areas and other interested persons.

As per the schedule, the awareness programme will be held at Middle School Athwatoo on October 3 at 11:00 AM; High School Bonakoot on October 6 at 11:00 AM; near Jamia Masjid Tangath on October 9 at 1:00 PM; Panchayat Ghar Guzerbal on October 13 at 11:00 AM; and near Jamia Masjid Watrina on October 16 at 1:00 PM.

The programme at Sonerwani will be held at Middle School Sonerwani on October 19 at 11:00 AM, while Pazalpura will host the programme at Higher Secondary School Mantrigram on October 23 at 11:00 AM. At Laharwalpora, the programme will be held near Jamia Masjid Laharwalpora on October 27 at 1:00 PM, followed by Nathpora near Jamia Masjid Nathpora on October 30 at 1:00 PM.

The programme at Dachigam will be held at Middle School Dachigam on November 3 at 11:00 AM, while the final programme at Kaloosa/Muslimabad will be held at N M Higher Secondary School Kaloosa on November 6 at 11:00 AM, as per the issued schedule. The awareness programmes will be attended by officials/representatives from Revenue, Flood & Emergency Services, SDRF, Police, Rural Development Department, ICDS, Health and District Control Room. The programme at Dachigam will be held at Middle School Dachigam on November 3 at 11:00 AM, while the final programme at Kaloosa/Muslimabad will be held at N M Higher Secondary School Kaloosa on November 6 at 11:00 AM, as per the issued schedule. The awareness programmes will be attended by officials/representatives from Revenue, Flood & Emergency Services, SDRF, Police, Rural Development Department, ICDS, Health and District Control Room.

Before crying 'Vote Chori', Congress must answer Sonia voter-list questions: Bali Bhagat

“Stop undermining constitutional institutions”: Bali Bhagat Slams Rahul Gandhi, Congress

■ **HT News Network**

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 25: Senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader and former minister Bali Bhagat today launched a sharp attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and the Congress leadership over their continuing campaign against the Election Commission and Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

Bhagat said the Congress cannot repeatedly accuse constitutional institutions of “vote theft” while refusing to address questions being raised over electoral rolls and its own political record.

“Rahul Gandhi and his entire political gang have turned ‘Vote Chori’ into a political slogan. But before preaching democracy to the country, they must answer questions from their own backyard. Democracy cannot run on allegations, theatrics and political narratives—it requires facts, evidence and accountability,” Bhagat said.

Taking direct aim at Rahul Gandhi, Bhagat said that



repeatedly invoking the Constitution does not give anyone the right to cast unsubstantiated aspersions on constitutional institutions.

“Rahul Gandhi keeps the Constitution in his hand and lectures the country about democracy. But the Constitution is not a political prop. If you invoke the Constitution, you must also respect the institutions created under it. You cannot question every constitutional institution simply because its functioning does not fit your political narrative,” he said. Bhagat also referred to the renewed controversy surrounding Sonia Gandhi's reported presence in the 1980

electoral roll, before she acquired Indian citizenship in 1983. A Delhi court recently set aside an earlier magistrate order that had rejected a request for an inquiry and sent the matter back for fresh consideration. The next hearing is scheduled for September 29. The court has not, however, established that Sonia Gandhi committed voter fraud or forgery.

“The Congress is demanding answers from the Election Commission. The country is now asking Congress to answer questions concerning its own leadership. Let the competent legal authorities examine the documents and establish the facts. But Congress cannot demand scrutiny of everyone else while objecting when questions are raised about its own side,” Bhagat said.

He added that the timing of the renewed legal scrutiny has given fresh political ammunition to the BJP as the confrontation over electoral rolls.

DLSA Kulgam Organises Sensitisation Programme for Executive Magistrates

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 25: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Kulgam, today organised a sensitisation programme for Executive Magistrates on legal and procedural aspects concerning threats to public peace arising from property disputes and matters related to the determination of unnatural deaths.

The programme was held at the Conference Hall of the Mini Secretariat, Kulgam, in pursuance of the directions of Mr. Aijaz Ahmed Khan, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority and Principal District & Sessions Judge, Kulgam.

The programme was aimed at enhancing the understanding of Executive Magistrates, including Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars,



regarding the legal and procedural aspects involved in maintaining public peace in cases arising from property disputes and dealing with matters concerning unnatural deaths.

Mr. Altaf Hussain Khan, Chief Judicial Magistrate, Kulgam; Mr. Mir Sayeem Qayoom, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Kulgam; and Mr. Muzamil

Ahmad, Additional Public Prosecutor, FTC/NIA, Kulgam, deliberated on various aspects of the topic and apprised the participants about the relevant legal and procedural provisions.

The speakers also highlighted the importance of following due legal process while dealing with sensitive matters involving property disputes and unnatural deaths,

Yash Parimoo Pays Tribute to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Ji on His Birth Anniversary

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar: Yash Parimoo, District President Youth BJP Srinagar, paid heartfelt tributes to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Ji on his birth anniversary and remembered his contribution to nation-building, organisational work and

public service. The programme was attended by Shri Ashok Koul, General Secretary (Organisation), BJP J&K; Dr. Shahnaz Ganai, Vice President, BJP J&K; Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, Chairperson, J&K Waqf Board; Shri Altaf Thakur, BJP Spokesperson; Shri Bilal Parry Ji All cell Co Convenor Shri Majid Khan, State General Secretary, BJYM; Er. Aijaz Hussain; Shri Manzoor

Bhat; Shri Sahil Bashir; and other Morcha office-bearers and senior party workers. Yash Parimoo said that Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Ji's philosophy of Integral Humanism and Antyodaya continues to be remembered in the context of service to society and the upliftment of the last person. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya was born on 25 September 1916

and served as a prominent leader of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

The leaders paid floral tributes and recalled his dedication to organisational work, social service and nation-building. The programme concluded with a message encouraging the youth and party workers to remain committed to seva, discipline and public service.

Deendayal Upadhyaya's vision strengthens BJP's commitment to last person in society: Sat Sharma

BJP remembers Deendayal Upadhyaya on 110th birth anniversary

■ **HT News Network**

Jammu/Srinagar, 25 September 2026:

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, observed the 110th birth anniversary of its ideologue and visionary leader, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Ji, with programmes at the party headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, and at J-53, Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar, besides tributes being paid at various organizational levels across the Union Territory.

At the BJP headquarters in Jammu, J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma (CA), accompanied by Vice-President Ashwani Sharma and Rekha Mahajan, General Secretaries Sanjita Dogra, Baldev

Singh Billawaria and Gopal Mahajan, along with Pawan Sharma, Tilak Raj Gupta, Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Ajay Vaid, Dharminder Kumar, Parduman Singh, Sanjay Kumar Baru and other senior leaders, paid floral tributes to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Ji.

Sat Sharma, while paying tributes, said that Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, born on September 25, 1916, and a prominent leader of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, was a profound philosopher, dedicated organizer and guiding light whose thoughts continue to provide ideological and moral direction to the BJP. He said his philosophy of Integral Humanism and Antyodaya placed the welfare and dignity of the last person in society at the center of national development.



Sat Sharma said that Pandit Ji's vision finds reflection in welfare-oriented governance focused on

empowering people socially and economically. He added that while individuals do not live forever, great

personalities such as Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya continue to live through their ideals and inspire generations.

In Srinagar, BJP J&K General Secretary (Organisation) Ashok Koul paid floral tributes to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Ji. J&K Waqf Board Chairperson Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, BJP Vice-President Dr. Shahnaz Ganai, Secretary Arif Raja and other senior leaders were present.

Ashok Koul recalled Pandit Ji's life of simplicity, dedication and service, saying that despite facing hardships from an early age, he remained steadfast in his mission of serving the nation and society. He said Pandit Ji worked to strengthen social unity, patriotism and equality, and asked party workers to spread awareness about his nationalist thought and pro-people principles.

Koul said that Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's life remains an enduring

source of inspiration for every BJP worker and called upon them to carry forward his commitment to service, social harmony and national reconstruction. At the BJP headquarters in Jammu, J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma (CA), accompanied by Vice-President Ashwani Sharma and Rekha Mahajan, General Secretaries Sanjita Dogra, Baldev Singh Billawaria and Gopal Mahajan, along with Pawan Sharma, Tilak Raj Gupta, Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Ajay Vaid, Dharminder Kumar, Parduman Singh, Sanjay Kumar Baru and other senior leaders, paid floral tributes to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Ji. Sat Sharma, while paying tributes, said that Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, born on September 25, 1916,





HT EDITORIAL

Early Snowfall in Kashmir : A Wake-up Call We Must Not Ignore

September snowfall in Kashmir is more than a striking spectacle; it is a reminder that the weather patterns on which the Valley's agriculture, tourism and daily life depend may be becoming increasingly unpredictable.

The first snowfall of the season in the higher reaches of Kashmir on September 5, and then again on 23rd of September, including Gulmarg, Sonamarg and Gumri, came unusually early. While one isolated snowfall cannot be treated as definitive evidence of climate change, its timing deserves attention, particularly when viewed against a broader pattern of unseasonal rain, sudden temperature fluctuations, hailstorms and changing precipitation patterns witnessed in recent years.

For generations, Kashmiris have understood the seasons through a relatively familiar rhythm. Autumn would gradually give way to winter, and snowfall would normally arrive after the intervening weeks of falling temperatures. An early September snowfall therefore naturally raises questions about whether that rhythm is becoming less predictable.

There is no need for alarmism. Weather has always varied, and unusual events can occur naturally. The real concern lies not in one snowfall but in the accumulation of irregular weather events over time. Such changes can have serious implications for agriculture, horticulture, water resources, tourism, roads, power infrastructure and disaster management.

For farmers and horticulturists, timely and accurate weather forecasts can make the difference between protecting a crop and suffering avoidable losses. The administration must therefore ensure that weather advisories reach farmers promptly, particularly during periods when sudden rain, hail, frost or snowfall can affect standing crops and orchards.

The tourism sector, too, needs greater preparedness. Kashmir's tourism economy is closely linked to its seasons, and unpredictable weather can create both opportunities and disruptions. Roads, power supplies, communication networks and tourist infrastructure in higher reaches must be capable of responding quickly to sudden weather changes.

Perhaps most importantly, unusual weather events should become an opportunity for greater scientific observation rather than speculation. The Meteorological Department, universities and research institutions should maintain comprehensive, long-term records of temperature, precipitation, snowfall and other climatic indicators. Only sustained scientific observation can establish whether individual anomalies are part of natural variability or evidence of a deeper and lasting shift.

Kashmir's ecological system is particularly sensitive. Its forests, glaciers, rivers, springs, agriculture and tourism are all interconnected, while millions of people depend directly or indirectly on these natural resources. Environmental protection, therefore, cannot remain merely a slogan. Responsible development, protection of water sources, preservation of forests and wetlands, and greater public awareness must form part of a long-term response to changing environmental conditions. The sensible approach is neither to dismiss every unusual weather event nor to attribute every anomaly automatically to climate change. What is required is preparedness based on evidence, better forecasting, stronger infrastructure and continuous scientific monitoring. The snow that arrived in Kashmir unusually early may disappear within days. But the question it has raised deserves to remain on the public agenda: if our weather patterns are changing, are we prepared for the consequences?



Sahil Manzoor

Kashmir Valley is widely blessed with a gallery of natural wonders carpet like meadows, lofty mountains, mesmerizing waterfalls, clear and incredible skies, green vegetation, and lush, dense forests. Kashmir has attracted millions of nature lovers and tourists from across the world.

Autumn is the season of harvesting crops in Kashmir, and it calls tourists from all corners of the world. During this season, the Chinar tree remains one of the most attractive sights for visitors.

Kashmir Valley experiences four distinct seasons. Spring generally begins around 21 March and continues until 21 June. Summer follows from 22 June to 21 September, while autumn extends from approximately 22 September to 21 December. Winter then arrives and continues until around 21 March. Each season has its own beauty, importance, and economic significance.

Winter is particularly associated with Chillai-Kalan, the harshest 40-day period of winter. It is traditionally described as a time when the cold becomes severe and water can freeze. The changing seasons in Kashmir are closely connected with weather conditions as well as the cultivation and harvesting of different crops.

Today, we are experiencing the charming beauty of autumn. Farmers are preparing to harvest different crops, including maize and cereals, while apple growers are busy plucking

and packing their produce.

Kashmiri apples are famous around the world for their distinctive taste and quality. Apple harvesting begins with the arrival of autumn. During this season, households across Kashmir are often busy storing apples, walnuts, corn, cereals, and other essential supplies for the coming winter.

Autumn is commonly called Harud in Kashmiri and Mausam-e-Khizaan in Urdu. It is a pleasant, beautiful, and mesmerizing season

becomes gentler, and the intensity of sunlight decreases. People begin to feel the cold inside their homes, while elderly people often enjoy sitting in the warm afternoon sunshine. Throughout the countryside, especially in villages, farmers remain busy with harvesting and preparation for winter.

For farmers, autumn is almost like a festival season. In many villages, people avoid weddings and other major functions during the busiest part of the harvest. Such celebrations are often



in the Kashmir Valley. Harud is the time when leaves begin changing colour, transforming the landscape into a spectacular natural painting.

Autumn is also the season when people begin preparing for winter. Families start storing rice, fodder, firewood, and other necessities. The relatively dry weather provides farmers with an opportunity to harvest and store their crops. Harud therefore has immense importance for the people of Kashmir, particularly because winter is approaching.

With the arrival of autumn, it seems as if the sun has changed its direction. Its heat

preferred toward the end of October or at the beginning of November, after much of the agricultural work has been completed.

The Chinar tree, known as Bouen in Kashmiri, holds a special place in the cultural and natural heritage of Kashmir. During autumn, its broad leaves gradually turn golden, orange, and red, creating some of the most beautiful scenes in the valley.

During this season, tourists from different parts of the world visit Kashmir to witness the magnificent colours of autumn and capture beautiful memories beneath the Chinar trees.

Chinar gardens and other scenic locations become popular places for photography, attracting both tourists and locals.

Almighty has blessed Kashmir Valley with extraordinary natural beauty. This makes me wonder why many of our young people still struggle to find meaningful employment opportunities. Why are some of our youth experiencing deep anxiety and becoming involved with drugs? Every young person should be encouraged to identify his or her abilities, pursue suitable skills, and give shape to their dreams.

The tourism sector has immense potential to create opportunities for unemployed youth. New tourist destinations are emerging, and these places should receive proper attention and development. Local communities should be given meaningful opportunities to participate in and benefit from tourism.

There is also a need for skill-development institutions, including polytechnics and vocational training centres at the district level. Such institutions could provide young people with practical training in hotel management, tourism services, tourist guiding, skiing, adventure tourism, hospitality, and safe ATV operations. Tourists should be treated as special guests throughout Kashmir. If we combine Kashmir's natural beauty with skilled local youth, responsible tourism, hospitality, and proper infrastructure, tourism can become an important source of dignified livelihoods.

Kashmir has the beauty. Kashmir has the people. Kashmir has the potential.

What is needed is the right opportunity, proper training, and a sincere effort to connect the talent of our youth with the immense possibilities offered by the tourism sector.

Sahil Manzoor Bhatti
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Those Who Stand Between Life and Loss

A Tribute to the Colorectal Surgery Department, SKIMS Soura



Shahid Qadri

There are moments in life when hospitals cease to be merely buildings of medicine. They become places where families learn the meaning of hope, patience, courage and humanity.

For our family, the Department of Colorectal Surgery at SKIMS Soura has become one such place.

From the moment my mother was admitted, we witnessed not only medical expertise but an extraordinary commitment to patient care. Behind every successful procedure is a team that works quietly, patiently and relentlessly—often long after the rest of the world has gone to sleep.

I would like to place on record my heartfelt gratitude to the frontline doctors of the department, particularly Dr. Raouf, Dr. Yaqoob, Dr. Aga Syed Ahmad, Dr. Jireel, Dr. Raj Kumar, and the entire assisting and nursing staff.

Each of them contributes something distinctive to the difficult journey of colorectal

surgery.

Dr. Raouf's keenness and clinical commitment, the reassuring and smiling presence of Dr. Yaqoob, and the collective professionalism of the entire team provide patients and their families with something invaluable: confidence at a time when fear is often overwhelming.

What touched me most was the manner in which patients are treated—not merely as medical cases, but as human beings.

In a department dealing with complicated illnesses, major surgeries, uncertainty, pain and the constant possibility of complications, maintaining patience and compassion is itself a remarkable form of service.

The department witnesses enormous rush, limited space, demanding schedules and countless challenges. Yet the doctors and supporting staff continue to navigate these circumstances with remarkable composure. They face the volley of practical and clinical challenges that accompany patient care and still strive to ensure that every patient receives attention.

The work does not end with surgery. Pre-operative preparation, the operation itself, post-operative monitoring, risk management, recovery and follow-up—every stage demands vigilance. The repeated emphasis

on follow-up is a reminder that healing is a journey, not an event.

I was particularly moved by the meticulous approach of Dr. Yaqoob. His patient diary, his attention to individual cases and the manner in which he keeps track of patients reflect a level of personal responsibility that families remember for years.

He has a remarkable way of making patients feel that they are not simply another name on a hospital list. There is a sense that each patient is his own patient—someone deserving of attention, reassurance and care.

And then there are those who rarely receive public acknowledgement: the night-duty staff, nurses, ward boys, attendants, cleaners and other supporting personnel.

While families sleep beside their loved ones, these men and women remain awake, attending to patients, maintaining cleanliness, responding to calls and helping the department function through the night.

Their contribution deserves equal recognition.

Healthcare is often discussed in terms of technology, infrastructure and medical

procedures. But my experience at the colorectal department has reminded me that medicine is also about human touch.

It is about a doctor patiently answering a frightened family member.

It is about a smile when someone desperately needs reassurance.

It is about checking on a patient when nobody is watching.

It is about remaining calm when circumstances become difficult.

It is about leaving behind, even temporarily, one's own comfort and personal happiness so that another family can experience a little peace.

Doctors and healthcare workers may sometimes become accustomed to these responsibilities because they perform them every day. But for a family standing outside an operation theatre, waiting for news about a loved one, every act of care carries enormous meaning.

My family's journey through the colorectal department has made me look at the medical profession differently.

Shahid Qadri is a freelance writer and corporate banker. He can be reached at findqadri@gmail.com

The Brain Health In A Wireless World



SURINDERPAL SINGH

We are living in a wireless world. Mobile phones, Wi-Fi routers, Bluetooth devices, tablets and computers have become an important part of everyday life. For children, technology is now used not only for entertainment but also for education, communication and learning. With this growing dependence on electronic devices, an important question is being asked: Can electromagnetic radiation affect the developing brain of children?

The question deserves careful scientific attention—but not unnecessary fear.

Electromagnetic radiation is produced by many electronic and communication devices. Mobile phones and Wi-Fi equipment mainly produce radiofrequency radiation, which is a form of non-ionising radiation. Unlike X-rays, it does not have enough energy to directly damage DNA by ionisation. At sufficiently high levels, radiofrequency radiation can heat body tissues, which is why exposure limits have been established.

A child's brain is still developing. During childhood and adolescence, the brain undergoes major changes as nerve connections develop and become more organised. Areas involved in learning, memory, attention and emotional control continue to mature. Children may also use wireless devices for many hours each day and could therefore experience exposure over a much longer period of their lives. However, this does not mean that ordinary exposure from mobile phones or Wi-Fi has been proven to damage children's brains. Current scientific evidence has not

established such a harmful effect. This distinction is important. Scientists may investigate a possible risk because it is biologically reasonable to study, but a possibility is not the same as proven harm. Scientists have studied whether

electromagnetic radiation itself.

Excessive screen use can reduce time spent sleeping, exercising, playing outdoors, reading books and interacting directly with family and friends. Notifications, games and social media can also make it difficult for



radiofrequency exposure affects brain activity, memory, attention and development. Some laboratory studies have reported small changes in brain activity, but researchers have not established that these changes cause illness or impaired development.

Major health organisations continue to review the evidence. At present, there is no consistent scientific evidence showing that normal radiofrequency exposure from mobile phones and Wi-Fi causes developmental damage to children's brains. At the same time, research should continue. Technology is changing rapidly and children may experience wireless exposure for many years. Long-term research is therefore important.

There is another issue that deserves greater attention. When children spend many hours with smartphones and tablets, the problem may not necessarily be

children to concentrate. Lack of sleep is particularly important. Children who use screens late at night may sleep less or have poorer sleep quality. A tired child can naturally experience problems with attention, memory and learning. Therefore, parents should not immediately blame electromagnetic radiation whenever a child becomes distracted or tired. The child's overall digital lifestyle should also be considered.

There is no need to create fear about every mobile phone or Wi-Fi router. Technology has brought enormous benefits to education and communication. The answer is not to reject technology but to use it responsibly.

Parents can encourage some simple habits:

- Keep phones away from children while they are sleeping.

- Encourage screen-free time before bedtime.

- Use speaker mode or hands-free options during lengthy phone calls.

- Encourage outdoor games and physical activity. - Give children regular breaks from screens.

- Set reasonable limits on recreational smartphone use. - Encourage reading, conversation and face-to-face interaction.

- Teach children to use technology as a tool for learning rather than allowing it to dominate their daily lives.

These measures are sensible ways of managing children's digital habits. They should not be interpreted as evidence that ordinary mobile-phone or Wi-Fi exposure has been proven dangerous.

The debate over electromagnetic radiation often becomes emotional. Some people treat every scientific study as proof of danger, while others dismiss every concern completely. Both approaches can mislead the public.

The better approach is to follow evidence.

At present, scientific research has not established that everyday radiofrequency exposure from mobile phones and Wi-Fi causes harm to the developing human brain. Nevertheless, continued research into long-term exposure, particularly among children, remains important.

Children need technology, but they also need sleep, exercise, fresh air, conversation, creativity and human relationships. A healthy childhood cannot be built around a screen alone. The real challenge, therefore, is not to frighten children away from technology. It is to teach them how to use technology wisely. Technology should remain a servant of childhood—not become a substitute for childhood.

SURINDERPAL SINGH
FACULTY IN SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
SRI AMRITSAR SAHIB
PUNJAB,



HT SATURDAY- GOSSIP ---

ONLINE

(This short story brings to light a hidden aspect of the changing online way of life, where relationships formed through false identities can sometimes bring a person close to realities they themselves may never have imagined.)



By **YOUSUF MIR,**

"Shanu... Shanu, my son..., will you please put that phone away now? I don't know what kind of magnet you've got in that thing. The moment it rings, you stick to it. You have only twenty minutes before college. Hurry up, your breakfast is ready."

Shanu's mother, Razia, was red with anger.

She had called her only son four times already to come and eat, but he remained completely absorbed in a casual conversation with someone on his phone. It was as though his mother's voice had never reached his ears.

Razia called her beloved only son once again, but this time there was no affection in her voice. There was intensity.

Shanu, a second-year B.A. student, entered the dining hall. His mother looked at him with a silent, questioning expression, wanting to ask whom he had been talking to for so long. But Shanu was in such a mood that, before she could say anything, she began to tremble.

She divided her portion of food into two equal parts.

She placed one portion neatly on a plate on the dining table and put the other into a container resembling a tiffin, then carried it out towards the veranda.

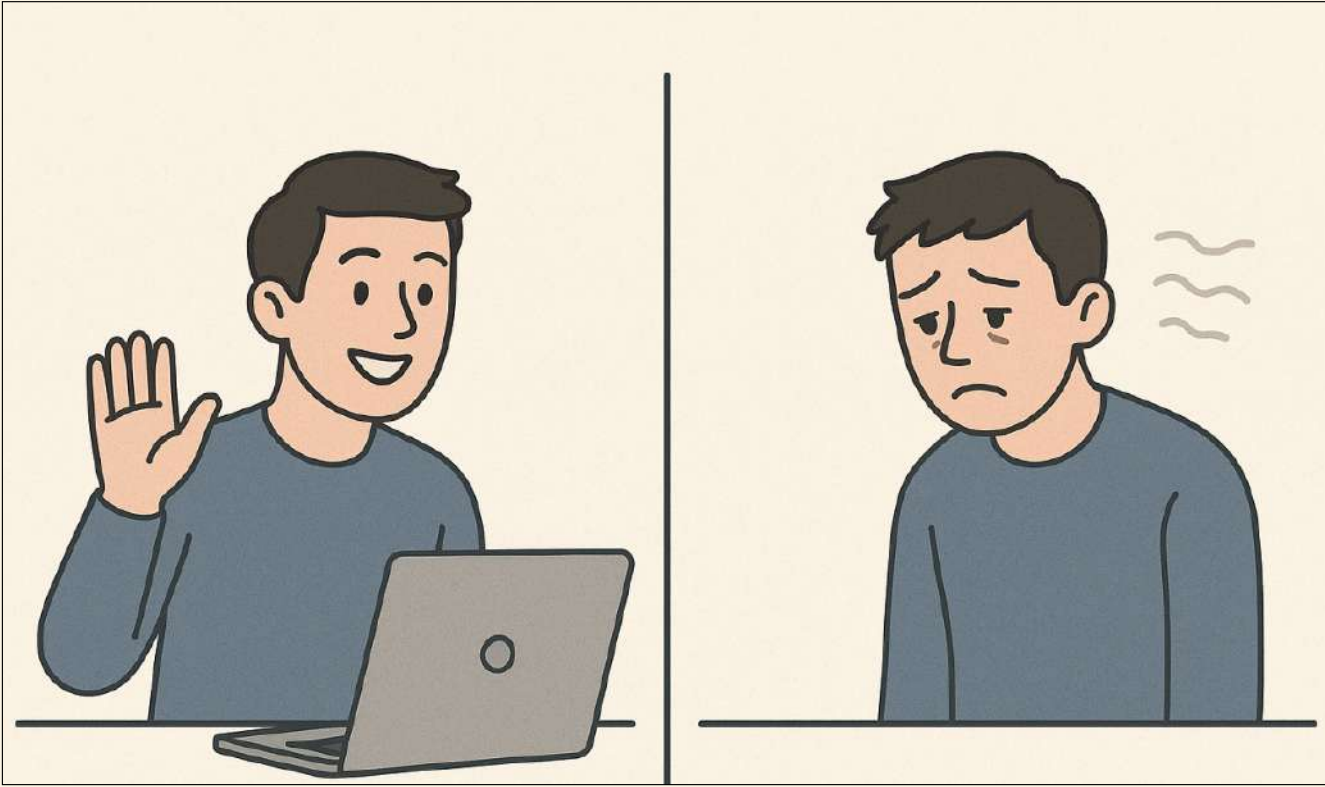
Shanu, with his strangely modern temperament, was eating quite comfortably with a knife and fork. He saw his mother going outside, but paid no attention to her.

He thought his mother had probably taken the food to "Kalu". Kalu had been brought home by his father, Khan Amjad, during his lifetime to guard the house.

When Razia returned to the room, Shanu had already left for college.

In the afternoon, when Shanu returned home, he went straight to his room and lay down on his bed without even informing his mother that he was back.

Razia was extremely angry at the change in her son's behaviour.



She kicked the door open and stormed at Shanu.

It was the first time Shanu had seen his mother so furious. He became worried, wondering what had happened. A few days later, Shanu was again absorbed in his phone. This time it was not college-going time, but bedtime.

Shanu was upstairs in his room. Razia also went upstairs to close the windows of the guest room. She sensed that Shanu was still awake and talking to someone.

She tried to listen to his conversation from outside the door, but she could not understand a single word. She waited silently outside for more than half an hour, but failed to discover what she wanted to know.

She did not want to waste any more time. Without knocking, she entered Shanu's room and, gathering all her courage, asked him, "Today, you will have to reveal your secret. Who is it that you have formed such a bond

of conversation with? Have you forgotten all your other relationships... your mother and father... your brothers and sisters... your own people and strangers and everyone... your pen... your books... What is it that you really want?"

"I am a human being too... your mother. In our time,

Tears appeared in his mother's eyes. Kissing her son's forehead, she said, "Well done, my son, well done... I have complete faith in you. After all, whose blood runs in your veins? Your father made us proud. He joined the police as a constable and rose to become an officer."

a mother's worth and dignity were held in the highest regard. A mother's word was considered final. But I am worried about what a mother's place has become in today's world. It is true that modern times have provided today's children with countless comforts and conveniences, but that does not mean that children should deceive their mothers and do things that could become a stain upon their mother's honour."

Shanu easily sensed the change in his mother. He immediately changed his manner of speaking. Abandoning his serious mood, he decided to try the medicine of affection. He put both his arms around his mother's shoulders and, in a childish, lisping voice, said, "Oh, Mother! You worry for no reason. Am I still a little child? Could anyone mislead me and make me lose my way? I am online..."

Shanu had succeeded completely in calming his mother's anger. He was quietly delighted with himself. He opened his real internet account and began looking at photographs of his late father.

Razia drifted into a world of memories. After looking at one photograph, she insisted that Shanu click on another. Thus, she went through all the treasured photographs of her husband, from his childhood to his final journey. Tears streamed down her eyes.

Meanwhile, Shanu began to turn the situation completely to his advantage. Comforting his mother, he encouraged her to learn how to use the internet so that she could look at her husband's photographs whenever she wished.

Shanu brought his mother online and won all her sympathy for himself.

A complete change came over the atmosphere of the house. Razia no longer felt lonely even after Shanu went out. She remained online throughout the day. Along with looking at her husband's treasured photographs, she became busy chatting with several people through fake accounts.

Shanu no longer felt troubled at home. He could use his time exactly as he pleased. The mother who had once constantly questioned him was now too occupied with her own world. The colours of the new age had dyed her in their own colours and completely absorbed her.

There was now a complete transformation in the atmosphere of the house. The change was not limited to the atmosphere alone; even the timings of their meals had changed. Many times, both mother and son would leave their respective rooms at the same time and arrive at the dining table together for their meals.

Yet Shanu became increasingly concerned about his mother's mental change. He felt that his mother had begun to hold back when it came to showing him affection.

It was the month of May. The weather was exceptionally pleasant and beautiful. It was Sunday, the twenty-first. Shanu dressed up smartly and left the house without asking his mother.

Razia, too, was getting ready. She also had plans to go out that Sunday. She called Shanu and told him to return home immediately because she had already made plans to go out for some important work. But Shanu, too, had a plan that had already been made and which he could not put off.

Believing that at least one person should remain at home on a Sunday, Razia postponed her plan. Shanu, too, cancelled his own plan and returned home halfway.

The following week, Razia was already dressed and had left home early in the morning. But she had to turn back when Shanu called and asked her to return because he needed to go to the city for some important work.

Razia returned, but two or three hours later she became furious when Shanu came back saying that his programme had been postponed.

The following week, mother and son once again made plans to go out together, but... this plan, too, fell victim to confusion.

The repeated coincidence of their plans to go out being made and then cancelled began to occupy Shanu's mind. Questions began to rise within him, and continued to rise...

Until he came online... and then... went offline forever.

**YOUSUF MIR, Bandipora
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Assam Rifles supports, aids, and partners with various pre-existing orphanages, destitute facilities, and old-age homes across the North-East



By **M S Nazki**

If we cannot relate anymore to the world that we live in, we are bound to remain like orphans, forlorn in the wasteland of our desires! Desires of Orphans are many but they just need nurturing!...

-Perhaps there are those who are able to go about their lives unfettered by such concerns. But for those like us, our fate is to face the world as orphans, chasing through long years the shadows of vanished parents. There is nothing for it but to try and see through our missions to the end, as best we can, for until we do so, we will be permitted no calm..... Assam Rifles!

"There," she said. She rocked him back and forth. "You, you foolish, beautiful boy who wants to change the world. There, there. And who could keep from loving you? Who could keep from loving a boy so brave and true?"

-When you lose your parents as a child, you are indoctrinated into a club, you are taken into life's severest confidence. You are undecieved...

-The purpose of having the orphans study all these diverse fields was not for them to just become geniuses, but to become polymaths - meaning they would be geniuses in a wide variety of fields..... Assam Rifles!

-The women laughed and wept; the crowd stamped their feet enthusiastically, for at that moment Quasimodo was really beautiful. He was handsome - this orphan, this foundling, this outcast.

— Victor Hugo, The Hunchback of Notre Dame

-Mother was anchor. Mother was comfort. Mother was home. A girl who lost her mother was suddenly a tiny boat on an angry ocean. Some boats eventually floated ashore. And some boats, like me, seemed to float farther and farther from land.

-Kiran was a ten-year-old boy who lived alone in a small stone room behind the old railway station, having lost his parents in a sudden train accident two years before.

-Every morning, Kiran woke up before the sun and walked to the local bakery, where a kind baker named Mr. Thomas always handed

him a warm, soft bread roll and a cup of sweet milk. Kiran did not have a family, but he spent his days helping sweep the market stalls and carrying heavy bags for elderly shoppers in exchange for a few coins or fresh fruit.

-Though the world felt cold and empty without his mother's gentle voice, Kiran kept a small notebook where he drew pictures of the stars, believing his parents were watching over him from the night sky and smiling whenever he chose to be kind.

-Leonardo Del Vecchio: Abandoned as a child



and raised in an Italian orphanage, he grew up to found Luxottica, building a massive global eyewear empire and becoming one of the world's wealthiest industrialists.

-Sindhutai Sapkal: Abandoned and facing extreme poverty after birth, she rose from begging on railway platforms to become India's beloved "Mother of Orphans," nurturing over 1,400 destitute children who grew up to become doctors and lawyers.-Madam C.J. Walker: Orphaned at age 7 and facing immense struggles in post-Civil War America, she worked her way up to become America's first self-made female millionaire through her pioneering line of hair care products.

-Coco Chanel: Placed in a Catholic monastery orphanage at age 12 after her mother died and her father left, she transformed her austere upbringing into the inspiration for her revolutionary fashion house, Chanel.

-Meet four remarkable boys, Sam Marandi, and Sudesh, who, despite facing abandonment at a young age, found hope and support through United Gospel Mission's orphanage. After graduating high school with flying colors and numerous sports awards, their journey exemplifies

the transformative impact of love, care, and education.

-In a small village where poverty and neglect were rampant, four orphan boys, aged between 5 and 6 years old, were left abandoned by their relatives. Their future seemed bleak without parental guidance or support until they found refuge and a new family at United Gospel Mission's orphanage.

-Growing up without the love and care of their biological families, the boys faced numerous challenges. From coping with the emotional trauma of abandonment to overcoming societal stigma, they endured hardships that could have easily derailed their prospects.

United Gospel Mission provided the boys a safe and nurturing environment where they received love, care, and education. Through the mission's dedicated staff and volunteers, they found a sense of belonging and were allowed to thrive academically and socially.

-Journey of Impact & Success:

-Despite their difficult beginnings, the boys flourished under the guidance of the United Gospel Mission. With access to quality education and extracurricular activities, they excelled in their studies and became standout athletes in their school. Their hard work and determination earned them good grades and numerous sports awards, showcasing their resilience and talent.

The success of these four boys is a testament to the life-changing impact of the United Gospel Mission's support. By providing them with a loving and supportive environment, the mission empowered them to break free from the cycle of poverty and achieve their full potential.

As these four boys graduate from high school with honors and sports accolades, their journey serves as a beacon of hope for other orphaned children. United Gospel Mission's unwavering commitment to their well-being and education has transformed their lives and inspired them to dream big. With continued support from generous donors, more children like them can rewrite their futures and become the leaders of tomorrow. "The truth is you can be orphaned again and again and again. The truth is, you will be. And the secret is, this will hurt less and less each time until you can't feel Like-Orphanages are the only places that ever left me feeling empty and full at the same time! If your brother can't 'old 'his own against a bunch of orphans, 'e'd best leave off playing 'azard altogether!"

Lives being extinguished on campus: Not just suicide, but a test of the system



Dr. **Priyanka Saurabh**

The death of IIT Bombay student Sahil Wakode has once again brought to the fore a serious question hidden behind the glittering buildings of the country's most prestigious educational institutions—are our higher education institutions merely testing talent, or are they also fulfilling the responsibility of nurturing it? The investigation into the circumstances of Sahil's death is still ongoing. Therefore, it would not be appropriate at this time to pinpoint any single person, incident, or alleged discrimination as the ultimate cause of his suicide. His family has alleged caste discrimination and mental harassment, while the institute has stated that it had not received any such formal complaint. Therefore, the path to the truth must be through an impartial and transparent investigation. But even as we await the findings of the investigation, a major question remains: why are so many of the country's talented youth taking their own lives?

Data from the National Crime Records Bureau indicates the severity of this crisis. In 2013, 8,423 cases of student suicide were reported in the country. This number increased to 13,892 in 2013 and 14,488 in 2014. This represents a significant increase in the number of cases reported over a decade. However, it would be inappropriate to draw conclusions based solely on these figures, as the total student population and enrollment in higher education have also increased during this period. Therefore, a detailed study of suicide rates in relation to the student population, based on age, gender, social background, institution, course, and region is needed. Nevertheless, it is clear that student suicide is no longer an isolated incident but has become a matter of national concern.

This question becomes even more serious in institutions like the IITs. The Ministry of Education reported in Parliament that 39 students died by suicide on IIT campuses between 2018 and 2023. On the other hand,

compilations based on various RTI responses and media reports have revealed higher figures. One reason for the varying numbers across sources is that their timeframes, definitions, and data collection methods are not the same. Therefore, instead of accepting any single figure as the ultimate truth, a nationally reliable database should be created by combining government records, institutional records, and independent studies. Until this happens, the debate will remain mired in data and claims, and the true picture of the problem will remain obscured.

The question of social and economic background is also crucial in this debate. Questions have been raised from time to time about discrimination, social isolation, academic pressure, and dropout rates faced by Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, and OBC students in IITs and other central educational institutions. Claims are also made on social media and in public discourse about a disproportionately high share of student suicides attributed to a particular social group, but such claims are not appropriate to be accepted as final without verified government data, a clear timeline, and reliable studies. However, if a student faces additional mental pressure or discrimination due to their caste, class, language, region, economic status, or any other social identity, it is a serious warning for the education system. Talent should be assessed based on a student's ability, not their social background.

It must also be understood that not every suicide is caused solely by discrimination or institutional harassment. Often, exam and performance pressure, fear of failure, family expectations, financial difficulties, loneliness, relationship problems, worries about the future, and mental health issues all play a role. In many cases, the full range of causes remains unclear even after the incident. Therefore, attributing a student's death to a single cause is as dangerous as completely dismissing the possibility of institutional problems.

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

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Airtel Flags 98.4 billion Spam Calls Amid Sharp Rise in Digital Fraud Cases

AI-Powered Safe Network solutions have identified 4.4 billion spam messages and blocked over 1.62 million malicious links

HT News Network/UNI

Jammu, 25 September 2026: India's digital economy is expanding rapidly, but cyber fraud is growing alongside it in both scale and sophistication. What was once largely limited to spam calls and phishing messages has developed into a wider ecosystem of fraud, including impersonation scams, fake banking requests, malicious links, investment fraud, and OTP-linked financial scams.

Government and industry data suggest the threat is now both widespread and increasingly organised. According to the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre

(I4C), Indians lost more than 52,976 crore to cyber fraud over the last six years. NCRB data also shows a steady rise in cybercrime cases, even as overall crime levels across the country have declined.

As digital services become more deeply embedded in everyday life, across banking, payments, healthcare, commerce, and government services, telecom networks are expected to play a larger role in digital safety. Users increasingly expect networks not just to provide connectivity, but also to identify and reduce risks linked to digital communication.

Two years ago, Airtel anticipated this shift and took a first-mover approach to customer protection.

In 2024, Airtel launched India's first network-based, AI-powered spam



detection solution by a telecom provider, bringing together network intelligence and artificial intelligence to protect customers from spam calls and SMSs.

Since then, Airtel has expanded its AI-powered Safe Network initiative over the past 2 years as part of a broader push toward network-level fraud prevention. The aim is to create security systems that work in the background, without requiring customers to install additional apps or manually report

threats.

Airtel's Safe Network has evolved into a broader suite of network-led digital safety tools. Its major components include:

OTP-linked fraud protection: Airtel has introduced AI-based protection designed to identify and intervene when users are being manipulated into sharing OTPs or other sensitive credentials during suspicious interactions.

Malicious link detection: Before launching OTP fraud detection, Airtel rolled out a system to identify fraudulent websites and suspicious links in real time. Since deployment, it has blocked more than 1.62 million malicious links shared through SMS,

messaging apps, emails, and browser redirects for all mobile and Wi-Fi broadband subscribers.

Spam call and message detection: In September 2024, Airtel launched an AI-driven spam detection system at the network level. Since then, the company says it has identified more than 98.4 billion spam calls and 4.4 billion spam messages.

Business name display: Airtel has also introduced business name display capabilities to help users distinguish verified enterprise calls from potentially fraudulent or fake numbers, reducing the risk of impersonation scams involving fake banking and customer care representatives.

Sericulture Development Department Bandipora facilitates Exposure Visit for 80 Sericulture Farmers

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 25: The Sericulture Development Department, Bandipora, today facilitated an exposure visit for 80 sericulture farmers, including farmers from tribal communities, under Silk Samagra-2/Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), as part of the Human Resource Development (HRD) component. The participating farmers from Chittebanday, C.A. Khan and other sericulture villages of the district visited various important sericulture institutions and facilities to gain practical knowledge and firsthand experience of scientific mulberry cultivation, silkworm rearing, cocoon production and silk processing.

As part of the programme, the farmers visited P4 Basic Seed Farm, Central Silk Board,



Mansbal, Ganderbal; College of Temperate Sericulture, SKUAST-K, Mirgund; Basic Seed Station, Mirgund, Baramulla; and Government Silk Factory, Rajbagh, Srinagar.

The visit aimed to provide field-level exposure to improved sericulture practices, including scientific mulberry cultivation, silkworm rearing techniques, disease and pest management, seed production, cocoon production and silk processing. During the visit, the farmers also interacted with technical experts and field functionaries and gained an understanding of various

stages of the sericulture value chain. The exposure is expected to enhance their technical capacities and encourage adoption of modern and scientific practices for improving cocoon yield, quality and farm income.

The Department stated that such capacity-building and exposure programmes form an important component of its efforts to strengthen the sericulture sector in District Bandipora, particularly by extending technical knowledge and institutional exposure to farmers from tribal.

Five-Day Training Programme on Natural Farming under NMNF concludes at KVK-Anantnag

HT News Network

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 25: A Five-Day Training Programme on Natural Farming concluded today at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)-Anantnag, under the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) for Krishi Sakshis and BRC members identified by the Department of Agriculture, Anantnag.

The valedictory function was attended by Chief Agriculture Officer, Anantnag, Shah Nawaz Ahmad Shah, along with other officers and officials of the Department of Agriculture.

The programme was aimed at building the technical capacity of frontline community resource persons and enabling them to effectively disseminate the principles and practices of natural farming among farming communities.

During the five-day programme, scientists of KVK-Anantnag delivered technical lectures covering various aspects of natural farming,



including soil health management, on-farm preparation and use of natural farming inputs, crop management practices and the role of natural farming in promoting sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture. Practical demonstrations were also conducted to provide hands-on exposure to the participants.

As part of the programme, an exposure visit to the Shalimar Campus of SKUAST-Kashmir was also organized, providing the participants an opportunity to observe relevant technologies and practices and

interact with experts.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ishtiyak A. Khan, Head, KVK-Anantnag, highlighted the significance of natural farming in reducing dependence on external inputs, improving soil health and promoting environmentally sustainable agricultural production. He emphasized that the growing emphasis on natural and regenerative agriculture reflects a broader global shift towards sustainable farming systems and noted India's emerging leadership in promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

DLSA Pulwama organises Awareness Programme on NALSA Scheme for Persons with Mental Illness, Intellectual Disabilities

HT News Network

PULWAMA, SEPTEMBER 25: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Pulwama organised an awareness programme on the NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness & Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024, with the objective of strengthening awareness regarding the legal rights, entitlements and access to free legal services for persons with mental illness and persons with intellectual disabilities.

During the programme, participants were sensitised about the provisions of the Scheme, the importance of legal aid and the role of Legal Services Authorities in ensuring equal access to justice for vulnerable and disadvantaged persons. Emphasis was laid on protecting the dignity, rights and interests of persons with mental illness and intellectual disabilities and ensuring that they are not deprived of legal representation or other available legal remedies. The resource person Advocate Masood Ahmad Magery, Panel lawyer highlighted the various mechanisms available through DLSA/TLSCs for seeking free legal aid, legal advice, assistance and representation, wherever required. The participants were also informed about the importance of identifying persons in need of legal assistance and facilitating their access to the appropriate legal services. The programme further emphasised the need for coordinated efforts among Legal Services Authorities, institutions, caregivers, families, social welfare agencies and other stakeholders for effective implementation of the Scheme at the grassroots level.

DLSA Pulwama reiterated its commitment to strengthening legal awareness and ensuring that no person is denied access to justice due to mental illness, intellectual disability or inability to afford legal services.

Udhampur: 10 School buses challaned for violation of safety norms

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 25: Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) Udhampur on Friday conducted a special enforcement drive with a special focus on checking the safety and regulatory compliance of school buses operating in the district. The enforcement team, led by ARTO Mudassir Iqbal, checked 60 school buses and assessed compliance with prescribed safety norms, seating capacity and other requirements under the Motor Vehicles rules. As many as 10 school buses of Delhi Public School were found to have seats beyond the permitted capacity. Accordingly, challans were issued against the vehicles for violation of the prescribed norms. The ARTO stated that such enforcement drives would continue to ensure strict compliance with motor vehicle regulations and the safety and well-being of school-going children. The transport authorities have advised all school managements and school bus operators to strictly adhere to the prescribed safety standards and seating capacity norms and to ensure that their vehicles remain compliant with all statutory requirements.

DC Rajouri reviews performance of banks at DLRC meeting

HT News Network

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 25: District Development Commissioner, Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today chaired the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) meeting to review the performance of Banks under Annual Credit Plan (ACP) and progress under government sponsored schemes for the Quarter ended June 2026 of FY 2026-27. At the outset, Lead District Manager, Rajouri informed the house that different Banks in the district have achieved Total business of Rs. 12450.06 crore. "The banks operating in the district have recorded deposits of 8042 crore and advances of 4407 crore as on June 30, 2026, with CD ratio of 55%", the LDM apprised the meeting. Under the Annual Credit Plan 2026-27, banks achieved advances of 255.43 crore against the annual target of 1649.60 crore, registering an achievement of 15% under the Priority Sector, while under the Non-Priority Sector, advances stood at 344.20.

ICICI Prudential Life Reports 99.31% claim settlement ratio in Q1-FY2027

HT News Network

Srinagar, Sep 25, KNT: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has reported a claim settlement ratio of 99.31% for the first quarter of FY2027, which the company said was the highest among leading life insurance companies in India based on public disclosures through Form L-39 and L-40.

During the quarter, the company settled individual death claims amounting to 414.08 crore. It said the average value per claim was around 15 lakh, which it described as the highest among leading life insurers for Q1-FY2027.

The company also reported an average claim settlement

turnaround time of one day for non-investigated claims, calculated from the date of receipt of the last required document.

"At ICICI Prudential Life, we are committed to making the claims process simple, seamless and timely for our customers and their families. In Q1-FY2027, our claim settlement ratio was highest in the industry at 99.31% and our average claim settlement turnaround time for non-investigated claims was just 1 day from last document received date. Besides, we settled 414.08 crore in death claims," said Sarang Gokhale, Chief - Underwriting and Retail Claims, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance. The company said its

digitalization initiatives allow claimants to lodge and track claims through its mobile application, WhatsApp, chatbot and website.

Under its 'Claim for Sure' initiative, the company said it paid around 75 crore within one day for eligible claims during the quarter. "Our customer-first approach and strong focus towards digitalization empowers us to settle claims quickly and provide timely financial relief when families need it the most," Gokhale said. He added that the company would continue to strengthen its digital processes to facilitate timely support for families during the claims process.

Samba: District Level Committee approves 206 project proposals under HADP

HT News Network

SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 25: District Development Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC) for the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) to review the implementation of programme and its ground impact in the development of agriculture and allied sectors in the district.

The Committee reviewed applications/cases sponsored by different departments. A total of 206 cases were approved, including 97 sponsored by Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare, 74 by



Horticulture, 23 by Sheep Husbandry, 9 by Animal Husbandry, 2 by Fisheries and 1 by HPM.

The DDC directed the concerned departments to expedite application processing, beneficiary enrolment, verification and sanctioning of

cases on the designated portal to achieve prescribed targets within the stipulated timeline. She stressed the need for output tracking through digital monitoring mechanisms to ensure transparency and real-time assessment of outcomes. She further directed officers to ensure timely achievement of physical and financial targets, clear pending cases and facilitate timely disbursement of benefits.

The DDC also called for expediting expenditure under HADP and completion of Daksh Kisan training and certification. She stressed timely establishment and tracking of units under KSOT and effective on-ground execution of projects.

JKTPO hosts Export Awareness Workshop, E-Commerce On-boarding drive and India-EU FTA Session at Kathua

HT News Network

KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 25: The Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO), Industries & Commerce Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, on Friday organised an Export Awareness Workshop, E-Commerce On-boarding drive and session on India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA) here at Kathua.

The event aimed at sensitising local entrepreneurs, MSMEs, artisans and aspiring exporters about opportunities in domestic and international markets.

The programme was organised under the guidance of Managing

Director JKTPO Sudershan Kumar, in collaboration with the district administration Kathua and witnessed enthusiastic participation from entrepreneurs, MSMEs, artisans, farmers, SHGs and aspiring exporters from the district.

The programme commenced with welcome remarks by Faculty, JKTPO Vishal Ray, who welcomed the Chief Guest, officials, resource persons and participants. He highlighted the importance of export awareness, digital commerce and market diversification in enabling local enterprises to access wider markets.

The event was graced by Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma as Chief Guest. In his address, he

emphasised the importance of promoting "Vocal for Local" by encouraging local entrepreneurs to showcase and promote their products beyond the district. He also highlighted the potential of local enterprises and encouraged participants to make effective use of available government initiatives and institutional support to expand their businesses and access wider markets. His interaction with the participants further encouraged them to explore new opportunities and strengthen their entrepreneurial ventures.

General Manager, District Industries Centre (DIC) Kathua Mushtaq Ahmed Choudhary was also present on the occasion. He



briefed the participants about various opportunities and support mechanisms available for local entrepreneurs.

During the programme, Ullas Kumar, ECGC, delivered a session on export credit and risk mitigation,

while Varinder Mongia, EXIM Bank, briefed participants on export finance and related support mechanisms. Gaurav Gupta, FIEO, conducted a virtual session on exports and the India-EU FTA, highlighting international market opportunities

and export preparedness.

A session by Career Counselling Officer, Mission YUVA Surjeet Kumar apprised participants about entrepreneurship opportunities and support under Mission YUVA.

As part of the E-Commerce On-boarding drive, Sarthak Khoda from GeM briefed participants on seller on-boarding and government procurement opportunities, while Adil Javaid Khan from Flipkart provided an overview of e-commerce onboarding and digital market access.

The workshop provided participants with insights into exports, export finance, India-EU FTA opportunities, Mission YUVA, GeM and e-commerce platforms. An interactive question-and-answer

session was also held to address queries of the participants regarding exports, financing and market access.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by JKTPO, acknowledging the support extended by the District Administration Kathua, participating institutions, resource persons and the entrepreneurs who attended the workshop.

As part of the ongoing series of Export Awareness and E-Commerce Onboarding programmes, the next workshop is scheduled to be held at Budgam on September 26, 2026, focusing on strengthening export awareness, digital market access and market linkages for local entrepreneurs and MSMEs.



'This is fixable': What really helps save a relationship

What couples therapists want you to know about trying to save a relationship that's going downhill.

If you're in an unhappy relationship, you may suffer from heartache – literally.

Vicious arguments can result in poor sleep and even heart pain and muscle pain. They can make everyone in the family, including children, more vulnerable to physical and mental health problems. A happy relationship can boost your health and even your lifespan. An unhappy one can have the opposite effect, raising your risk of an earlier death by chipping away at your health.

In fact, poor-quality close relationships are considered a health risk factor equal to or greater than smoking or lack of exercise. And then, of course, there's the metaphorical heartache: the pain of love unravelling.

So how do you turn an unhappy relationship into a happy one? And is that even possible?

A growing body of research reveals some surprising answers – and spells hope for couples committed to a turnaround.

Why couples argue

If you enter a new relationship and the first argument you have with your partner is about dirty dishes, you may be catching a glimpse of the distant future: research suggests that what couples argue about remains pretty constant throughout the relationship. These recurring problems are known as perpetual or gridlocked issues.

"Those gridlocked issues could be about finances, parenting, their sex lives, how they negotiate power in the relationship," says Carrie Cole, a psychologist and the director of research at The Gottman Institute for couples therapy in Seattle, US. But also, they can be about seemingly minor issues such as neatness.

In one longitudinal study, psychologist John Gottman and his team observed couples' disagreements in an initial assessment, and four years later. They found that 69% of the time the couples were still arguing over the same type of issues they had debated those four years earlier.

Other studies have revealed a similar pattern, with certain core issues such as money coming up in conflicts across households and even across cultures. Disagreements over money, in particular, cause the most persistent and heated rows. Unequal division of housework is another cause of tensions, and can raise the likelihood of divorce.

In itself, disagreement isn't necessarily a bad sign. It can just be a natural part of learning to understand and respond to each other's needs. And both happy and unhappy couples argue.

The crucial difference between happy and unhappy couples is how they behave towards each other, research suggests – during and also outside of arguments.

Four behaviours that can 'kill a relationship'

Cole cites four specific behaviours that signal your relationship may be headed for a break-up, according to studies: criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling (which means withdrawal from a conflict by refusing to engage).

"Those four behaviours will kill a relationship," says Cole. But, she adds, "they are fixable, if the couple wants to fix them."



(Read on for specific tips.)

In fact, it's not just the relationship that's at risk: separate research has shown that persistent criticism from one's partner significantly predicts an earlier death.

Arguments involving these kinds of behaviours, along with aggression and hostility, are known as destructive – and can ultimately raise the risk of divorce.

However, constructive arguments, which focus on mutually resolving issues with respect, curiosity and kindness, can strengthen your relationship.

One key factor is responsiveness: the feeling that your partner listens, supports and understands you. Experiencing your partner as responsive is not only associated with greater marital satisfaction, but can even buffer inflammation and boost physical health and longevity.

Kindness and cooperation can also build long-term goodwill. One 20-year-study of married couples showed that shared decision-making and equally shared housework were associated with greater marital happiness and lower conflict.

How couples argue may even affect their sleep: destructive arguments are associated with bad sleep, while constructive ones are associated with good sleep, research has found.

Rebuilding empathy

If you're in the midst of an unhappy relationship, it may feel near-impossible to switch from bitter, hostile arguments to kind and supportive ones. But a large body of

evidence shows it's possible – for example, with the help of therapy.

Research suggests that couples therapy has a positive impact on 70% of couples who do it. It can help improve relationships issues, boost relationship satisfaction and prevent relationship distress, strengthen emotional intimacy, but also help improve individual emotional or physical health problems.

disagree with what the other is saying, "they would say something like: 'Tell me more about that, how did you come to believe that?'"

If people work on their problems, "the evidence is pretty strong that you get good outcomes", Lebow says.

Sharing dreams

When it comes to resolving gridlocked conflict, understanding each other's dreams and goals can help, says Cole.

She gives the example of a couple who came to therapy because of recurring arguments over money. Both had grown up in poverty. But this had shaped them in very different ways. The wife's focus was on being financially secure and independent, through saving and careful budgeting. The husband wanted to spend his hard-earned money on nice things, and enjoy the feeling of fitting in with the rest of society, and no longer being cut off by poverty.

This led to endless rows over spending.

"They fought about those things all the time. And they never got down to the reason they were fighting," says Cole.

In therapy, they listen to each other talk about their painful experiences of growing up poor, and how this had shaped their goals in life. They learned to compromise, and agreed on how much money they would set aside to save, and how much they would be free to spend.

"They did work it out. But they had to understand what was so important to each one of them, before they could be open to accepting influence from each other and working towards a compromise that included both of their dreams," says Cole.

Lebow also emphasises another factor: "The motivation of clients matters a lot," he says. "You could have the best couple therapist in the world, with the least motivated people, and the outcome is unlikely to be good. You could have the best motivated clients with the worst couple therapist, you still might do OK. That makes a big difference."

Breaking up better

Even separating couples may benefit from couples therapy, says Lebow. It can help them cope with the separation itself, and its potential impact on mental health. It may make the process less hostile, and also help the couple support the mental health of their children, if they have them, he says.

And while a break-up or divorce can be incredibly painful, "these are moments when you can really learn something about yourself", he says. "It's a moment where lots of people learn things that are very valuable to them and the rest of their lives."

(BBC NEWS)

What the Japanese can teach us about super-ageing gracefully

Japan has one of the oldest populations in the world, but some of the country's elderly aren't slowing down.

Mieko Nagaoka first started swimming in her 80s to help recover from a knee injury sustained while practicing Noh, a traditional Japanese theatre. When she was 100, Nagaoka published her book entitled: "I'm 100 years old and the world's best active swimmer", before going on to set the first world record for her age group, swimming 1,500m in a 25m pool. At 105 years old, she still enters Masters competitions and currently holds 18 world records.

Then in September 2019, to much media fanfare, Nagaoka announced her retirement before entering her last competition, the Japan Masters held in Fukuoka. She attempted to set the world's first record in the 50m backstroke in the 105-109 age group but, was forced to retire from the race. She left the poolside smiling to the applause of her fans.

Nagaoka will soon be relocating to live with her son in Yokohama and will retire from her amazing swimming career of 25 years. Her son Hiroyuki (79), who helped Nagaoka in her training told The Asahi Shinbun, "We have had blissful happiness swimming together until this age. There must be no other examples like us in the world."

Another beloved centurion was Master class sprinter Hidekichi Miyazaki, who passed away in 2019 at 108 years old. Nicknamed "Golden Bolt" after the Olympic Gold medalist Usain Bolt, Miyazaki made headlines at 105 years old when



he set the world's first record for 100m sprint for the 105-and-over age category. Asked about his performance he replied, "I'm not happy with the time," echoing the competitive mentality that drives Nagaoka to swim.

We are quick to attribute good eating habits and exercise as keys to ageing gracefully. But what about the question of never losing the competitive spirit? A healthy rivalry, whether against a near-aged competitor or your younger self, combined with the hope of achievement, seem to play an important part. Certainly that's the case for Yuichiro Miura.

At 86, alpinist and professional skier Miura, is another

senior citizen who has celebrity-like status both in and out of Japan. In his 40s he attempted to ski down Mount Everest with a parachute on his back, a practice known as speed riding, to decelerate his descent. His feat was documented in the film "The man who skied down Everest", which won an Academy Award for best documentary in 1975.

At 70 years old, he returned to Everest and became the oldest person in the world to summit. That record was broken when Miura again made the climb at 75, and then again at the age of 80. In early 2019, Miura attempted to climb, then ski down Aconcagua, the highest peak in South America. At Plaza Colera located around 6,000m above sea level, Miura was ordered to stop by his doctor, who had accompanied him, due to concerns about the risk of heart failure triggered by the high altitude. Once back in Japan, Miura explained during a press conference that he decided to accept the doctor's orders because he still hopes for another attempt. He is now working towards his goal to summit Everest again at 90. The list of active seniors in Japan can go on: 83-year-old marathon runner, Michiharu Shimojo, and Seichi Sano who took up surfing at the age of 80, "on a whim," are just some of the octogenarians who put many of us to shame. What is their secret? Is it the competitive nature of extreme sporting, or something fundamental?

(BBC NEWS)



Swimming roundup: Zhang Zhanshuo seals record seven-gold haul as China finishes with 30 titles at Asian Games

United News Of India

TOKYO, SEP 25 :On the closing night of the swimming program at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, China's Zhang Zhanshuo capped a remarkable campaign by winning the men's 400m freestyle on Friday, becoming the first swimmer to win seven gold medals at a single edition of the Games.

The 19-year-old clocked 3 minutes 41.28 seconds, breaking the Asian Games record, to complete a clean sweep of seven of the eight events he entered. His haul also matched the Asian Games record for most gold medals won by an athlete at a single edition, set by DPR Korean shooter So Gil-san in 1982.

Zhang's reaction to his unprecedented achievement was strikingly calm. "I feel much calmer than

I had imagined. Of course, I'm very happy to win these seven gold medals, and I will turn them into greater motivation going forward," Zhang said after the race.

His most emotional moment came when he touched the wall and looked up at the scoreboard, where his time flashed with an Asian Games record.



He also raised his hand and counted from one to seven in the water after the race, a simple gesture to mark his seven titles.

"It was a perfect finish to the Games," Zhang said. Asked about his ambitions for the Los Angeles Olympics, Zhang stressed that the Asian Games was not his ultimate goal. "I need to settle down and face the gaps between myself and the world's best. The Asian Games are not my ultimate goal," he said.

His next target is more demanding, which is the world record. Zhang's 3:41.28 was just over a second outside the men's 400m free world record, and he said he would work toward breaking it over the next two years.

"I think that will be one of my next goals, and I will give my all to chase the world record," he said.

Zhang acknowledged that plenty still needs to be improved, from technique to overall ability. He singled out his turns as one area for further work, saying there remains a significant gap between his turns and those of the world's top swimmers.

"I think there are many things I need to improve. That's also one of the purposes of this competition, to make a new summary and find the gaps, both technically and in terms of ability," he said.

Zhang's seven golds came in the men's 200m, 400m, 800m and 1,500m freestyle, as well as the men's 4x200m free, 4x100m free and mixed 4x100m medley relays.

He said he did not regard any single event as his favorite, preferring to continue developing across the middle and long distance free events, according to Xinhua.

"Everything is possible. I will stay humble and keep pushing forward," he said. China won five more titles on the final day and finished the swimming program with 30 gold, 13 silver and 11 bronze medals. China's Li Bingjie also completed a five-gold collection after winning the women's 800m free in 8:24.02, but the 24-year-old was far from satisfied with her performance.

"I'd give myself a seven out of 10," Li said. "My time was below my expectations, and I also wasn't good enough at preventing illness and injury."

Li said she caught a fever after her 400m free race and was also less content with her result in the relay the previous day, where she felt she had relied on her teammates to build the advantage. Despite these defects, she saw the Games as an evidence that she was gradually climbing back after a difficult period following .

Asian Games: Indonesia ends China's two-Games reign to win men's badminton team gold

United News Of India

NAGOYA (JAPAN), SEP 25 :Indonesia overcame China in a five-match thriller to win the men's badminton team title at the 2026 Asian Games, ending China's bid for a third straight championship in the event.

Former world champion Shi Yuqi put China ahead with the first point, defeating Jonatan Christie 21-13, 21-18. Feng Yanzhe and Liang Weikeng then doubled China's lead in doubles, edging out Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri 22-20, 19-21, 21-14. Indonesia hit back when Alwi Farhan outlasted Li Shifeng 23-21, 15-21, 21-16 to get his side on the board. The Indonesians then rode the momentum into the next doubles rubber, as Leo Rolly Carnando and Daniel Marthin needed just 45 minutes to see off China's He Jiting and Liu Yi 23-21, 21-10, leveling the tie at 2-2 and forcing a decider. In the deciding match against Hangzhou Asian

Games gold medalist Weng Hongyang, 19-year-old Zaki Ubaidillah saved four game points to



claim the first game 23-21, then raced to a 6-1 lead in the second and held his nerve to close out the second game. 21-13, sealing the title for Indonesia, according to Xinhua.

Varun Chopra's final day charge win him title at AM Green IGPL Invitational



United News Of India

RAS AL KHAIMAH, SEP 25 :Varun Chopra, who started the final day of the AM Green IGPL Invitational presented by Vimtra Chennai Lions GC, three shots behind the 36-hole leader Shiv Kapur, played another solid round of 4-under 68 and beat Kapur in the race to the finish.

Chopra's superb final-round rally gave him a two-shot win over Kapur, who slipped to 1-over 73 on the final day. Chopra shot rounds of 66-68-68 for a total of 14-under 202.

Kapur, after a stunning 62 on the first day, had a 69 on the second, which kept him in a three-shot lead. However, the final day saw the pendulum swing Chopra's way and win the title, which also gave the Indian-American the first prize cheque of Rs. 22.50 lakhs. Kapur was left to clutch the second spot at 12-under 204 and received Rs. 15 lakhs. It was Chopra's first IGPL title, and earlier this year he won the APGA Tour championship and had done well at the Morocco Rising Stars Marrakech.

Sachin Baisoya grabbed third place with a 68 that gave him a total of 8-under, while five players Veer Ganapathy (71), Gaganjeet Bhullar (71), Varun Parikh (71), Aryan Roopa Anand (68) and Tushar Panu (68) were tied fifth.

Chopra's fine final day also meant Auro Goa Eagles took a double as they won the team title also this week. They totalled 23-under, while Kapur-led RVR Delhi Blue Bulls were pushed to second at 21-under.

Sachin Baisoya's final day push earned his team Hyderabad Firebird the third place at 13-under. They were tied for third with Flying Man Kolkata, for whom Varun Parikh was the star performer.

Chopra began with a birdie start but his three birdies in a span of four holes between the fifth and

the eighth gave him the momentum he needed. Meanwhile, Kapur just could not get the birdies to answer Chopra's charge. By the turn Chopra had moved ahead, and he made no mistakes on the back nine, even as Kapur's putter did not do his bidding.

Gulveer strikes 10,000m silver, Manpreet bags maiden Asian Games medal

United News Of India

AICHI-NAGOYA, SEPT 25 :Gulveer Singh delivered another long-distance podium finish while Manpreet Kaur finally broke through for a major Asian Games medal as India added two athletics medals on a productive Day Six of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games here on Friday.

Gulveer, the national record holder, produced a determined run to win silver in the men's 10,000m, clocking 28:29.38. Bahrain's Birhanu Balew claimed gold in 28:27.51, while Albert Kiptoo of Kenya took bronze in 28:34.38.

The silver extended Gulveer's Asian Games medal haul to two, following his bronze at Hangzhou in 2023. It also added another international podium to a breakthrough run that includes the Asian Championships title last year and silver at the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

Gulveer's performance also ensured India had a 10,000m medallist in both the men's and women's events at these Games. Seema Kumari had won bronze in the women's 10,000m on Thursday.

Asian Games: From uncertainty to history, Arkhangelskiy writes first ever aquatics golden moment with Bahrain

United News Of India

NAGOYA (JAPAN), SEP 25 :When Bahrain's national anthem began to play at the Tokyo Aquatics Center, Mikhail Arkhangelskiy stood atop the Asian Games podium and watched the red-and-white flag rise above the pool.

The race had lasted just 22.91 seconds. The journey to that moment had taken much longer.

A day after winning the men's 50m butterfly title at the Aichi-Nagoya

Asian Games, the 21-year-old told Xinhua in an exclusive interview that the moment would stay with him forever. "Winning gold at the Asian Games is an incredible feeling and a moment I will cherish forever," Arkhangelskiy said. "Making history by securing Bahrain Aquatics' first ever Asian Games gold medal makes this achievement even more meaningful."

Arkhangelskiy won Thursday's final in 22.91 seconds, equaling his own Asian record. Japan's Shoon Mitsunaga took silver in 23.06, while China's Wang Changhao claimed bronze in 23.25. The victory was Bahrain's first Asian Games

medal in swimming.

Arkhangelskiy's path to the podium was far from straightforward. Reuters reported that he



had lived in France for around 16 years after his family left Russia, but was unable to represent France internationally because he was not a French citizen. He later found an international sporting home in Bahrain, which he said provided strong support for his training and competition.

Speaking to Xinhua, however, Arkhangelskiy preferred to describe Thursday's breakthrough not as a sudden transformation, but as the result of years of work.

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