



Continue from Front Page.....

“We Will

put in place robust arrangements to minimise public inconvenience during the winter months. He stressed close coordination among the Roads and Buildings, Mechanical Engineering, Municipalities , Urban Local Bodies, PMGSY and other concerned agencies for timely snow clearance, directing the designation of nodal officers to ensure that no road remains unattended.

He also directed the administration to ensure adequate stocking of essential commodities, strengthen LPG buffer stocks and maintain uninterrupted emergency healthcare services in snow-bound areas. Reviewing power supply arrangements, he stressed strict adherence to notified power curtailment schedules and prior intimation to consumers about unscheduled power cuts.

The review covered key sectors, including health, education, roads and infrastructure, youth empowerment, food and civil supplies, power and rural development. The Chief Minister issued directions to accelerate the development of industrial estates in the district and streamline the delivery of social welfare assistance to ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive their entitlements without delay.

Emphasising the need to promote youth entrepreneurship, Omar Abdullah directed banking institutions to streamline and expedite disbursements under Mission YUVA to enable young entrepreneurs to establish their enterprises.

Reviewing progress under the District CAPEX Budget 2026–27, Centrally Sponsored Schemes and the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI), the Chief Minister called for regular fortnightly monitoring to improve physical and financial progress. He directed the district administration to ensure timely utilisation of allocated funds and prevent any lapsing of funds.

As part of the visit, the Chief Minister inaugurated public projects and laid foundation stones for new works worth 52 crore aimed at strengthening infrastructure and improving civic amenities in the district.

Major projects inaugurated include Jal Jeevan Mission Water Supply Schemes at Semthan(6.29crore), Shoul Sarsuna(5.66 crore) and Chontipora Baghwanpora(5.08 crore). The Chief Minister also laid foundation stones for the Ashajipora–Donipawa road upgradation(3.61 crore) and a steel girder bridge over Nallah Brengi at Her–Kandiwara (3.18 crore).

These initiatives will provide reliable access to safe drinking water, strengthen road connectivity, particularly in remote areas, and bring tangible improvements to the everyday lives of people across the district.

The review meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary; Ministers Javed Rana, Javid Dar and Satish Sharma; Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani; Members of the Legislative Assembly Peerzada Mohammad Sayeed, G.A. Mir, Altaf Ahmad Wani, Abdul Majeed Bhat, Zaffar Ali Khatana and Reyaz A. Khan; Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta; Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Bilal Mohiuddin; heads of departments and district officers.

Deputy Commissioner Bilal Mohiuddin presented an overview of the district's developmental progress and the status of ongoing works. Public representatives highlighted constituency-specific developmental demands, while various local deputations also met the Chief Minister and raised issues concerning their respective areas.

Reaffirming the Government's commitment to equitable development, efficient public service delivery and responsive governance, the Chief Minister assured that priority developmental works would be taken up systematically and directed the administration to ensure effective follow-up on public grievances.

“Panchayat Polls

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a BJP function in Kashmir, Sharma alleged that the ruling party had failed to deliver on its election promises and was reluctant to face voters at the grassroots level.

“The Panchayat elections will be the first litmus test for the Omar Abdullah government. They have made promises on electricity, jobs and ration, but the people have been deceived,” Sharma said.

He accused the Abdullah family of opposing Panchayat elections because it did not want other political leaders to emerge at the local level.

“They know the National Conference will face defeat in these elections. That is why they are afraid of holding them,” he claimed.

Sharma said the government should face the public through Panchayat and municipal elections, which he described as an important measure of its popularity.

On the security situation, the BJP leader claimed that militancy had declined significantly in Jammu and Kashmir over the past five years.

He credited the Union Home Ministry

and security agencies for the improvement, claiming that recruitment of local Kashmiri youth into militant organisations had stopped over the past two years.

“This is a major sign that militancy is coming to an end. The youth who were earlier misled into taking up arms are no longer joining terrorist organisations,” he said.

Sharma said security forces were continuing operations against foreign militants, while activities linked to stone-pelting and overground worker networks had also declined.

Referring to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent remarks, he said Kashmir was gradually moving from decades of militancy towards peace, although complete normalcy would take more time.

On comparisons between political prisoners in Kashmir and protesters in Ladakh, Sharma rejected the argument, saying people accused of serious militancy-related offences could not be treated in the same manner as peaceful protesters.

He said the BJP would support justice for innocent people but maintained that those involved in violence against the country could not be described as innocent.

Earlier, Sharma addressed a BJP programme organised to honour senior party leader Ashok Koul, who has been assigned a new organisational responsibility after serving in a key party position for around 14 years.

He praised Koul's contribution to strengthening the BJP's organisational network in Kashmir and said changes in party responsibilities were part of a routine organisational process.

Sharma added that Koul's guidance would continue to benefit the party in the future. (KNS)

“Our Internal

In a post on the social media platform X, Modi said, "Warm birthday greetings to Home Minister Shri Amit Shah Ji. His administrative understanding has ensured India's internal security systems become more effective."

The Prime Minister particularly highlighted the government's stated progress in tackling Left-wing extremism and combating drug abuse, describing the efforts as important to the country's security and social objectives. "Particularly noteworthy are the successes in eliminating the menace of Maoism and in furthering our dream of a society free from drugs," he said.

Modi also wished Shah a long and healthy life, expressing the hope that he would continue to serve the people. "I pray that he is blessed with a long and healthy life in service of the people," the Prime Minister said.

Shah has played a central role in the union government's internal security strategy, including its approach to counter-insurgency operations, curbing Left-wing extremism and combating drug trafficking.

The Centre has made the elimination of Maoist violence and the goal of a drug-free India key policy priorities, relying on security operations, intelligence coordination and cooperation between central and state agencies.

The government has also pursued measures aimed at disrupting drug-trafficking networks and strengthening enforcement against narcotics-related offences.

“People Should

issues and that people should judge its performance over its full term.

“The trust and confidence with which the people of Jammu and Kashmir elected the Omar Abdullah government carries a responsibility. We have made certain promises in our manifesto, and we will fulfil them within five years,” he said.

Responding to a question about the resolution of a particular public issue, the Deputy Chief Minister said it was only one of several matters requiring government attention.

“This is one issue. There are many other issues that we have to resolve,” he said.

Choudhary also criticised opposition parties for what he described as unnecessary attacks on the government and alleged that certain media outlets were publishing reports at the behest of political parties or individuals.

He urged people not to be influenced by such criticism and instead maintain confidence in Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

“People should have faith in Omar Sahib. He is an honest leader who has always fulfilled his promises and will continue to do so,” Choudhary said.

The Deputy Chief Minister reiterated that the government would continue working towards fulfilling the commitments made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. (KNS)

JKBOSE grants

examination to bridge discontinuity in their academic pursuits.”—(KNO)

J&K to

Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 23.7 degrees Celsius on Thursday, 1.8 degrees above the seasonal normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 5.2 degrees Celsius, marginally below the normal of 5.4 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund recorded a maximum of 23.6 degrees Celsius, 3.1 degrees above normal, while Kupwara registered 25.4 degrees Celsius, 3 degrees above normal.

Pahalgam recorded a maximum temperature of 19.4 degrees Celsius, marginally above normal, while Gulmarg registered 16 degrees Celsius, 3.1 degrees above the seasonal average.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 30 degrees Celsius, 0.6 degrees below normal, while Katra registered 27.8 degrees Celsius. Baderwah recorded a maximum of 23.3 degrees Celsius, 0.3 degrees below normal—(KNO)

“Delays in Court

in pending court cases, particularly contempt petitions, warning that delays and failures could invite accountability for the officers concerned.

The directions have been issued by the Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, with the stated objective of ensuring effective representation of the government before courts and tribunals and timely compliance with judicial directions.

All administrative departments, heads of departments and other concerned authorities have been directed to provide complete records, relevant documents and specific factual inputs to the concerned Law Officer and Officer In-charge Litigation sufficiently in advance to facilitate the timely preparation and filing of replies and affidavits.

In cases involving implementation of judicial directions, the latest compliance status, supported by documentary evidence, must be furnished to the concerned Law Officer and Officer In-charge Litigation well before the date fixed for hearing.

The government has also directed the Officer In-charge Litigation to maintain close coordination with the concerned administrative department and the Law Officer to ensure that replies, affidavits and compliance reports are filed before the respective courts and tribunals within the prescribed time.

Warning against delays, the government has stated that any failure to furnish the requisite records, instructions or compliance reports resulting in non-filing of replies or affidavits, or leading to adverse judicial orders, will be viewed seriously. Responsibility will be fixed upon the officers concerned in accordance with the applicable rules.

The instructions have been circulated to the Advocate General, Jammu and Kashmir; all Administrative Secretaries; the Registrar of the Central Administrative Tribunal, Jammu/Srinagar Bench; the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir; government counsel; Deputy Commissioners; Superintendents of Police; and the Director of Litigation, among other authorities. [KNT

“J&K's Anti-Drug

extensive grassroots outreach under social welfare schemes and its coordinated, whole-of-government approach to combating drug abuse, describing the UT's efforts as a commendable model with potential for replication across the country.

Pant made these observations during a comprehensive review of the implementation of various social welfare schemes and programmes in Jammu and Kashmir, chaired jointly by him and Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Home; Commissioner Secretary, Education; Secretary, Social Welfare Department; Secretary, Health; Director General, Social Welfare, Kashmir; Director, Social Welfare, Jammu; Head of Department, Psychiatry, Government Medical College, Srinagar; Secretary, SC/ ST/OBC Boards, besides officers of other concerned departments.

Appreciating the UT administration's efforts to extend welfare interventions to the grassroots, Pant observed that the outreach undertaken across villages and panchayats reflected a strong commitment to inclusive welfare delivery. He particularly commended J&K's coordinated campaign against the drug menace, noting that its whole-of-government approach had received nationwide appreciation and could serve as a successful model for other regions.

Expressing satisfaction over the progress of individual beneficiary-oriented schemes, the Union Secretary highlighted the importance of ensuring that interventions for students, senior citizens, destitute women and other vulnerable sections deliver meaningful outcomes. He advised the administration to document first-hand beneficiary testimonies and showcase the thousands of success stories emerging from these initiatives to generate wider awareness and amplify their impact across the country.

Reviewing the rehabilitation of persons

engaged in begging, Pant encouraged the UT administration to work towards achieving the 'Begging-Free City' status for its urban centres. He observed that the relatively small number of such persons could be addressed through focused rehabilitation, sustained support and collaboration with dedicated non-governmental organisations.

The Union Secretary also outlined key priorities and focus areas for the UT to facilitate the achievement of the Ministry's objectives. He appreciated Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo for his continued guidance and mentoring of the J&K's Social Welfare Department, observing that its diverse mandate required close coordination across multiple departments for effective implementation.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo reaffirmed the Government's unwavering commitment to inclusive growth, social justice and community empowerment. He emphasised that the UT administration was committed to saturating the benefits of welfare schemes among all eligible and deserving beneficiaries, particularly those belonging to disadvantaged and underprivileged sections of society.

Further the Chief Secretary threw light on the population profile of various beneficiary groups in J&K, the welfare measures available for their upliftment and the legal, institutional and regulatory safeguards established to protect their rights and prevent atrocities, discrimination and harassment. He stressed the importance of coordinated efforts to ensure that the benefits of these interventions reach every eligible beneficiary.

On this occasion the Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Doifode Sagar Dattatray, presented a detailed appraisal of the progress achieved under various centrally sponsored and UT-level schemes, covering drug demand reduction, educational scholarships, senior citizen welfare, rehabilitation, sanitation-worker safety, community development and legal protection for vulnerable groups.

Under the Nasha Mukta J&K 100 Days Abhiyan, the Department reported extensive public outreach through coordinated efforts involving multiple departments. It was revealed that more than 7.21 million outreach events had been conducted across the UT with Addiction Treatment Facilities handling 66,594 outpatients, while the Department's Drug De-addiction and Rehabilitation Centres providing care to 1,053 individuals.

On the enforcement front, it was given out that the Police had registered 1,187 FIRs and arrested 1,349 persons. With respect to financial investigations the meeting was apprised that the same resulted in the seizure or attachment of 125 immovable properties valued at 9,828.17 lakh and 60 movable assets worth 703.83 lakh belonging to drug traffickers.

The meeting was informed that the proposed Rehabilitation and Socio-Economic Reintegration Scheme for Drug Abuse Victims, 2026, envisaging a structured three-year recovery framework.

On this occasion, Dr Arshad Hussain, Head of the Department of Psychiatry, GMC Srinagar, elaborated on J&K's 'Circle of Care' approach to addressing substance use disorders. The three-dimensional strategy

provides continuity of care from admission to de-addiction facilities through treatment, rehabilitation, social reintegration and long-term monitoring to support sustained recovery.

Moreover it was divulged that under the Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana, it was informed that 419 villages had been selected for development as model villages, of which 28 had been declared Adarsh Grams. A total of 81 development works had been completed during 2026–27 so far. The meeting also reviewed the funding requirement for completing subsequent phases of the programme.

The Department informed that 496.59 lakh had been utilised under the Grants-in-Aid component of PM-AJAY towards basic infrastructure, skill development and income-generating assets. Similarly under the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana, 17 Senior Citizen Homes were operational across the UT, including eight in Jammu division, accommodating around 450 senior citizens, and nine in Kashmir division.

The review also covered educational scholarships under PM-YASASVI for OBC, EBC and DNT communities and scholarship schemes for Scheduled Caste students. As of October 15, 2026, a total of 20,611 applications had been received against a target of 24,817 under PM-YASASVI for the academic year 2026–27.

Under the Scheduled Caste scholarship schemes, 5,613 post-matric and 2,866 pre-matric applications had been submitted through the National Scholarship Portal. Special drives and individual follow-ups were underway to clear pending cases and expedite Aadhaar seeding.

Under the National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE), 741 sewer and septic tank workers had been profiled across 74 Urban Local Bodies, of whom 734 had been validated. In addition, 5,862 urban waste pickers had been profiled, with 4,508 validated. The Department had distributed 721 personal protective equipment kits to sewer and septic tank workers and 3,854 kits to waste pickers.

The meeting reviewed the implementation of safeguards under the Protection of Civil Rights framework and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. In this direction the SAMBAL 2.0 portal had resolved 63 of the 66 online grievances registered. Relief amounting to 58.60 lakh had been disbursed through direct benefit transfers to 50 victims of atrocities between 2022 and 2026.

During the deliberations, J&K highlighted the pending central financial share for certain OBC hostel projects had affected their completion. The UT administration sought the Ministry's intervention for the release of the requisite funds to facilitate early completion of these facilities.

The review emphasised the need for sustained interdepartmental coordination, effective beneficiary outreach, timely resolution of implementation bottlenecks and a stronger focus on documenting and publicising success stories to ensure that welfare interventions translate into tangible improvements in the lives of people across Jammu and Kashmir.

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PAC reviews CAG audit observations of H&UDD Deptt Salathia calls for citizen-centric, scientific waste management system

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: The Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly today convened a meeting at the Legislative Assembly here, under the Chairmanship of Surjeet Singh Slathia, to examine the CAG Audit Paras pertaining to the Housing and Urban Development Department.

The meeting was attended by Legislators Mubarik Gul, Shamim Firdous, Qaysar Jamshaid Lone, Ranbir Singh Pathania, Ch. Mohammad Akram, Vikram Randhawa and Tanvir Sadiq.

The Chairman observed that deficiencies flagged by the CAG including gaps in planning for ULBs, lack of stakeholder consultation in preparation of SWM Action Plans, non-assessment of quantity and composition of waste and inadequate segregation at source need to be addressed on priority. He further noted that issues related to collection, transportation, processing, scientific disposal, adherence to SWM Rules 2016 and deficient manpower and capacity building of sanitation staff require concerted efforts at the ULB level.

The Committee held detailed deliberations on Audit Paras concerning the Solid Waste Management in Urban Local Bodies, including collection, segregation at source, transportation, processing and scientific disposal of waste. The Committee also reviewed issues relating to the financial management, capacity building and implementation of waste management rules. During the meeting, Surjeet Singh Slathia, emphasized that proper utilization of public funds is essential for strengthening the democratic institutions and ensuring clean environment for citizens. He underlined the need for strict adherence to the prescribed guidelines and for time-bound



implementation of Solid Waste Management projects.

The Chairman stressed on achieving 100 percent door-to-door collection and segregation of waste at source, improvement of approach roads to dumping sites and scientific management of legacy waste, particularly along highway corridors. He emphasized on conducting Compliance Audit and Performance Audit to ensure transparency, accountability

and effective outcome of urban development schemes.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Mandeep Kaur, Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD; Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Commissioner, SMC; Ayushi Sudan, Commissioner, JMC, Chief Engineer, UEED Director, ULB Jammu Deputy Accountant General, besides other senior officers of the Department and officers of the Assembly Secretariat.

FDA Conducts 274 Inspections lifts 213 Food Samples under Festive En- forcement Drive

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 21: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: The Food & Drugs Administration (FDA), J&K intensified food safety inspections across all districts in view of the festive season to ensure compliance with the prescribed food safety standards.

As part of the ongoing Festive Enforcement Drive, 274 inspections have been conducted and 213 food samples lifted for laboratory analysis.

The drive focuses on checking the quality and safety of edible oils, ghee, sweets, khoya, paneer, milk and milk products, and other food items commonly consumed during the festive season.

During the drive, Food Business Operators (FBOs) are being directed to comply with the prescribed requirements relating to food hygiene, sanitation, storage and handling. They have also been instructed to maintain hygienic conditions at their establishments in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011.

The FDA, J&K, reiterated that all Food Business Operators must comply with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and its rules and regulations. Any violation shall be dealt with in accordance with law. The Festive Enforcement Drive will continue across the Union Territory through regular inspections and sampling to monitor compliance with food safety standards and protect public health during the festive season.

Consumers are being requested to report any suspected unsafe or adulterated food product through Toll-Free Helpline No. 104.

Kulgam Police Arrest Three in Assault and Cattle Theft Case; 193 Sheep and Goats Worth 25 Lakh Recovered

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, OCTOBER 22: Kulgam Police have arrested



three accused persons in connection with an alleged assault and livestock theft case at Humpathri and recovered 193 sheep and goats worth approximately 25 lakh. According to police, a written complaint was received at Police Post D.K. Marg on October 8, 2026, alleging that 7-8 persons had assaulted women at Humpathri and taken away livestock belonging to the victims. Following the complaint, FIR No. 92/2026 under Sections 310(2) and 115(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) was registered at Police Station DH Pora, and an investigation was taken up. During the course of the investigation, police made sustained efforts to trace the accused and recover the stolen livestock. These efforts led to the arrest of three accused persons and the recovery of 193 livestock, including 181 sheep and 12 goats, with an estimated value of 25 lakh. Police said that further investigation into the case is underway.

MACT Srinagar Opens Door to Compensation for Families of Deceased Owner-Drivers

Tribunal rules legal heirs can seek insurance relief if the deceased was not proven negligent; judgment may have wider implications for motor accident claims

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: In a significant ruling with potential implications for motor accident compensation claims, the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT), Srinagar, has held that the legal heirs of a deceased vehicle owner-cum-driver can seek compensation from the insurer under Section 166 of the Motor Vehicles Act, subject to the facts of the case and applicable insurance policy conditions.

The ruling was delivered by Presiding Officer Fayaz Ahmad Qureshi on October 21, 2026, while adjudicating a claim arising from the death of Syed Javed Nazir, an engineer who died after his Hyundai Santro car plunged into a gorge near Digdol in Ramban district on



July 30, 2013. His wife, two minor daughters and parents had approached the Tribunal seeking compensation from Oriental Insurance Company Limited. Addressing the central legal question of whether a family could claim compensation when the deceased was driving his own insured vehicle, the Tribunal emphasised that the Motor Vehicles Act, being beneficial and social-welfare legislation, must be interpreted to facilitate just compensation for eligible

claimants.

The Tribunal observed that the legal representatives of a deceased owner-driver could maintain a claim against the insurer where the circumstances of the accident and the applicable policy provisions supported such relief. It examined the evidence and concluded that the vehicle had gone out of control and plunged into a gorge, with negligence on the part of the deceased not established. The judgment also considered the relationship between statutory motor insurance requirements and personal accident cover for owner-drivers. Its reasoning indicates that the absence of separately purchased personal accident cover should not automatically result in the rejection of every claim by the legal heirs of a deceased owner-driver.

Div Com Kashmir reviews progress of Greater Srinagar Comprehensive Sewerage Scheme, sets One-Month deadline

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Thursday reviewed the progress of the Comprehensive Sewerage Scheme of Greater Srinagar, being implemented under the Jawahar Lal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM), and directed the completion of all pending works within one month.

The review meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Chief Engineer, Urban Environmental Engineering Department, General Manager, National Buildings Construction Corporation, and officers from KPDC, PHE, Roads and Buildings, and Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner took stock of the various components of the 60 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Noorbagh, Srinagar, and reviewed the status of the remaining works required for its completion and commissioning.

He reviewed vital works included the installation of a hydraulic gate at the Noorbagh outfall near the damaged riverbank, remodelling



of transformers at the Outfall Pumping Station and Infall Pumping Station, plugging of leakages in the 60 MLD STP, and refurbishment of all agitators and aerators at the treatment plant.

The Divisional Commissioner directed NBCC to ensure the completion of all pending works within one month and subsequently hand over the project to UEED.

He further directed the Executive Engineer, UEED, to conduct site visits twice a week to closely monitor progress, ensure effective coordination among the concerned agencies, and expedite the completion of the remaining works within the stipulated timeframe.

BJP always recognises and honours dedication to organisation: Sat Sharma

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, 22 October 2026:

J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma CA has said that the Bharatiya Janata Party has always recognised, respected and honoured the dedication, commitment and selfless services of its leaders and workers who contribute towards strengthening the organisation and advancing its ideology.

Sat Sharma was addressing a felicitation ceremony organised at Countryside Hotel, Nowgam, Srinagar, where former BJP J&K General Secretary (Organisation) Ashok Koul was honoured in recognition of his dedicated services, organisational commitment and significant contribution towards strengthening the party across Jammu and Kashmir.

Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, BJP General Secretaries Mohammad Anwar Khan and Gopal Mahajan, J&K Waqf Board Chairperson Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, MLARS Pathania and several other senior party leaders were present on the occasion.

Sat Sharma, while speaking on the occasion, said that the BJP is an organisation where dedication, discipline, sincerity and commitment to ideology are valued above personal ambitions and positions.

Unlike parties driven by individuals or families, the BJP draws its real strength from dedicated workers who serve the organisation with honesty and commitment.



Every worker, irrespective of position, receives due recognition and respect for sincere contributions.

Sat Sharma said that tireless efforts of Ashok Koul, his vast experience and disciplined working style have played an important role in expanding the BJP's organisational network and strengthening its grassroots presence across Jammu and Kashmir.

Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma said that the felicitation reflected the BJP's organisational culture of acknowledging dedication, loyalty and selfless service. He said that Ashok Koul had worked tirelessly under

challenging circumstances, guided countless workers and contributed significantly towards strengthening the party's organisational structure.

Expressing gratitude for the honour, Ashok Koul thanked the party leadership, senior functionaries and workers for their affection, cooperation and support throughout his organisational journey. He reiterated his commitment to the party's ideology and urged workers to maintain unity, discipline and dedication while continuing to serve society and strengthen the organisation.

DDC Kupwara reviews progress of NH- 701 (RKCTC Road) Construction Work

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, OCTOBER 22: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Abhishek Sharma, today convened a meeting of officers to review the ongoing construction work on the Rafiabad-Kupwara-Chowkibal-Tangdhar-Chamkote (RKCTC) section of National Highway-701 (NH-701) and resolve bottlenecks slowing down project execution.

During the meeting, the DDC reviewed key impediments affecting work progress, including pending land revenue records, mutation attestations, structure clearances, and the shifting of utility lines.

Addressing land-related matters, the DDC directed the Tehsildars of Langate, Kupwara, Drugmulla, and Trehgam to immediately clear all pending revenue documents and attest mutations to avoid any delay in handing over land to construction teams. The officers were instructed to submit compliance certificates in this regard without delay.

On the relocation of utilities along the highway alignment, Executive Engineers from the Jal Shakti (PHE) Department and the Power Development Department (PDD) were asked to shift water pipelines and electric poles expeditiously. The DDC also



reviewed the availability of construction material, directing the District Mineral Officer (DMO) and concerned Tehsildars to ensure adequate supply of muck, soil, and RBM while strictly adhering to statutory guidelines.

Furthermore, line departments were instructed to fast-track assessments and clearances for structures standing within the right-of-way to facilitate unhindered work on site.

Emphasizing the strategic and economic significance of NH-701 for the district, the DDC urged all departments to maintain close inter-agency coordination and promptly resolve field-level issues to meet project deadlines.



DDC Kulgam conducts inspection of JJM Water Supply schemes in Kulgam

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, OCTOBER 22: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kulgam (Chairman District Jal Jeevan Mission), Shahzad Alam today conducted a extensive tour in Kulgam to inspect the progress of various water supply schemes (WSS) being implemented under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

The DDC conducted on-site reviews of civil, mechanical and groundwater works of WSS Lankar Pombay and Khalbura, WSS Banimulla GB, WSS Khanmulla, WSS Ashthal GB and WSS Laisoo GB. During the inspection, Shahzad Alam reviewed the physical progress on the ground, evaluated ongoing construction and installation activities, and assessed the operational readiness



of the infrastructure. Interacting with the engineering team, he assessed progress against prescribed timelines

and highlighted the necessity of adhering strictly to approved standards of work execution. Reiterating the core objective

of the Jal Jeevan Mission, to ensure reliable, safe, and sustainable tap drinking water to every rural household, the DDC directed officers to expedite the pace of work and ensure strict monitoring to prevent any avoidable delays.

He further tasked the engineering staff with maintaining close oversight of ongoing projects to guarantee that the newly created infrastructure effectively fulfills its target of delivering safe drinking water to all targeted habitations across Kulgam district.

Executive Engineer PHE Division Kulgam, Project Manager DPMU Kulgam, Assistant Executive Engineers (AEE) of Damhal and Kulgam, AEE PHE Mechanical, and Junior Engineers of the concerned jurisdictions attended the inspection visits.

DC Shopian chairs CLU Meeting, reviews Cases for timely disposal

■ **HT News Network**

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 22: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, today chaired a meeting regarding Change of Land Use (CLU) cases at the Mini-Secretariat,

Shopian.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the cases pertaining to Change of Land Use and emphasised the need for their thorough scrutiny in accordance with the prescribed rules, regulations and established guidelines. He stressed upon the concerned officers to ensure transparency, maintain proper documentation and adhere to the stipulated procedures while examining



the cases. The DC directed the officers concerned to expedite the processing

of pending cases and ensure their timely disposal as per the applicable norms. He underscored the importance of inter-departmental coordination and accountability to facilitate a smooth, transparent and efficient process.

The meeting was attended by ACR Shakoor Ahmed Dar, GM, DIC, Shurjil Naik, Chief Agriculture officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Xens, Tehsilidars and other line Deptts associated with the processing of CLU cases.

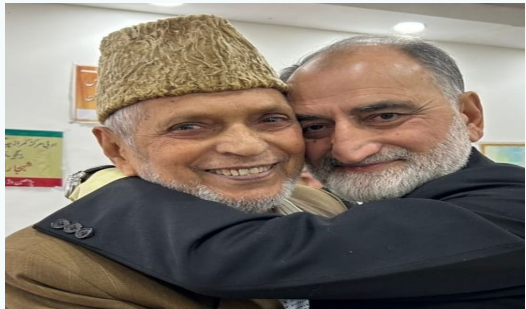
Dr Rafiq Masoodi Mourns Demise of Ghulam Rasool Shah, Calls It Irreparable Loss

Says Shah Sahib's lifelong association with Masoodi family and contribution to Majlis Un Nisa and Meeras Mahal will be remembered

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar:-Dr Rafiq Masoodi, Patron of Adbi Markaz Kamraz and Advisor to Majlis Un Nisa and Meeras Mahal, J&K, Sopore, has expressed profound grief over the demise of Ghulam Rasool Shah, describing his death as an irreparable loss to the Masoodi family, the two institutions and all those who shared a close association with him. In his condolence message, Dr Masoodi said Shah Sahib was a sincere well-wisher, trusted associate and guiding figure who maintained a close and affectionate relationship with his late parents and remained a source of support, goodwill and guidance for the family over the years. He said Shah Sahib's longstanding association with Muzammil Masoodi, along with his affection and commitment towards Majlis Un Nisa and Meeras Mahal, made him a cherished and respected personality. His sincerity, warmth and selfless companionship, Dr Masoodi said, would remain etched in the memories of those who knew him.

Expressing deep sorrow over the loss, Dr Masoodi said Shah Sahib's passing had created a void that would be difficult to fill, adding that his noble qualities, wisdom and enduring bonds of affection would continue to be remembered. Dr Masoodi prayed for eternal peace for the departed soul and sought Almighty Allah's blessings to grant him the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous. He also extended his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for strength and patience for them to bear the irreparable loss.



PD&SJ Srinagar Convenes 4th UTRC Meeting

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: The 4th and the last meeting of calendar year of the Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC) was convened today under the chairmanship of Naseer Ahmad Dar, Principal District & Sessions Judge (Chairman DLSA), Srinagar, in the conference hall of the Principal District & Sessions Judge (PD&SJ) Srinagar.

The meeting was presided over by PD&SJ Srinagar, and was attended by, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar along with Senior Superintendent of Police Srinagar, ADC Srinagar, Secretary DLSA Srinagar, Superintendent Central Jail Srinagar, and Public Prosecutor PD&SJ Court Srinagar. The Secretary DLSA Srinagar convened the meeting who deliberated upon the cases of eligible undertrial prisoners in accordance with the guidelines of the Supreme Court of India and the Under Trial



Review Committee framework. The Committee reviewed the status of undertrial inmates lodged in the Central Jail Srinagar pertaining to District Srinagar and examined cases for consideration of appropriate legal relief, including release on bail or other measures as permissible under law.

The Chairman emphasized the need for timely review of undertrial cases to ensure that no eligible prisoner remains incarcerated unnecessarily and reiterated the commitment of the District Legal Services Authority, Srinagar, towards safeguarding the constitutional and legal rights of undertrial

prisoners. The Committee also stressed the importance of effective coordination among all stakeholder departments for expeditious disposal of eligible cases. In the meeting, four Cases of under trial prisoners furnished by the concerned authorities were taken up for consideration, out of which two cases were recommended for consideration by the committee as per the guidelines. The meeting concluded with necessary directions and recommendations for prompt follow-up action by the concerned authorities in accordance with the decisions.

District Treasury Shopian organises Training on JKIFMS Digital Financial Modules for DDOs, dealing assistants

■ **HT News Network**

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 22: District Treasury Shopian is conducting a capacity-building and training programme for Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) and concerned dealing assistants on the implementation of digital financial modules under the Jammu and Kashmir Integrated Financial Management System (JKIFMS).

The training programme which commenced on October 19 and will continue up to October 27, 2026 was inaugurated by District Treasury Officer (DTO) Shopian, Omar Javid at the office premises of District Treasury Shopian.

While speaking on the occasion, DTO Shopian highlighted the importance of effective adoption of digital



financial systems for streamlining government financial transactions and improving efficiency, transparency and accountability in the delivery of financial services.

He stressed upon the participating officials to make full use of the training sessions and develop adequate familiarity with the new digital modules for their effective implementation.

The programme focuses on the implementation and operational aspects of e-Bill,

e-Voucher, e-Receipt and e-Account modules, aimed at facilitating a smooth transition towards efficient and fully digitised financial management processes.

During the sessions, participating DDOs and dealing assistants are being familiarised with the workflow and procedures associated with the digital modules, besides being provided guidance on their effective utilisation in day-to-day financial transactions.

DDC Kupwara conducts Major Health Review; Pushes for Winter Readiness, High Care Standards

■ **HT News Network**

KUPWARA, OCTOBER 22: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Abhishek Sharma chaired a comprehensive review meeting today to assess the overall functioning, institutional readiness, and healthcare delivery mechanisms of the Health Department across the district.

The meeting was attended by Principal,

Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara, Prof. (Dr.) Khurshed Ahmad Wani; Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Handwara; Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) of Lolab and Karnah; Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Kupwara; Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Kupwara, along with other senior district and sectoral officers.

During the meeting, Principal GMC Handwara presented a detailed overview outlining the operational status, institutional capacity, patient care facilities, and current staff positioning at

GMC Handwara. Taking stock of institutional safety, the DDC impressed upon the Principal to immediately conduct a comprehensive fire safety audit across all associated facilities to ensure patient and infrastructure security.

Reviewing the primary and secondary healthcare sector, the CMO briefed the chair on manpower allocation, healthcare outreach, and facility-wise progress. The DDC laid strong emphasis on quality assurance, directing health administrators to rigorously fulfill parameters

required for National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) and LaQshya certifications to upgrade maternal and newborn care standards.

In view of the approaching harsh winter season, the DDC underscored the urgency of robust winter preparedness, noting that rural and high-altitude health centers often witness heightened patient influx and logistical constraints. He sought ground-level feedback from SDM Karnah regarding the specific medical requirements of the snow-bound sub-divisions.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs organises One-Day Interaction Programme with ST Beneficiaries, FRA title holders at Budgam

■ **HT News Network**

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 22: Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, organised an interaction programme with Scheduled Tribe (ST) beneficiaries and Forest Rights Act title holders of Sub-Division Khansahib in district Budgam to raise awareness about the Forest Rights Act (FRA), facilitate awareness regarding the process of filing and obtaining forest rights claims, and highlight various welfare initiatives aimed at the socio-economic development of tribal communities.

Under Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, Shambhu Nath Pal, attended the programme as the Chief Guest. Upon

his arrival at the venue, he inspected stalls showcasing locally cultivated products and other items produced by members of the Scheduled Tribe community. The exhibition highlighted the local livelihood activities, traditional skills and economic potential of the tribal population.

During the programme, Shambhu Nath Pal held detailed deliberations on the provisions of the Forest Rights Act, with particular emphasis on Community Forest Rights (CFR) and Individual Forest Rights (IFR). He sensitised the participants about the objectives and scope of the Act and explained the procedure for filing claims, documentation required, and the process involved in securing eligible forest rights under the

prescribed framework.

He also interacted with the beneficiaries and emphasised the importance of awareness, proper guidance and coordination among the concerned departments to ensure that eligible members of the Scheduled Tribe community are able to understand and access the benefits available to them under the Act.

Dr. Basharat Hussain, Secretary Tribal Affairs Advisory Board, also addressed the gathering and spoke about the significance of the Forest Rights Act and its potential to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of tribal communities. He highlighted the benefits of the Act and stressed the need to enhance awareness among eligible beneficiaries so that they could avail



themselves of their entitlements in accordance with the prescribed provisions.

Earlier, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate Khansahib, Jahangir Ahmad Giri briefed the visiting officer about the demographic profile of the Scheduled Tribe population in the region, their socio-economic conditions and the developmental initiatives being undertaken for their welfare. He also outlined various government welfare schemes and departmental interventions aimed at promoting community development, improving livelihood opportunities and ensuring the overall upliftment of tribal households in the subdivision.

The programme also provided an opportunity for beneficiaries to

share their experiences and express their views regarding the implementation of the Forest Rights Act. Several FRA beneficiaries spoke about the benefits they had received after obtaining their forest rights and expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the District Administration Budgam and the Sub-Divisional Administration Khansahib for their support and facilitation.

The beneficiaries highlighted the importance of such interaction programmes in bridging the gap between the administration and the community, addressing concerns at the grassroots level and ensuring that information about government initiatives reaches the intended beneficiaries.



NIT Srinagar welcomes Maharashtra delegation under Yuva Sangam Phase-VII

Director encourages delegates to explore Kashmir's heritage, beauty

HT News Network

Srinagar, Oct 22: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Wednesday welcomed the Yuva Sangam Phase-VII delegation from Maharashtra, led by IIT Bombay, under the Government of India's Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) initiative.

The delegation was received by Prof. Anurag Misra, Director, NIT Srinagar, and Dr. Ashok Kumar, Nodal Officer, Yuva Sangam and Coordinator, EBSB Cell, NIT Srinagar. Faculty members Dr. Pramod Kumar, Dr. Hareesh, Dr. Brajendra, Dr. Nitika Kundan, Dr. Janani L., Dr. Dinesh and Dr. Pankaj, along with EBSB student volunteers, were present on the occasion. Addressing the delegates, Prof. Anurag Misra encouraged them to explore Kashmir's cultural heritage, traditions, technological progress and natural landscape. He urged the students to make the most of their visit, sharing the message, "Dil Maange More!" Dr. Ashok Kumar highlighted the role



of Yuva Sangam in promoting national integration, cultural understanding and mutual respect among young people from different regions.

He emphasised that direct interaction and experiential learning help strengthen people-

to-people connections and foster a deeper understanding of India's diversity.

The programme is structured around the Five P's—Paryatan (Tourism), Parampara (Traditions), Pragati (Development), Paraspar Sampark (People-to-People Connect) and

Prodyogiki (Technology).

The initiative provides participants with opportunities to explore Kashmir's heritage, understand its developmental progress, engage with local communities and gain exposure to educational and technological advancements. Faculty members and EBSB student volunteers will facilitate the delegation's engagement with the Institute, local communities and the cultural and educational landscape of Jammu and Kashmir throughout their stay.

On Thursday, delegates participated in a yoga session, followed by a visit to the Dargah Hazratbal and explored the nearby market. They also visited the market along Dal Lake and experienced the scenic beauty of the lake through a memorable Shikara ride. The visit seeks to strengthen ties between Maharashtra and Jammu and Kashmir through cultural exchange, experiential learning and interaction, in furtherance of the objectives of the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative.

Dr Darakhshan Releases G N Adfar's Biography of Sheikh-ul-Aalam at Chrar-e-Sharief

"We need to tell our story of spiritual excellence to the world": Dr Andrabi

HT News Network

Budgam, OCTOBER 22: Chrar-e-Sharief (Budgam), October 16: Chairperson of the Jammu & Kashmir

a rich legacy of Rishi-Sufi thought, spiritual wisdom, compassion and universal human values. The life and teachings of Sheikh-ul-Aalam represent the finest traditions of this heritage, and it is our collective responsibility



Waqf Board, Dr. Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, today released a biographical book on the life, teachings and spiritual legacy of Hazrat Sheikh-ul-Aalam Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA), written in English by noted writer Baba Ghulam Nabi Adfar. Titled "Apostle of Light", the book was formally released by Dr. Andrabi at a special literary and academic event organised by Kashmir Markaz-e-Adab-wa-Saqafat and was held at the Sheikh-ul-Aalam Conference Hall of the J&K Waqf Board, Chrar-e-Sharief. The event was attended by eminent scholars, writers and academicians, including Prof. G. N. Khaki, Dr. Satish Vimal and Ghulam Hassan Talib, besides other intellectuals and admirers of the rich Rishi-Sufi heritage of Kashmir. Famed author Inayat Gul moderated the event and presented the welcome address.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Andrabi appreciated the author for documenting the life and message of Sheikh-ul-Aalam in the English language and said that such literary efforts have the potential to take Kashmir's profound spiritual and cultural heritage to a wider global audience.

"We need to tell our story of spiritual excellence to the world. Kashmir has

to preserve, document and communicate this legacy for future generations," Dr. Andrabi said. Dr. Andrabi said that Sheikh-ul-Aalam's teachings transcend geographical, social and sectarian boundaries and continue to remain relevant in the contemporary world. His emphasis on spirituality, humility, compassion, human dignity, harmony and devotion to the Creator, she said, provides important guidance for society, particularly for the younger generation. She further observed that translating and documenting Kashmir's spiritual heritage in languages such as English is essential for creating greater awareness about the region's indigenous intellectual and spiritual traditions beyond Jammu and Kashmir. "Our saints and spiritual masters have given us a universal message of peace, tolerance, coexistence and service to humanity. Their contribution should not remain confined to our local memory; it must reach readers, scholars and seekers across the world," Dr. Andrabi said. She congratulated Baba Ghulam Nabi Adfar for bringing out 'Apostle of Light' and expressed hope that the book would encourage further research and literary work on the lives and contributions of Kashmir's great Rishi-Sufi personalities.

IUST records highest-ever annual admissions in 2026, marks major milestone in 2-decade academic journey

HT News Network

Awantipora, Oct 22: The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) has achieved a significant milestone in its academic journey by recording its highest-ever annual admissions in 2026, with over 2000 students admitted across its 100 academic programmes.

This represents an increase of around 10 percent over the admissions recorded in 2025, reflecting the continued growth of the University and its expanding contribution to the higher education landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.



Notably, the university has achieved its highest-ever annual admission tally even as the admission process for the B. Tech. programmes for working professionals remains ongoing. The eventual enrolment for the 2026 academic session may therefore rise further, underscoring the continued expansion of academic opportunities at IUST. The university has recorded an

overall seat occupancy of approximately 91.7 percent.

IUST has recorded a great surge in admissions in last five years with addition of new programmes. Since 2022 admissions in the university have doubled with more than 100 percent increase in programme offerings and the same has been achieved under visionary leadership of the honourable Vice Chancellor.

Agriculture Department Kashmir launches Khet Bachao Abhiyan campaign

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Department Kashmir today launched Khet Bachao Abhiyan and the campaign will run from October 22 to November 30 in every village of the valley.

The main event was organised in District Bandipora and Project Coordinator Mushroom, Kashmir was the chief guest on the occasion.

Main objective of the Abhiyan is to generate awareness among farming community about the balanced and judicious use of fertilizers and other agricultural inputs. It also aims to promote crop diversification through oilseed, pulse and encourage the effective utilization of fallow fields after paddy

harvesting and promote proper crop residue management. The campaign will also focus on capacity building of farmers in the appropriate use of organic and bio-based agricultural products and promoting natural farming through awareness programmes, training sessions and field demonstrations.

One of the important objectives is to improve soil health, promote the balanced use of fertilizers and other agricultural inputs, enhance water-use efficiency, and encourage the adoption of resource-efficient and climate-resilient farming practices. Special emphasis will be placed on creating awareness about the appropriate use of fertilizers, including green ammonia, and biological products; water conservation; crop diversification.

One-Day Conference-cum-Workshop on Labour Codes organised by Labour Department in Srinagar

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: The Labour Department, Jammu and Kashmir, organised a one-day Conference-cum-Workshop on Labour Codes at SAMCI Riviera Rajbagh, Srinagar, today, with the objective of enhancing awareness and understanding of the key provisions and implementation of the Labour Codes among the officers and officials of the department.

The conference was graced by Vikas Ahlawat, Labour Commissioner, Jammu and Kashmir, as the Chief Guest, in the presence of Najwan Nazki, Deputy Labour Commissioner, Kashmir/Central.

The programme was attended by all Assistant Labour Commissioners, Labour Officers and Labour Inspectors of Kashmir Division.

The deliberations primarily focused on two significant labour legislations, viz. Code on Wages and



Code on Social Security, with emphasis on their objectives, key provisions and implications for workers, employers and the effective administration of labour laws.

Addressing the gathering, the Labour Commissioner, highlighted the importance of the Labour Codes in strengthening the labour administration framework, promoting transparency and ensuring better

protection of workers' rights. He emphasized the need for enhanced awareness and capacity-building among departmental officers for effective implementation of the provisions of the Labour Codes.

Subsequently, Sajad A. Geelani, Advocate and ADR Practitioner, delivered a detailed presentation on the Code on Wages, explaining its aims, objectives and significant provisions.

Shafat N. Ahmad, Lawyer and Mediation Professional, elaborated the Code on Social Security, highlighting its various aspects and the framework for extending social security benefits to eligible workers.

The conference provided a valuable platform for knowledge-sharing, interactive deliberations and capacity-building of departmental officers. It also reinforced the importance of coordinated efforts towards effective labour law implementation and the promotion of workers' welfare across Jammu and Kashmir.

Basohli Utsav 2026 concludes on a grand note

Festival highlights region's heritage, creative talent and economic potential

HT News Network

KATHUA, OCTOBER 22: The three-day Basohli Utsav 2026 concluded today with a spectacular celebration of the region's rich cultural heritage, artistic traditions, sporting spirit and entrepreneurial potential. The final day witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, artists, investors and the general public, reaffirming Basohli's growing prominence as a vibrant centre of art, culture and tourism.

A major highlight of the festival was the massive turnout of people to witness Basohli's century-old traditional Ramleela. The historic open-air performance drew large crowds from Basohli and adjoining areas, reflecting the enduring appeal of this age-old tradition and its deep-rooted cultural and religious significance. The overwhelming public participation underscored the importance of preserving and



promoting Basohli's rich cultural heritage for future generations.

The other major attraction of the festival was the Cartoon Workshop Camp, featuring seven eminent cartoonists from across India. Organised at the Front Park in the historic Fort area near Rani Talab, the workshop brought together renowned artists and budding talents. Students from different schools and artists from the Basohli

Painting Centre enthusiastically participated, showcasing their imagination and artistic skills.

Cartoonist Chander Shekhar Sharma (Bunty) from Jammu also showcased his work at the camp. Based on the themes "Vikas Bhi Aur Virasat Bhi" and "Nasha Mukht Bharat", the workshop creatively conveyed messages of development, heritage preservation and a drug-free society. Promoting sportsmanship and

teamwork, a Tug of War event was held at Ramleela Ground, drawing enthusiastic participation from the sporting community. The event added energy to the festival while highlighting the importance of physical fitness, discipline and collective spirit.

In a significant initiative to promote economic growth and investment, an Investor Meet was organised as part of Basohli Utsav 2026, bringing together more than 70 investors. The meet provided an important platform to explore investment opportunities and highlight Basohli's potential for enterprise, tourism and economic development. The festival also showcased the region's exceptional artistic legacy through an exhibition featuring traditional artefacts, Basohli paintings and Basohli Pashmina. Presented around the theme "Shakti Parampara vis-à-vis Basohli Arts", with Geet Govind as a central theme.

JKRLM to host Saras Mela from October 25 in Srinagar

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: The Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj is set to organise SARAS AAJEEVIKA Kashmir 2026 from October 25 at Polo View Park, Srinagar, bringing together rural entrepreneurs, artisans and culinary traditions from across India.

The ten-day exhibition will offer visitors an opportunity to experience the country's diverse crafts, handloom traditions and regional cuisines under one roof.

Building on the success of previous editions, the mela will feature around 70-80 stalls, with participation from several

states and Union Territories, alongside line departments from Jammu and Kashmir. The exhibition will provide a platform for women associated with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) to display and sell their products, connect with consumers and explore opportunities to expand their enterprises.

Participants from states including Telangana, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Tripura Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, among others, will showcase products reflecting their regions' traditional skills and local resources. The exhibits will include Pochampally Ikat sarees, Banarasi textiles,

Chikankari embroidery, traditional jewellery, handicrafts, home décor, jute products and other eco-friendly goods.

A major attraction of the exhibition will be the Umeed Ka Zaika Food Court, which will bring regional culinary traditions to Srinagar through food enterprises led by women associated with the SHG movement. Visitors will be able to sample traditional delicacies from Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, alongside the cuisine of Jammu and Kashmir. Umeed Ka Ziaka initiative is strengthened by JKRLM through capacity-building, improved quality standards and wider market linkages, helping SHG women turn their culinary expertise into sustainable businesses.



The ten-day event will also feature cultural and entertainment programmes,

along with structured capacity-building sessions for SHG members on key livelihood

themes. Expert resource persons will conduct sessions intended to strengthen

participants' understanding of enterprise development and help them identify ways to improve their products and business practices.

Mission Director JKRLM, Dr. Shubhra Sharma, said SARAS AAJEEVIKA is an important opportunity for SHG members to gain exposure to wider markets, understand consumer preferences and learn about quality standards, product diversification and marketing strategies. "Every product displayed at SARAS carries a story of the woman behind it, the skills she has developed, the effort she has invested and the confidence she has gained in building an enterprise of her own. The mela is not simply about showcasing products; it is about recognising the journey

through which women, supported by the SHG movement, are finding their place as productive and independent contributors to society," the Mission Director said. Emphasising the wider cultural significance of the event, the Mission Director said SARAS offers visitors an opportunity to experience the traditions of different parts of the country in one place. "When people from different states come together, they bring with them much more than their products. They bring their traditions, their food, their craftsmanship and their ways of life. Such events allow us to appreciate cultures beyond our own and in the process, understand our own heritage better," Dr. Sharma said.

HT EDITORIAL

Kashmir's Power Crisis Deepens as Winter Chill Intensifies

Falling voltage and unscheduled outages, even in metered areas, call for better planning, timely maintenance and greater accountability

As temperatures begin to fall across Kashmir, the reliability of electricity supply has once again become a major concern for consumers. The sudden decline in voltage and unscheduled power cuts, including in metered areas, have added to public hardships at a time when households are increasingly dependent on electricity to cope with the growing chill. Despite the announcement of curtailment schedules and assurances of winter preparedness, the ground situation continues to raise questions about the readiness of the power distribution system.

The problem extends beyond scheduled curtailments. Consumers in several areas complain that unexpected interruptions and low voltage are affecting household activities and the functioning of electrical appliances. For families that pay their bills regularly, the expectation of a reasonably stable supply is legitimate. While seasonal demand and limited power availability present genuine challenges, these constraints underline the need for more effective distribution management and timely corrective measures.

Preventive maintenance, including the trimming of tree branches near power lines, is necessary to reduce the risk of faults, particularly during snowfall and strong winds. However, such work must be properly planned and completed within reasonable timeframes. The power department should communicate planned shutdowns in advance and provide clear information about restoration. Maintenance-related explanations must be accompanied by visible action to minimise inconvenience to consumers.

The authorities also need to address falling voltage, overloaded transformers and recurring faults in the distribution network. Metering and revenue reforms can help improve the financial health of the power sector, but their benefits must ultimately be reflected in better service delivery. Similarly, electricity theft and high distribution losses require firm action without overlooking the genuine difficulties faced by law-abiding consumers.

The government's winter preparedness measures must now translate into tangible improvements on the ground. Regular monitoring of feeder-wise supply, prompt response to complaints, timely repairs and transparent communication can help reduce uncertainty and improve public confidence. Consumers, too, must use electricity judiciously and pay their legitimate bills.

Kashmir's winter poses considerable challenges for the power sector, but these cannot be addressed through curtailment schedules alone. The focus must remain on improving supply reliability, maintaining stable voltage and ensuring that avoidable interruptions are minimised. As the cold intensifies, people need practical solutions and effective service delivery. The success of winter preparedness will ultimately be measured not by official assurances, but by the quality and reliability of electricity reaching consumers.

Rayees Ahmad Kumar

Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages, Soch Kral Adbi Sangam Wapora and Soch Kral Memorial College of Education Nawa in collaboration with Sky Lark Institute of Paramedical Sciences Pulwama organized a one-day literary and cultural programme in memory of renowned Sufi poet Hazrat Soch Kral ra in Pulwama. The aim of organizing the programme was to pay tribute to the literary and spiritual services of the renowned Sufi poet, along with promoting Kashmiri language, literature and cultural traditions and to promote literary activities and create literary taste and interest among the young generation. A large number of people associated with literature participated in the programme. In the programme, Faqir Shah Ahmad Dildar, former President of Kashmir Cultural Academy, Assistant Editor (Kashmiri) Dr. Gulzar Ahmad, Farooq Fida, Faqir Abdul Qayyum Shah, Younis Waheed, Syed Ishtiyaq Ahmad, Parvez Ahmad Shah Major, President of Kashmir Markaz Adab-o-Saqafat Budgam and renowned poet and writer Inayat Gul, along with members associated with the organization participated. Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Wani, senior journalist of Pulwama Ayub Javid, Nida-e-Kashmir's Managing Editor Miraj-ud-Din Faraz, renowned Sufi poet Abdur Rahim Shah and personalities associated with District Cultural Society participated. Apart from this, a large number of respected poets, writers, intellectuals and people belonging to different walks of life of the area were also present. At the beginning of the programme, the patron of Soch Kral Memorial College of



Education Nawa, Ghulam Hassan Talib delivered the welcome address and welcomed the guests with great enthusiasm. In his address, he said that Kashmiri language and literature and the Sufi poetry tradition need to be kept alive and for this, such programmes are of great importance. Ghulam Hassan Talib said that the work of Hazrat Soch Kral is an important part of Kashmiri literature and there is a need to take his literary and Sufi services to the new generation. He stressed that such literary programmes not only help in promotion of language and literature, but also help in research and investigation of language and literature. A literary platform provides an opportunity to writers, poets, new writers, young men and women to express their thoughts and feelings, where they can express their thoughts and to

highlight their literary talents, to recognize and to establish their identity. The importance of such a platform was also highlighted. Ghulam Hassan Talib said on the stage that organizing such literary programmes is very important for encouragement of literary activities and promotion of new young creative talents. Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages Assistant Editor (Kashmiri) Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather also addressed the gathering. He said that Hazrat Soch Kral was a Sufi saint and renowned poet, his poetry belonged to poets, writers, thinkers and literary people. They celebrate his day as a memory every year in the form of a big literary fair and highlight his literary and Sufi services in a more comprehensive manner. He said that the services of Hazrat Soch Kral as a renowned Sufi poet

need to be conveyed to the new generation, which is an important part of our language, literature and cultural heritage, whose identity and literary status needs to be preserved collectively. For literary organizations, poets and intellectuals, there is a need to cover them in a more collaborative manner. He stressed on this point that Hazrat Soch Kral's memory should also be celebrated every year on a large scale and literary conferences should be held to highlight his personality, thought and literary services so that Kashmiri language and literature's great literary heritage can be introduced to the new generation and they can become aware of this great literary heritage. During the programme, personalities who rendered prominent services in different fields were honoured with special awards. Eight distinguished personalities were honoured in the gathering chaired by Gh Hassan Talib. During the programme, Younis Waheed was conferred with the Ghulam Rasool Josh Memorial Award, while Abdur Rehman Fida was honoured with the Rashid Memorial Award. According to the organizers, both these awards were introduced for the first time. During the function, Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather, Assistant Editor (Kashmiri) of J&K Academy of Art Culture and Languages, was also felicitated. Senior journalist Ayoub Javid was honoured in recognition of his services in the field of journalism. Similarly, in recognition of outstanding services in the education sector, Principal of Government Higher Secondary School Hall, Sayed Ishtiyaq Ahmad and Master Parvez Ahmad Shah were honoured with the Soch Kral Memorial Award. Dr. Pirzada Aftab Ahmad Shah, Assistant Professor, Department of Urdu, was also honoured for his academic and literary services.

RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR
Writer is a columnist based in Qazigund Kashmir

Exam Season In Chenab Valley Doda: Beyond Marks Expectations

season has increasingly become a test of emotional resilience and time management alongside academic preparation.

For many students, Class 10 examinations represent an important transition in their educational journey. Performance can influence subject choices and shape expectations about future academic opportunities. However, the importance attached to these examinations should not turn them into a source of overwhelming anxiety. Marks matter, but they should not become the sole measure of a student's ability, intelligence or potential.

The positive feedback on the Mathematics paper offers some reassurance. Students who entered examination halls feeling nervous found the paper easier than expected, while others considered it fair despite finding it somewhat lengthy. Such responses underline how preparation and confidence can influence a student's experience of an examination. They also demonstrate why students should avoid judging a paper's difficulty before attempting it. One of the growing challenges during examination season is the influence of social media. Speculation about question papers, rumours about difficult examinations and unverified claims regarding marking patterns can create unnecessary fear. Students who spend valuable preparation time following such discussions risk losing concentration and confidence.

The sensible approach is to rely on official information, follow a realistic study schedule and concentrate on the syllabus rather than rumours. Teachers and parents should also

discourage unnecessary comparisons between students and avoid adding to the pressure through unrealistic expectations. Examination stress is not always visible. Some students may appear confident while struggling with anxiety, sleep deprivation or fear of disappointing their families. Others may find it difficult to balance schoolwork, tuition and revision. A supportive environment can make a considerable difference. Students need encouragement to prepare consistently, take adequate rest and approach each paper with a clear mind.

Chenab Valley Doda's education system should prioritize fostering resilience, curiosity, and confidence over mere exam scores, ensuring failure is viewed as a minor set-back rather than the end of a student's journey."

Parents, in particular, must recognise that every child has a different learning pace and set of abilities. Comparing children with classmates, relatives or neighbours rarely improves performance. Instead, it can undermine confidence and create a fear of failure that persists beyond the examination hall. The purpose of education should be to develop knowledge, skills and independent thinking, not merely to secure high marks. The responsibility also lies with educational institutions and the examination authorities. The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education has established 1,003 examination centres for the current Class 10 examinations and made arrangements for candidates with special needs. Eligible students are being provided additional time, scribes according to their disabilities and a concession in the passing criteria. Such measures

are important for making examinations more accessible and ensuring that students receive appropriate support.

However, the quality of an examination system should not be judged only by the number of centres or the smooth distribution of question papers. It should also be assessed by its fairness, transparency, accessibility and ability to evaluate students' understanding rather than their capacity to reproduce memorised answers.

As the examinations continue until November 18, students will face the challenge of maintaining consistency across different subjects. One difficult paper should not destroy their confidence, just as an easy paper should not encourage complacency. A balanced approach to revision, proper time management and a focus on understanding concepts can help students navigate the remaining schedule.

The examination season should ultimately be an opportunity to assess learning, identify strengths and prepare for future academic choices. It must not become a period in which fear overshadows education. Chenab Valley's students deserve an environment in which hard work is encouraged, individual differences are respected and failure in one examination is not treated as the end of the road. The real measure of an education system lies not only in the marks its students obtain, but also in the confidence, curiosity and resilience they carry forward. As the board examinations progress, that larger purpose must remain firmly in focus.

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER



BY-MOOL RAJ

The annual examination season in Chenab Valley Doda has once again brought thousands of students into examination halls, accompanied by the familiar mix of nervousness, expectations and hopes for a better academic future. With more than 97,000 candidates appearing in the annual regular Class 10 examinations conducted by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE), the period is significant not only for students but also for their parents, teachers and the education system as a whole.

The examinations began on Monday across 1,003 centres in the Chenab Valley and the winter-zone areas of Jammu division. Of the registered candidates, 72,232 belong to Kashmir division and 25,268 to the winter-zone areas of Jammu division. The examinations are also being conducted in Leh and Kargil for a smaller number of candidates.

While the first Mathematics paper received largely positive feedback, with students describing it as balanced and manageable, the larger question is how students navigate the pressure that accompanies board examinations. The examination

Maize: The Queen of Cereals



adequate irrigation facilities under centrally sponsored schemes to safeguard farmers' livelihoods.

Health Benefits of Maize
Maize, or corn, is rich in vitamins, minerals, fibre, and antioxidants. It supports eye and digestive health, prevents anaemia, and strengthens the heart. It may also help control diabetes and promote healthy skin.

Nutritional Profile:

Vitamins: A, C
Minerals: Iron, zinc, magnesium, phosphorus, selenium
Health advantages include:

Preventing haemorrhoids
Reducing cancer risk (due to antioxidants)
Promoting healthy weight gain
Supporting growth in children
Boosting immunity
Corn is also used in cosmetics, adding to its economic importance.

Benefits of maize

Whether as food, fodder, or an industrial raw material, maize is a versatile and valuable crop. Eating fresh, healthy maize products benefits both health and the economy. Let us support our farmers, improve irrigation systems, and ensure this queen of cereals continues to thrive in our fields and on our plates.

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Maize is cultivated on a large scale in the Kashmir Valley and holds immense value in both food and non-food industries. Globally, maize is widely grown as a cereal grain, especially in regions like Central America.

Interestingly, maize is known as the queen of cereals due to its remarkable genetic yield potential. It is cultivated on more than 160 million hectares across over 160 countries. The United States is the largest producer, contributing about 35% of global output, followed by China with around 20%.

India, blessed with a great diversity of food crops, ranks maize as the third most important grain after wheat and rice (2010-2011 data). In the country, it is cultivated on 8.6 million hectares, with 80% grown during the Kharif season. Indian agricultural scientists have developed several new varieties through advanced pollination techniques, making maize even more productive and beneficial.

To ensure farmers reap maximum benefits, the Department of Agriculture

should conduct regular mass counselling and awareness programs for maize growers. Our hardworking farmers play a crucial role in strengthening the nation's economy, and their needs must be addressed at every level.

Types of Maize
White grain
Normal yellow
Sweet corn
Baby corn
Popcorn
Waxy corn
High amylase corn
High oil corn
Taxonomy:

Family: Poaceae (Grass family)
Tribe: Maydeae
Botanical name: Zea mays
Chromosome number: 2n = 20

Maize in the Kashmir Valley
In Kashmir, maize is cultivated from large farmlands to small patches, primarily in hilly areas. Kupwara, Baramulla, and Budgam are the leading districts in production. The crop is rain-fed, playing a vital role in local diets and the rural economy.

Besides being consumed fresh or as flour for making delicious and easily digestible maize bread, the leftover stalks serve as valuable fodder for livestock during harsh winters. Thus, maize provides both food security and income for farmers.

However, maize cultivation is highly dependent on water availability. This year, prolonged drought and water scarcity have severely affected crop yields. The government should ensure

We've got a motto here-you're tougher than you think you are, and you can do more than you think you can. Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, Army Cdr NC! And his short stint at Madras Regimental center taught him exactly that!



By M S Nazki

No matter how long you train someone to be brave, you never know if they are or not until something real happens. Art is unquestionably one of the purest and highest elements in human happiness. It trains the mind through the eye, and the eye through the mind. As the sun colors flowers, so does art color life. Training is a work of art

-My muscles informed me they did not want to go through any more exercise today. So I suggest that maybe he should let me off this time. He laughed, and I'm pretty sure it was at me... not with me

-"Why is that funny?"
"Oh," he said, his smile dropping. "You were serious."
"Of course I was! Look, I've technically been awake for two days. Why do we have to start this training now? Let me go to bed." I whined. "It's just one hour."
"How do you feel right now?"
"I hurt like hell."
"You'll feel worse tomorrow."
"So?"

"So, better get a jump on it while you still feel...not as bad."
"What kind of logic is that?" I retorted.
But there is a logic! For sure there is!.....An anecdote
-This man, our own Lt Gen Pratik Sharma loves toughness as he is from Northern Command!

-Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, Army Cdr NC and Colonel of the Madras Regiment, visited Madras units deployed in Manipur and interacted with the troops. He commended the soldiers for their exemplary professionalism in ensuring peace in the region and exhorted them to continue striving for Excellence in all fields!

-Anyone who has a continuous smile on his face conceals a toughness that is almost frightening!

-We've got a motto here-you're tougher than you think you are, and you can do more than you think you can. Lt General Pratik Sharma! And his short stint at Madras Regimental center taught him exactly that!

-The Madras Regimental Centre is located in Wellington, near Coonoor and Udhagamandalam (Ooty) in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, India.

•Established: Formed originally in 1758, making the Madras Regiment the oldest infantry regiment of the Indian Army.

•Location: Shrinagesh Barracks, Wellington, Tamil Nadu (moved to these barracks in February 1947).

•Motto: "Swadharme Nidhanam Shreyaha" (It is a glory to die doing one's duty).

•Battle Cry: "Veera Madrasi, Adi Kollu, Adi Kollu!" (Brave Madrasi, strike, strike!).



Key Details
•Training Hub: The centre trains recruits and serves as the foundational home for the battalions of the Madras Regiment.

•MRC Museum: It features a well-known museum showcasing historical battle honors, gallantry medals (including Param Vir Chakra and Maha Vir Chakra awards), captured enemy trophies, and regimental history.

•Visitor Access: The museum and premises are located inside a restricted military area at Wellington/Coonoor, but visitors are generally permitted during working hours with a valid ID.

-The Madras Regiment

-The Madras Regiment is the oldest infantry regiment of the Indian Army, originating in the 1750s as a unit of the British East India Company.

-The regiment took part in numerous campaigns with the British Indian Army and the post-independence Indian Army.

-The Madras Regiment primarily recruits from the erstwhile Madras state (present-day Tamil Nadu, southern Karnataka, parts of Andhra Pradesh, and northern Kerala) and the Kingdom of Mysore (present-day Karnataka).

-However, the 9th and 10th battalions (Nair Battalions) were later formed from troops from the Kingdoms of Travancore and Cochin in present-day Kerala.

-History

-The Madras Regiment was initially formed as the Madras European Regiment in the 1660s by the East India Company, and would see its first action during the First Carnatic war. The first of the sepoy levies were mostly irregulars, consisting of Indo-

Portuguese guards, Europeans, and some natives, with no standard issue uniforms or equipment.

-Unlike the English East India Company, the French Indies Company had begun to recruit and train local Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam speaking recruits, and would have two regiments of sepoys fully drilled and equipped in the French Manner.

-In 1746, the newly trained French sepoy regiments under Admiral La Bourdonnais would capture Madras after quickly overwhelming the under-equipped garrison.

-In 1748, Major Stringer Lawrence, a veteran of action in Spain, Flanders and the Highlands, was hired by the East India Company to take charge of the defence of Cuddalore. Training the levies to become a militia, he formed the Madras Levies into companies, and trained them to become a disciplined fighting force.

-In 1758, Lawrence raised the Madras Regiment, forming the several Companies of Madras Levies into two battalions. 2 Madras was raised in 1776 as the 15th Carnatic Infantry at Thanjavur (and underwent many name changes thereafter).

-The original title of these battalions was 'Coast Sepoys'. In 1769, these battalions were numbered and named differently with the battalions in the South being called 'Carnatic' and numbering 1 to 13, while those serving in the North were named 'Circar' and numbered 1 to 6.

-In 1784, this distinction between 'Carnatic' and 'Circar' was abolished and they were henceforth known as Madras battalions. In 1796, the units were numbered 1st to 50th Madras Native Infantry. In 1891, the word 'Native' was dropped.

-In August 1758, they were formed into regular companies of 100 men each with a due proportion of Indian officers, havildars, naiks, etc. and in December of that year the first two battalions were formed with a European subaltern to each company and a captain to command the

whole. (These officers were mostly seconded from the King's service with a step-in rank. They were of a better class, better educated and above all had far more military experience than the company's officers).

-The regiment has been through many campaigns with the Madras Army, British Indian Army and Indian Army. Many well-known British officers have commanded this regiment, among them Robert Clive, and Arthur Wellesley, the later Duke of Wellington.

-This regiment fought in the Carnatic wars, which were fought in South India. The elephant crest symbolises its gallantry in the Battle of Assaye.

-The Madras sepoys fought in a majority of the East India Company's campaigns in the subcontinent. The regiment fought alongside Robert Clive at the Siege of Arcot, and would later fight under him in Battle of Plassey.

-The regiment saw action against the French during all of the Carnatic Wars, and fought in several campaigns against native rulers like Hyder Ali, his son Tipu Sultan, and the Polygars such as Puli Thevan, Dheeran Chinnamalai, Maruthu brothers, Kattabomman, Pazhassi Raja, etc.

-At its zenith in the 1800s, the regiment consisted of 52 battalions. The regiment saw many overseas deployments during this period, such as the First Anglo-Burmese War, First Opium War of 1839-42, and the Second Anglo-Burmese War of 1852-54.

-A contingent of the regiment would even land in Egypt in 1801 under David Baird, to fight the French during their invasion of Egypt, but never saw action.

-Under the British Crown

-The regiment played an important role in suppressing the Revolt of 1857 in Lucknow and Central India, going on to serve in the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1879-80, Third Anglo-Burmese War of 1885-87 and the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900.

-The coming of the British rule

and merging of the Presidency armies into a British Indian Army led the erstwhile regiments to be reorganised. After conquest of India, the main perceived threat to British was from Russia. So, recruitment was re-oriented towards north Indians of Punjab and Nepal.

-This resulted in the British reducing the strength of the Madras Regiment, since the southern borders were relatively peaceful. As part of this change, seventeen Madras regiments, were converted into Punjab and Gorkha regiments between 1890 and 1903. They were renamed the 1st, 2nd and 8th Punjab and 1/7th and 1/10th Gorkha Rifles.

-By the time of World War I, the once large regiment was left with eight Carnatic Regiments, the 63rd, 73rd, 75th, 79th, 80th, 83rd, 86th and 88th.

-These battalions were with a reduced strength of 600 men, as they were intended to perform duties of garrison troops only.

-During 1917-18, eight additional battalions were raised. In 1922, the regiment was allotted one regiment each of Pioneers

and Infantry.

-During the re-organisation of the Indian Army in 1922, the regiments were numbered according to their seniority. The 1st and 2nd Punjab Regiments, which ironically were raised from senior Madras Regiment battalions were given precedence and the regiment was renamed as 3rd Madras Regiment.

-Following the great war, nearly the whole of the regiment was disbanded between 1922 and 1928. What remained were four Indian Territorial Force (ITF) and one University Training Corps battalions.

-This decline was arrested in 1941, when Sir Arthur Hope, the then Governor of Madras put in efforts to revive the regiment.

-The ITF battalions were converted to regular ones and new ones raised. A training centre was raised at Madukkarai in Coimbatore district in July 1942. After many years, the regiment was re-raised with fresh recruits and a draft of troops from the Queen's own Sappers and Miners (Madras Paraiyar Regiment) and the Madras Sappers during World War II.

-The newly reborn Madras Regiment performed very creditably during the Burma Campaign. In 1947, the numeral '3' was dropped from the name of the regiment and it came to be known by its present name.

-Post Independence

-into the Madras Regiment. This included what is now the 9th Battalion, which is the oldest battalion of the Regiment (and thus the Indian Army). It was formerly known as the Nair Brigade (Nair Pattalam) ("Nair Army").

-This militia was raised in 1704 at Padmanabhapuram as body guards for the Maharajah of Travancore, and saw action in the Battle of Colachel by defeating the Dutch forces. The army was made up of soldiers from Nair warrior clans, however after the 1940s, non-Nairs were permitted to join. The "Nair Army" became incorporated into the Indian Army in April 1951.

-Post-independence saw the consolidation of the Regiment and re-affirmation of the versatility and valour of the South Indian troops, when the battalions of the Regiment fought fierce battles during the 1947-48 Jammu & Kashmir Operations, the 1962 Sino-Indian Conflict, the Indo-Pak Wars of 1965 and 1971 and Operation Pawan in 1987-89 as a part of the IPKF.

-Class composition

-The regiment still recruits heavily from Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh with a slight majority of Tamil- and Malayalam-speaking recruits. Drill commands by NCOs are commonly given in Tamil or Malayalam. However, since the 1990s the percentage from Kannada and Telugu speaking recruits has increased, commands are also given through Telugu and Kannada. As is the practice in all the army, the officers of the regiment can be from any part of India.

-What has mood to do with it? You fight when the necessity arises, no matter the mood! Mood's a thing for cattle or making love or playing the baliset. It's not for fighting. No one learns as much about a subject as one who is forced to teach it

-He who conquers himself is the mightiest warrior. If you want to teach people a new way of thinking, don't bother trying to teach them. Instead, give them a tool, the use of which will lead to new ways of thinking. Practice is the hardest part of learning, and training is the essence of transformation

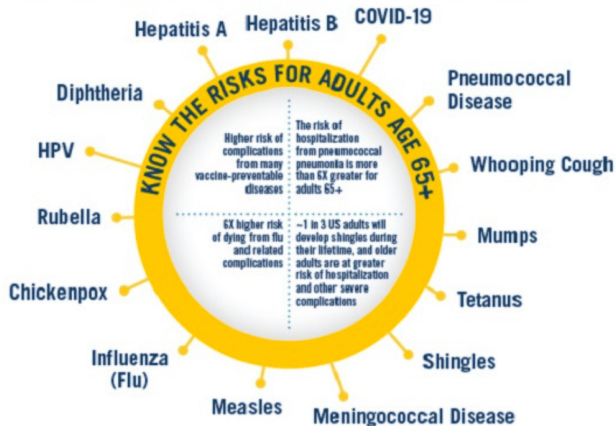
Old Age and Immunity: The Importance of Vaccination



-Dr. Vijay Garg

Ageing is a natural process, but maintaining good health and independence in later life requires special attention. As people grow older, their bodies undergo several changes, including a gradual weakening of the immune system. This makes elderly people more vulnerable to infections and increases the risk of serious complications from diseases such as influenza, pneumonia, COVID-19 and shingles. In this situation, vaccination becomes an important tool for protecting health, preventing illness and promoting healthy ageing.

VACCINES ARE NOT JUST FOR CHILDREN
ADULTS 65+ CAN BE PROTECTED
FROM DEADLY DISEASES



Why Does Immunity Weaken with Age?

The immune system protects the body against harmful microorganisms, including viruses and bacteria. However, as people age, the immune system may become less effective at recognising and fighting infections. This process, known as immunosenescence, can reduce the body's ability to respond quickly to new infections and vaccines.

Older adults are also more likely to have chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, respiratory disorders and kidney disease. These conditions can increase the risk of complications when an infection occurs. Some elderly people may also experience nutritional deficiencies, reduced mobility or limited access to healthcare, further increasing their vulnerability.

Consequently, an infection that causes mild illness in a younger person may lead to hospitalisation or prolonged recovery in an older adult. Prevention therefore becomes particularly important during later life.

Vaccination: A Protective Shield

Vaccines train the immune system to recognise specific disease-causing organisms and respond more effectively when exposed to them. Although vaccines cannot prevent every infection,

conditions and current public health guidance.

Shingles vaccine:** Shingles results from the reactivation of the virus responsible for chickenpox. Its risk increases with age, and it can cause severe pain that persists long after the rash disappears. Shingles vaccination may be recommended for eligible adults, depending on vaccine availability and local guidelines.

Tetanus and other vaccines:** Older adults may need tetanus boosters and other vaccinations depending on their vaccination history, previous illnesses, travel plans and individual risk factors. Hepatitis B and other vaccines may also be appropriate for certain people.

There is no single vaccination schedule suitable for every senior citizen. Recommendations depend on age, medical history, previous immunisations, vaccine availability and the guidance followed in the person's country.

Benefits Beyond Disease Prevention

The advantages of vaccination extend beyond protection against individual infections. Preventing serious illness can help elderly people maintain mobility, independence and quality of life. It may reduce hospital admissions, limit the financial burden on families and prevent disruptions to daily activities.

Infections can sometimes trigger complications in older adults, including worsening of existing heart or lung disease, prolonged weakness and loss of independence. Reducing the likelihood of severe infections can therefore support healthier ageing.

Vaccination also offers benefits to families and communities. Older adults who are protected against vaccine-preventable diseases may be less likely to experience severe illness and, in some circumstances, may be less likely to transmit particular infections. However, the degree of protection against infection and transmission differs between vaccines and diseases.

Addressing Common Misconceptions

Despite the benefits, many elderly people do not receive recommended vaccines. Some believe that vaccinations are necessary only for children, while others worry about side effects or assume that a strong diet alone can provide sufficient protection.

These beliefs can leave older adults unnecessarily vulnerable. A balanced diet, regular physical activity, adequate sleep and good hygiene support overall health, but they cannot replace vaccination.

Most vaccine side effects are mild and temporary, such as soreness at the injection site, tiredness or a low-grade fever. Serious reactions are uncommon, although individual risks vary. People who have experienced severe allergic reactions to a vaccine or its ingredients should inform their healthcare professional before receiving another dose.

Vaccination decisions should be based on reliable medical advice rather than rumours or unverified social media messages. The Role of Families and Healthcare Providers

Families can play an important role in protecting the health of elderly members. They should encourage regular medical check-ups, maintain vaccination records and discuss recommended vaccines with a qualified healthcare professional.

Doctors should review an older person's medical history, existing conditions, previous vaccinations and possible contraindications before recommending a vaccination schedule. Healthcare centres can improve access by providing clear information, convenient appointments and reminders for due doses.

Governments and public health institutions should also strengthen awareness programmes, particularly in rural areas where access to preventive healthcare may be limited. Community health workers can help elderly people understand the importance of vaccination and guide them towards appropriate services.

Older adults should not wait until an outbreak occurs or an infection spreads through their community before seeking advice. Preventive healthcare is most effective when planned in advance.

Conclusion

Ageing may weaken the immune system, but it does not mean that illness and loss of independence are inevitable. Vaccination, combined with regular medical care, balanced nutrition, physical activity and healthy habits, can help protect older adults against several serious infections.

Every senior citizen deserves the opportunity to enjoy later life with dignity, confidence and better health. Timely vaccination is a practical and valuable step towards that goal.

Protecting immunity in old age is not simply about preventing infections; it is about preserving independence, safeguarding families and adding healthier years to life.**

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The Cryogenics And Their Impacts

SURINDERPAL SINGH



Human civilisation has always sought to understand and control the extremes of nature, from the intense heat of industrial furnaces to the freezing temperatures of the deepest reaches of space. Amongst the most fascinating scientific developments in this pursuit is cryogenics, the branch of science and technology concerned with producing, maintaining and studying extremely low temperatures. Although often associated with laboratories and sophisticated industrial equipment, cryogenics has become an important part of modern medicine, scientific research, food preservation, energy systems and space exploration. Its growing applications demonstrate how extreme cold, when scientifically controlled, can become a powerful instrument for human progress.

However, like every transformative technology, cryogenics also presents technical, environmental, economic and safety challenges. The real question is not merely how cold we can make our surroundings, but how responsibly we can use this extraordinary scientific capability.

Cryogenics refers to the scientific study and practical application of temperatures generally below approximately 120 kelvin, or -153°C. A cryogen is a substance used to produce or maintain extremely low temperatures. Common examples include liquid nitrogen, which boils at approximately -196°C under atmospheric pressure, and liquid helium, which boils at approximately -269°C.

These substances possess remarkable physical properties at extremely low temperatures. Gases can be liquefied, certain materials become superconducting, biological samples can be preserved for extended periods and the behaviour of matter can be investigated under conditions that are impossible to achieve at ordinary temperatures.

It is important to distinguish cryogenics from cryonics. Cryogenics is an established scientific and engineering discipline with numerous practical applications, whereas cryonics refers to the speculative practice of preserving legally deceased individuals at very low temperatures in the hope that future technology might restore them. The latter has not been demonstrated to enable the revival of a human being.

One of the most significant contributions of cryogenic technology is in healthcare. Modern medicine depends heavily on the safe preservation of biological materials, including blood components, reproductive cells, embryos, stem cells and certain tissues. Cryopreservation can slow biological deterioration by reducing the molecular processes responsible for damage and decay.

Fertility treatment has particularly benefited from these advances. The freezing and storage of eggs, sperm and embryos provide individuals and couples with greater flexibility in family planning and assisted reproduction. Similarly, biological samples preserved under carefully controlled conditions support medical research, disease diagnosis and the development of new therapies.

Cryogenic temperatures also contribute to medical imaging. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners commonly use superconducting magnets that operate at very low temperatures, often with the help of liquid helium. These magnets generate strong, stable magnetic fields that enable doctors to examine internal organs and tissues without using ionising radiation.

Cryosurgery and cryotherapy represent another application of extreme cold. Certain medical procedures use controlled freezing to destroy abnormal tissue, treat selected skin conditions or manage particular lesions. Nevertheless, such treatments must be performed by qualified professionals because improper application can damage healthy tissue.

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Div Com Jammu reviews arrangements for Annual Darbar Move; Stresses Inter-Departmental Coordination, Traffic Management

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Vikas Kundal, today chaired a meeting of senior officers to review arrangements for the Annual Darbar Move from Srinagar to Jammu for 2026-27. The meeting focused on ensuring seamless resumption of official functioning at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu, as the Darbar Move offices are scheduled to reopen on November 02, 2026.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner reviewed arrangements for accommodation, healthcare, road connectivity, traffic regulation, power and water supply, sanitation, street lighting and other essential civic amenities required for the smooth functioning of Darbar Move offices.

Reviewing accommodation arrangements, the concerned officers



briefed the Chair on the availability of accommodation for government departments and officials. The Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned authorities to address any shortfall through appropriate arrangements and ensure the availability of adequate facilities.

The meeting also reviewed

healthcare preparedness along the Jammu-Ramban National Highway. The concerned health authorities briefed the Chair on the availability of medical staff, healthcare facilities and ambulance services to respond to emergencies during the Darbar Move period.

Taking stock of road connectivity

and traffic management, the Divisional Commissioner stressed the need for timely repairs of damaged road stretches and potholes, particularly at locations prone to traffic congestion and accidents. The concerned road-owning agencies were directed to undertake repairs on a sustained basis, set daily targets

and submit regular progress updates.

The meeting also discussed traffic bottlenecks at identified locations. The concerned agencies were directed to expedite necessary repairs, improve road conditions and maintain close coordination with Traffic Police to ensure smooth and uninterrupted vehicular movement.

The recurring vulnerability to landslides at Ramban and other stretches of the National Highway was also discussed. The concerned highway authority informed the meeting that traffic was presently moving on two lanes and that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) was being prepared for a long-term solution. It was emphasised that any future intervention at the vulnerable locations must be guided by a thorough scientific and engineering assessment.

DC Udhampur reviews stray dog management measures

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 22: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Ananth Dwivedi today chaired a meeting to review the implementation of apex court directions on the stray Dog management.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh; Chief Planning Officer, Uttam Singh; Chief Executive Officer Municipal Council and other concerned officers.

The Deputy Commissioner undertook a detailed review of the existing infrastructure, availability of essential equipment and arrangements for anti-rabies vaccination drive.

He directed the concerned officers to make available requisite infrastructure, equipment and other necessary arrangements strictly in accordance with the prescribed norms and guidelines.

Emphasising the importance of coordinated efforts, the DC directed to ensure strict compliance with the directions and effective implementation of the Animal Birth Control Programme across the district.

DLSA Udhampur convenes 4th Under Trial Review Committee meeting

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 22: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Udhampur, under the guidance of Chairperson (Principal District and Sessions Judge) Kalpana Revo and the supervision of Sub Judge/Secretary Sumati Sharma, today convened the 4th meeting of Under Trial Review Committee-2026. The meeting was held in the Conference Hall of the District Court Complex to evaluate cases of under-trial prisoners and to ensure compliance with legal safeguards and timely justice.

The meeting was chaired by DLSA Chairperson Kalpana Revo and attended by Sub-Judge/Secretary Sumati Sharma, Additional District Magistrate Prem Singh Chib; Additional Superintendent of Police Shivender Singh Jamwal and Superintendent District Jail Mohammad Irfan Khan.

The Committee reviewed cases in light of the Supreme Court guidelines and NALSASOPs, focusing on prisoners with no proper representation or those who have spent substantial time behind bars. The Committee recommended the release of eligible prisoners by filling bail applications before appropriate Courts and ensuring that the benefits of legal provisions reach to the intended beneficiaries, especially prisoners. The meeting also discussed action taken, such as conducting regular meetings to track progress, maintaining a consolidated data sheet to monitor prisoners' cases and preparing quarterly reports. The meeting concluded with appreciation expressed by Chairperson District Legal Services Authority (Pr. Dist. & Sessions Judge) to all the stakeholders for their proactive.

MLA Sajjad Shaheen lays foundation stone of 1.96 crore Lamber Road to connect the area with NH-44

■ HT News Network

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 22: Member Legislative Assembly Banihal-Gool Sajjad Shaheen, today laid the foundation stone of a road project connecting Lamber Gujar Nar with National Highway-44.

The project, estimated to cost of ₹ 1.96 crore, is being constructed by the Public Works Department (R&B).

The project addresses a longstanding demand of residents of Lamber and adjoining villages, who have faced difficulties due to the absence of direct road connectivity with the National Highway. Upon completion, the road is expected to reduce travel distance, improve accessibility and facilitate the movement of people and essential commodities.

Speaking on the occasion, the MLA stressed the importance of strengthening road



infrastructure in remote and mountainous areas to improve public convenience and access to essential services. He said efforts are underway to address infrastructure gaps through road, bridge and other development projects across the Banihal-Gool constituency.

He also referred to road projects sanctioned under PMGSY-IV, including Ramsod-Sarbagni, Makerkote-Dardahi and Livra-Gagarnag, with a combined estimated cost of ₹ 64.74 crore. He highlighted other initiatives aimed at

improving bridge connectivity, educational infrastructure, power supply, healthcare facilities and sports infrastructure.

The MLA further referred to the Model Higher Secondary School project at Banihal, for which the foundation stone was recently laid, besides proposals for 58 playgrounds, seven mini-stadiums and an indoor stadium to promote sports among local youth. He emphasised the need for timely execution of sanctioned works and coordinated efforts by the concerned departments.

DC Rajouri reviews preparations for Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas 2026

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, OCTOBER 22: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Dr. Devansh Yadav today reviewed the arrangements for the celebration of the 6th Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas, here at a meeting held in the Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa Memorial Conference Hall, PWD Dak Bungalow.

The meeting focused on finalising arrangements and activities planned to be organised from November 1 to 15, 2026 in tribal-majority blocks and villages to highlight the contribution of tribal leaders in India's freedom struggle and promote tribal art, culture, heritage and traditions.

All departments were instructed to designate nodal officers for effective coordination and implementation of the planned activities. Emphasising the development of tribal communities, the DC sought special focus on Vibrant Villages and aspirational blocks. He also called for coordinated efforts to promote awareness about social security schemes. The meeting further discussed the holding of financial literacy camps, with directions to ensure maximum participation of beneficiaries. The Chief Education Officer was asked to facilitate Aadhaar seeding of students attending these camps to improve access to financial services and government welfare schemes. The Deputy Commissioner stressed inter-departmental coordination, timely execution of assigned



responsibilities and effective public participation to ensure the successful celebration of Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas across the district. The meeting was attended by the ADDC Malik Zada Sheraz Ul Haq; POICDS Harpal Singh; CPO, Maqsood Ahmed; ACD, Sheraz Chowhan; ACP, Mohd Rafeeq; CEO Education Mohd Hafiz; CAO, Rajesh Verma; DSHO, PP Sagotra and other concerned officers. Emphasising the development of tribal communities, the DC sought special focus on Vibrant Villages and aspirational blocks. He also called for coordinated efforts to promote awareness about social security schemes. The meeting further discussed the holding of financial literacy camps, with directions to ensure maximum participation of beneficiaries. The Chief Education Officer was asked to facilitate Aadhaar seeding of students attending these camps to improve access to financial services and government welfare.

DDC Poonch inspects healthcare services at District Hospital

Directs immediate removal of illegally parked Vehicles

■ HT News Network

POONCH, OCTOBER 22: District Development Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma today inspected Government Raja Sukhdev Singh District Hospital to assess its overall functioning and review the availability and delivery of healthcare services to the public.

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the functioning of various sections and departments of the hospital.

The DDC reviewed key



operational arrangements and stressed the need for maintaining discipline, proper management of hospital premises and strict adherence to established procedures to ensure efficient healthcare

delivery. He inquired about ambulance availability and parking arrangements within the hospital premises. Taking serious note of private vehicles parked in the Hospital premises, the District Development

Commissioner directed for immediate removal. He instructed the hospital administration to ensure that no vehicle obstructs the casualty entrance or other access points required for ambulances and emergency medical services.

The Medical Superintendent was further directed to issue official vehicle passes or identification tags to staff members for authorised parking. The measure is intended to regulate vehicle movement, prevent unauthorised parking and maintain a congestion-free environment within the hospital premises.

Municipal Committee Batote organises Capacity-Building Workshop on SWM Rules 2026

■ HT News Network

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 22: To strengthen operational compliance and field-level efficiency under the Swachh Bharat Mission framework, the Municipal Committee Batote today organised a comprehensive capacity-building and orientation session on the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules 2026 at the municipal committee office premises.

The technical training workshop was conducted by Capacity Building Expert Tapan Mohanta, who delivered detailed operational guidance to enhance knowledge and field proficiency regarding the implementation of the SWM Rules 2026. The program witnessed active participation of officials, including Tax Inspector Sanjeev Khajuria, Senior Assistant Shyam Lal,



municipal staff members and frontline sanitation workers.

During the interactive session, the experts elaborated on practical protocols for scientific waste handling, emphasizing

mandatory source segregation and the nationwide four-bin waste management system. The presentation focused on managing municipal waste effectively at the source, enforcing segregated collection of organic, recyclable, sanitary and special-care waste and ensuring strict adherence to occupational safety standards during daily operations.

The Municipal Committee officials reaffirmed their firm commitment to strengthening local sanitation infrastructure, improving door-to-door collection workflows and fostering responsible waste management practices across all municipal wards. The programme concluded with a collective resolve by administrative staff and sanitation workers to work cohesively toward achieving Garbage-Free City standards and building a cleaner, greener and healthier Batote.

Jammu Getting Its Due Share of Inclusive Development under Omar Abdullah-Led Government: Rattan Lal Gupta

■ HT News Network

Jammu, October 22nd: Senior National Conference leader and Provincial President Jammu, Rattan Lal Gupta, said that Jammu Province is receiving due attention in the development agenda of the Omar Abdullah-led Government, with emphasis on infrastructure, drinking water, electricity, healthcare, education, rural connectivity, tourism, employment and the welfare of weaker sections of society.

Mr. Gupta said that the elected Government is committed to inclusive development in which the needs of Jammu city, border areas, villages, far-flung regions and economically disadvantaged families receive appropriate attention. He emphasised that development must be assessed through improvements in public services, completion of projects and tangible benefits reaching ordinary citizens.

Mr. Gupta highlighted the

important projects, schemes and initiatives taken by the Omar led Government said that the Government has prioritised road improvement, macadamisation, rural connectivity and restoration of damaged infrastructure and government has targeting more than 300 roads under NABARD, Water-supply augmentation and sewerage infrastructure are essential for Jammu's growing population. In August 2026, projects included a ₹ 124.19-crore water-supply



augmentation scheme for Udhampur and a ₹ 16.33-crore used-water management project for Reasi. The upgraded Residency Road-High Street corridor in Jammu, costing

₹ 9.18 crore, is another example of urban infrastructure improvement and a scheme of Rs 13.5 crores of drinking water in Sidhra, Ragoora and Rs 6.5 crores water schemes in Barani areas. The Government is also giving priority to electricity a target of improving power availability towards 24-hour supply by 2027-28, alongside modernisation of the distribution of electricity supply, Upgradation of hospitals, diagnostic facilities, MRI and CT services, and expansion of digital

healthcare and telemedicine are among the measures aimed at improving access to medical services.

Mr Gupta said that the initiatives include improvements in school infrastructure, smart classrooms, vocational education and skill development. Mission YUVA aims, over five years, to promote approximately 1.37 lakh enterprises and generate 4.25 lakh employment opportunities across Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr Gupta said that the

government is taking special care for the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme, rural infrastructure schemes, irrigation improvements and support for agricultural enterprises aimed to strengthen farmers' incomes and create opportunities in horticulture and allied activities.

Mr Gupta said that the government is developing infrastructure for the connectivity of Jammu's religious tourism and heritage sites.



DDC Pulwama holds Public Outreach-cum-Grievance Redressal Camp at Batagund Tral

Calls for time-bound redressal of public grievances; stresses field visits and coordinated action

HT News Network

PULWAMA, OCTOBER 22: A mega Public Outreach-cum-Grievance Redressal Camp was today held at Batagund, Urpal, Sub-Division Tral, under the chairmanship of District Development Commissioner (DDC) Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, providing residents of Batagund, Urpal, Gulshanpora, Jawarpora, Largam and adjoining areas an opportunity to project their developmental concerns and seek time-bound resolution of their grievances.

The camp witnessed active participation of residents, who raised a wide range of issues concerning healthcare, drinking water, road connectivity, education, sanitation, revenue services, irrigation and flood control, forest and timbers supply, public transport, power infrastructure, tourism, sports facilities and tribal welfare.

The DDC heard the grievances in detail and called upon the concerned officers to address the issues through coordinated field-level intervention, clear timelines and close follow-up, while avoiding unnecessary red-tapism and delays.

Residents highlighted the inconvenience caused by the Tehsil and Block offices being located at separate places. The DDC asked the ADC Tral to examine the issue and work out a practical arrangement to facilitate access to government services. The non-availability of Patwaris and Panchayat Secretaries was also raised, following which the ACR and ACD were asked to prepare a day-wise roster ensuring availability of field functionaries in the area for at least two days every week.

Healthcare deficiencies figured prominently during the interaction. Residents pointed out the shortage of technical staff, non-functional equipment, absence of a Dental Surgeon and the need for an X-Ray Technician at the local dispensary. The concerned BMO was tasked with preparing and implementing a roster to ensure availability of technicians at the facility at least two days a week and taking up the shortage of essential staff for early resolution.

Issues concerning the PHC at Gulshanpora were also raised, particularly the non-availability of water despite tanks and pipelines having been installed. The BMO Tral was asked to visit the facility and ensure immediate availability of potable water. The BMO was also requested to identify pregnant women in tribal habitations approaching their expected delivery dates and facilitate their timely shifting to District Headquarters, wherever required, to prevent



avoidable emergencies.

Residents from several areas highlighted drinking water shortages, defunct pipelines and non-functional filtration plants. The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Department, was asked to inspect the affected water supply schemes and undertake necessary measures for restoration of supply, including examination of borewell facilities for water-stressed Gujar habitations.

Concerns were raised regarding open dumping of waste besides inadequate garbage collection arrangements. The ACD and concerned BDO were tasked with undertaking field visits, identifying an appropriate dumping site and shifting waste dumping away from water bodies, religious places and other sensitive locations, while ensuring proper collection and disposal under the Swachh Bharat Mission.

On the demand for streetlights in different mohallas, the BDOs and Executive Officers of the concerned Municipal Committees were asked to assess the requirement within two days and initiate necessary action. Road connectivity remained a major concern, with residents seeking improvement and upgradation of the Largam-Batagund road and other link roads connecting upper and remote habitations, including smaller hamlets and orchard areas. The Executive Engineer, R&B Division Tral, was asked to undertake a field assessment of the identified roads and take up feasible works on priority.

The public highlighted an acute shortage of teachers in primary and middle schools serving tribal communities and pointed out that teachers are frequently assigned non-teaching duties, adversely affecting classroom learning. The Chief Education Officer, Pulwama, was asked to ensure

adequate teaching staff in the affected schools and minimise diversion of teachers to unrelated assignments.

The DDC stressed the need for focused interventions in remote and tribal habitations, particularly in education, healthcare, road connectivity and drinking water, to ensure equitable access to basic services. Residents sought development of a proper playground in the area. The ACD Pulwama and concerned BDO were entrusted with identifying a suitable site and preparing a DPR for a playground along with an accessible racing track/facility for specially-abled children.

The public also raised the issue of an incomplete and deteriorating cooperative building. The concerned department was asked to inspect the public asset, assess the requirement of repairs and examine its utilisation so that the building is put to productive public use.

The demand for construction of Panchayat and Community Halls was also projected, with residents informing that land has already been made available. The ACD and concerned BDO were asked to verify the available land and take up the works as per approved norms and availability of resources.

Residents sought improvement of facilities at the Shamshan Ghat in Gulshanpora, including proper tiling to address waterlogging and construction of a suitable structure for conducting last rites. The concerned BDO was asked to inspect the site and prepare a proposal for the required works.

The demand for improvement of the Eidgah-Asthan Aliya Road was also projected. The Executive Engineer, R&B Division Tral, was asked to inspect the road and examine the feasibility of its improvement and widening.

On irrigation and flood control, residents sought protective bunds along Lam Nallah and Saturah Nallah. The Executive Engineer, Irrigation and Flood Control Division, was tasked with conducting a field inspection and submitting a report on the required protective measures within the stipulated timeline.

Residents highlighted the tourism potential of Chenar Bagh, Jawarpora, Lam and other locations and sought their planned development to generate employment and strengthen the local economy. The DDC directed the concerned officers including ADC Tral, ACD, to visit the identified sites, assess their tourism potential and prepare suitable proposals/DPRs for recreational and tourism infrastructure. The DDC also called for exploring public amenities and suitable commercial facilities at identified locations to create livelihood and employment opportunities for local residents.

Residents sought direct SRTC bus connectivity from the area to Srinagar. The concerned ARTO was asked to examine the feasibility of direct bus connectivity and submit an appropriate proposal.

A major concern raised by residents of Tehsil Arupal was the absence of a dedicated fire and emergency response facility despite the area comprising around 50 villages. Taking serious note of the issue, the Fire & Emergency Services, was tasked with undertaking an immediate field assessment and working out an interim mechanism for emergency coverage. A rotational roster for deployment of fire service vehicles and staff from Tral was also sought to ensure regular emergency response coverage until a permanent arrangement is established.

The DDC also took note of the demand for a Sheep Development Centre in the area. The District Sheep Husbandry Officer, Pulwama, was asked to examine the feasibility and requirement of establishing such a facility to support livestock-rearing households.

The DDC said that the present visit was his first to the area but certainly not the last, assuring residents that field visits and direct interactions with the public would continue. He observed that while officers routinely function from their offices, a real understanding of public issues comes through visiting the field and interacting directly with the people.

He impressed upon all officers to regularly visit their respective areas, identify issues on the ground and work towards practical solutions rather than allowing grievances to remain pending through prolonged correspondence.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION ANANTNAG NIT 117 OF R&B/Anantnag/2026-27 /E-TENDERING/9015-24, DATED 21-10-2026

For and on behalf of the **Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K** e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-P

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc.(in Rs)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Time of Completion	Major Head of Account	Class of Contractor
1.	C/O of R wall with fencing around graveyard portion of Farooq Ahmad (Tag and others at Bhagwadi opposite Jamia Masjid Ahalehadees Anantnag	3.51 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.98 + (18% GST Amount 0.53)	200	7020/-	15 Days	CDF 2026-27	DEE Class & MSME's Only
2.	Construction of Fencing of Graveyard and earthwork filling Auto Stand at Samal Payeen Anantnag (First Phase-I)	8.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 6.78 + (18% GST Amount 1.22)	300	16000/-	25 Days	CDF 2026-27	CEE, DEE Class & MSME's Only
3.	Construction of Latrine Bathroom point at Sadiq Abad near Womens college Anantnag	4.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 3.39 + (18% GST Amount 0.61)	200	8000/-	15 Days	CDF 2026-27	DEE Class & MSME's Only
4.	Earth filling and lighting of Wagay Graveyard at Qazi Mohalla , Anantnag	3.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.54 + (18% GST Amount 0.46)	200	6000/-	15 Days	CDF 2026-27	DEE Class & MSME's Only
5.	Construction of Lane from Fayaz ahmad Dar to main road , bilal colony Bangidar	7.61 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 6.45 + (18% GST Amount 1.16)	300	15220/-	25 Days	CDF 2026-27	CEE, DEE Class & MSME's Only
6.	Renovation of spring near Masjid Hamza , Samal, Payeen B Anantnag	3.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.54 + (18% GST Amount 0.46)	200	6000/-	15 Days	CDF 2026-27	DEE Class & MSME's Only
7.	C/O Lane from Mohd Yaqub Khanday to Gh. Mohidin Khanday Khosa Mohalla Anchidora	2.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 1.69 + (18% GST Amount 0.31)	200	4000/-	15 Days	CDF 2026-27	DEE Class & MSME's Only
8.	C/O Drain FHO Syed Ali Mohammad , Ghulam Jeelani and others Opposite Masjid Noor at KP Road Anantnag	3.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.54 + (18% GST Amount 0.46)	200	6000/-	15 Days	CDF 2026-27	DEE Class & MSME's Only

Project Authority : District Development Commissioner Anantnag.
Position of AAA: Accorded vide Order No. 452 & 470 DCA of 2026, Dated 14.09.2026 & 25.09.2026 respectively.

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

S.No.	Particulars	Date
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	21-10-2026
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 21-10-2026 (02:00 PM)
		To 28-10-2026 (04:00 PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 21-10-2026 (02:00 PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 28-10-2026 (04:00 PM)
5	Date and time of opening of bid(online)	29-10-2026 (10:30 AM)
		In the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Anantnag.

- Bids must be accompanied with a Receipt of cost of Tender document/Tender Fee deposited in a Centralized Designated Pooling Bank Account bearing No. 0470010200000099 (Division Name, Bidder Name, NIT No. and Item No/ Name of Work to be mentioned on the Receipt (The Date of transaction should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and Receipt of EMD (2% of advertised Cost), also deposited in a Centralized Designated Pooling Bank Account bearing No. 0470010200000099 (Division Name, Bidder Name, NIT No. and Item No/ Name of Work to be mentioned on the Receipt. (The Date of receipt of EMD and Tender Fee should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date). The same EMD/Tender Fee receipt should not be used in more than one Tender/Bid.
- All the Bidders have to submit Earnest Money/Bid Security (EMD@2% of Advertised Cost). Non submission of Earnest Money/ Bid Security shall render the bidder as No-responsive.
Note:a. MSME's are required to pay only 50% of Tender Document Cost or Rs500/- whichever is lower.
b. MSME's are required to pay only 50% of the amount of EMD/ Bid Security or Rs 5000/- whichever is lower
- The Bid security amount of the successful Bidder shall, upon completion of the bidding process be transferred from single Centralized Designated Pooling Bank Account to Performance Security Deposit Head on Authorization from HoD during the currency of contract agreement including defect liability period. In addition, the differential amount of performance security shall be furnished by the Bidder in cash to the designated Authority. Failure to produce differential amount of Performance Security shall render the L1 as non-responsive and case for debarring of the Contractor for a period of 01 Year be forwarded to Higher Authorities.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Anantnag
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical Bid6.
Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
a. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.
b. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.
c. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No Financial bid will be accepted in physical form.
d. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
e. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid.
f. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents including tender document fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid.
Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.
- The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.
- Scanned copy of Receipt of cost of Tender document/Tender Fee deposited in a Centralized Designated Pooling Bank Account bearing No. 0470010200000099 (The Date of transaction should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and receipt of EMD deposited in a Centralized Designated Pooling Bank Account bearing No. 0470010200000099 (Division Name, Bidder Name, NIT No. and Item No/ Name of Work to be mentioned on the Receipt. (The Date of transaction should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The Original receipt of Cost of Tender Document, EMD and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of the Contract.
- Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.
- Price escalation and taxes: The %age quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees, shall be deemed to include price escalation upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.
- Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.
- All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

DIPK-6979/26
Send Date: Oct 22 2026

Sd/-
(Er. Mohammad Waseem)
Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Anantnag

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified to the general public that my name has been incorrectly recorded in my Aadhaar Card as Hashmat Shabir, whereas my actual and correct name is Haashim Shabir Malla.

The details are as follows:

- Incorrect Name in Aadhaar Card: Hashmat Shabir
- Correct Name: Haashim Shabir Malla
- Father's Name: Shabir Ahmad Malla
- Address: Pohrupeth, Langate, Handwara, District Kupwara, Jammu & Kashmir – 193302
- Aadhaar Number: 347757878893

Any person having any objection or claim regarding the above-mentioned name correction is hereby requested to submit their objection within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.
If no objection is received within the stipulated period, it shall be presumed that there is no objection from any concerned person regarding the proposed name correction.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified to the general public that my son's Aadhaar Card bears the name Aatif Bashir Dar, whereas his actual name is Mohammad Aatif. Details are as follows:

- Name mentioned in Aadhaar Card: Aatif Bashir Dar
- Actual Name: Mohammad Aatif
- Father's Name: Bashir Ahmad Dar
- Address: Bungam, Langate, Handwara, District Kupwara, Jammu & Kashmir – 193302
- Aadhaar Number: 548308721048

Any person having any objection, claim, or issue regarding the above-mentioned name may submit their objection within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.

If no objection is received within the stipulated period, it shall be presumed that there is no objection from any concerned person regarding the above-mentioned matter.
For any clarification or objection, please contact the undersigned at the number given below.
Contact No.: 9858357581

Bashir Ahmad Dar
Father of Mohammad Aatif
R/o Bungam, Langate, Handwara, District Kupwara, Jammu & Kashmir – 193302

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified that the applicant namely Ghulam Mohammed Sheikh S/o Late Ghulam Qadir Sheikh R/o Check kawoosa Tehsil NARBAL District BUDGAM applied for the issuance of Death certificate of his father Ghulam Qadir Sheikh S/o Khazir Mohammed Sheikh. The applicant intends to register the Death certificate of his father as on records is 28 / 09 / 2026 If any one has objection in this regard, he can approach concerned Births and Death authorities within the period of seven days after the publication of said Notice . No objection will be entertained .

21/10 /2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as ATEEQA BEGUM W/O GHULAM NABI BHAT on my Adhaar card bearing Adhaar No. . 9798 3864 0065 while my correct name is ATIQA BEGUM W/O GHULAM NABI BHAT which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of concerned Adhaar authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained
Name...ATIQA BEGUM
W/O...GHULAM NABI BHAT
R/O...BURZAWACHAN KREERI





SKUAST-Kashmir kicks off two-day training programme on 'Revival and Promotion of Millets' at KVK Gurez

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 22: The Faculty of Agriculture (FoA), Wadura, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir), in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)/Mountain Agriculture Research and Extension Station (MAR&ES), Gurez, on Wednesday commenced a two-day training programme on the revival and promotion of millets (nutri-cereals) in Jammu and Kashmir.

The programme witnessed active participation from postgraduate students, Ph.D. scholars, project staff, progressive farm-women,

innovative farmers, and scientific and technical personnel from various subject matter divisions of FoA, Wadura, and KVK/MAR&ES Gurez.

Prof. Lal Singh, Chief Scientist-cum-Principal Investigator, HADP-08, highlighted the importance of millets in the context of changing climatic conditions. Through a detailed presentation, he underlined the potential of these resilient and nutritious crops under the agro-climatic conditions of Gurez, emphasising their adaptability, health benefits, market prospects and industrial potential. He also stressed the role of value addition, product development, proper labelling and branding in enhancing



the commercial viability of millets and strengthening farmers' livelihoods.

Senior Scientist and Head, KVK/MAR&ES Gurez, Dr. Hilal Ahmad Malik, underscored the importance of introducing innovative agricultural technologies developed by SKUAST-Kashmir to expand

livelihood opportunities for the tribal community. He said the Kendra, under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai and with the support of Director Extension Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Research Prof. Syed Zameer and Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Prof. Najeeb

Ul Rehman Sofi, remains committed to the revival and promotion of heritage crops across Gurez Valley.

Dr. Malik emphasised the need to strengthen collaborative research and extension efforts under HADP-08, focusing on scientific millet cultivation, value addition and product development to realise the crop's full potential.

Dr. Jauhar Rafeeq, Scientist, Agro-forestry, informed that the Action Plan for 2027-28 would incorporate various interventions for the revival and promotion of heritage crops, with particular emphasis on millets.

Prof. Lal Singh assured continued support for agricultural development in Gurez and proposed organising an exposure visit for

progressive farmers from the valley to the Faculty of Agriculture, Wadura, during the forthcoming season. The visit would familiarise farmers with the latest technological advancements developed by the University, particularly in millet cultivation and related practices.

The participating farmers and beneficiaries expressed gratitude to SKUAST-Kashmir for organising the informative, need-based and market-oriented training programme, describing such initiatives as valuable opportunities to enhance agricultural knowledge, explore new income-generating avenues and promote sustainable farming practices in the region.

Khaur farmers oriented on modern horticultural practices, Govt schemes

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22: The Department of Horticulture Jammu today organised an Interaction-cum-Awareness camp at Khaur to familiarise farmers with modern horticultural practices, departmental schemes and opportunities to diversify into high-value fruit crops.

Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Syed was the Chief Guest.

At the outset, Chief Horticulture Officer R. K. Kotwal gave a detailed presentation on the different schemes and programmes being run by the Department of Horticulture. He particularly spoke about the potential of dragon fruit cultivation in the Jammu region as a profitable diversification crop. Farmers were briefed on important aspects of dragon fruit cultivation, including choosing quality planting material, site selection, trellis systems, irrigation, plant spacing, orchard care, nutrient management and income potential.

The Director highlighted the Department's efforts towards improving horticultural infrastructure, promoting quality planting material, introducing new and profitable fruit crops and providing technical support to farmers. He emphasised the important role of horticulture in strengthening the rural economy and improving the livelihood of farming families.

6 Yrs of NMBA: District-wide pledge-taking events reaffirm commitment to a drug-free Kathua

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, OCTOBER 22: In connection with the celebration of six years of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA), district-wide pledge-taking ceremonies were held across district Kathua today.

At the DC Office, the pledge was administered in the presence of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma with participation of Additional Deputy Commissioner Sachin Jamwal; Project Officer ICDS; Chief Planning Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, Chief Medical Officer and other district officers and officials.

The initiative aimed to strengthen the collective resolve against drug abuse and promote awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse among all sections of society.

The pledge taking events were held across the district with the active participation of government departments, officials and other stakeholders, reflecting a collective commitment to the vision of a drug-free India.

The initiative highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts by the district administration, educational institutions, law enforcement agencies, civil society organisations and the public in preventing drug abuse and safeguarding the health and well-being of the younger generation. The Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan, a nationwide initiative aimed at generating awareness about substance abuse and mobilising community participation against drug addiction, emphasises the role of collective responsibility in addressing the growing challenge of drug abuse.

SWD Srinagar organizes Awareness Programme on Financial Assistance Schemes

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: Social Welfare Department (SWD) Srinagar, SANKALP Hub for Empowerment of Women-Mission Shakti organised an awareness programme at Malla Bagh Srinagar at Community Level and in Collaboration with Mission POSHAN to sensitise the local community about financial literacy, various financial assistance initiatives and social security schemes aimed at promoting financial inclusion and ensuring the welfare of eligible beneficiaries.

During the programme, participants were informed about the significance of financial literacy in everyday life, including the importance of savings, budgeting, maintaining bank accounts, using banking services

responsibly and adopting safe digital financial practices. Emphasis was laid on making individuals aware of their financial rights and encouraging them to make informed decisions to improve their economic security.

The participants were also sensitised about various financial assistance schemes and social security initiatives implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and other line Departments. Information was shared regarding the benefits available to eligible individuals and families, including marriage assistance, assistance for persons with disabilities, and other welfare measures designed to provide support to deserving beneficiaries. The importance of understanding eligibility conditions, completing the required documentation and

following the prescribed application procedures was also highlighted.

The programme further emphasised the need to ensure that government welfare benefits reach the intended beneficiaries, particularly vulnerable households, women, persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged sections of society. Community members were encouraged to approach the concerned departmental offices for accurate information, guidance and assistance in accessing the benefits of relevant schemes.

The Department of Social Welfare Srinagar reiterated its commitment to inclusive development and the effective implementation of welfare initiatives, with a focus on empowering individuals and families through awareness, financial inclusion and access.

HDFC Bank Conducts Over 8,800 Cyber Fraud Awareness Workshops, Reaches 1.8 Lakh Citizens

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Oct 22, KNT: HDFC Bank has conducted more than 8,800 cyber fraud awareness workshops across India between July and October 2026, reaching over 1.8 lakh citizens under its nationwide initiative, Cyber Fraud Suraksha. The campaign aims to raise awareness about emerging cyber frauds, promote safe digital banking practices and help citizens protect themselves against financial scams as digital transactions become increasingly common. The workshops targeted a wide range of groups, including school and college students, senior citizens, Resident Welfare Associations, corporate offices, community forums, self-help groups, bank customers and employees. Through interactive sessions, participants were informed about common fraud techniques and precautions to safeguard their financial information. According to the bank, the



sessions used real-life examples, stories and videos to explain how fraudsters operate and how individuals can identify suspicious activities before becoming victims. Topics included digital arrest scams, investment frauds, job scams, APK file scams and QR code frauds. The workshops also covered secure net banking and online shopping practices, including the importance of the bank's Vigil Aunty awareness initiative. Participants were advised never to share confidential banking details, including one-time passwords (OTPs), card verification values (CVVs), debit and credit card credentials, and UPI PINs. Commenting on the initiative, Manish Agrawal, Senior Executive Vice President, Credit

Intelligence and Control, HDFC Bank, said cybercrime posed a serious threat and that a lack of awareness often left people vulnerable to fraud. He said the campaign sought to familiarise participants with the methods used by fraudsters and promote secure banking habits so that citizens could remain vigilant and avoid falling victim to scams. The bank has urged customers to exercise caution while conducting digital transactions and refrain from sharing confidential banking information with anyone. Customers who fall victim to cyber fraud have been advised to contact their nearest bank branch immediately and call 1930, the national cybercrime helpline. [KNT]

KVK Bandipora-1 organises Training Programme on Natural Farming for Officials

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 22 : Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Bandipora-1, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir), organised a training programme on Natural Farming for officials from the Department of Agriculture and other government departments at its campus in Potushai.

The programme aimed to familiarise participants with the principles and practices of natural farming, promote sustainable agricultural technologies and highlight the use of locally available resources to reduce dependence on external agricultural inputs. Head, KVK Bandipora-1, Dr. Tariq Sultan, delivered a detailed technical presentation on natural farming, highlighting its fundamental principles, scientific approaches and significance in promoting sustainable.

J&K Bank Q2 net profit rises 11 pc to Rs 546 crore

■ HT News Network/UNI

NEW DELHI, Oct 22: J&K Bank on Thursday reported an 11 per cent growth in its net profit to Rs 546 crore in the second quarter ended September 2026. The bank had posted a net profit of Rs 494 crore in the year-ago period.

Total income rose to Rs 4,042 crore in the quarter under review from Rs 3,446 crore in the same period a year ago, J&K Bank said in a regulatory filing.

Interest income of the bank improved to Rs 3,727 crore in the July-September quarter from Rs 3,292 crore in the second quarter of the previous financial year.



The bank's Net Interest Income (NII) rose 5 per cent to Rs 1,502 crore during the quarter. The Cost-to-Income Ratio for the quarter has consequently witnessed substantial improvement, being recorded at 56.57 per cent compared to 60.79 per cent for the corresponding quarter last year, the bank said in a statement.

Asset quality of the bank witnessed improvement with gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) falling to 2.23 per cent of gross advances at the end of the September quarter of 2026 against 3.32 per cent a year ago.

Net NPAs or bad loans also declined to 0.51 per cent compared to 0.76 per cent in the year-ago period.

On the improvement in asset quality, J&K Bank MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "The continuing improvement in our GNPA ratio by 14 bps QoQ to 2.23 per cent, the lowest level in a decade, along with an annualised gross slipperage ratio of just 0.4 per cent for the half year."

Rupee slumps 44 paise to close at 94.82 against US dollar

■ HT News Network/UNI

MUMBAI, Oct 22: The rupee slumped 44 paise to close at 94.82 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, weighed down by a negative trend in the domestic equity markets and surging crude oil prices.

According to forex analysts, the rupee began trading on a flat-to-lower trajectory due to sluggish domestic equities and surging crude oil prices.

Escalation of attacks by Yemeni Houthis on Saudi Arabia's energy infrastructure deteriorated global market sentiment, they said, adding that softening of the dollar index



and a decline in US Treasury yields cushioned the downside.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 94.47 against the dollar, then lost ground to touch an intra-day low of 94.94 and finally settled for the day at 94.82 (provisional), registering a decline of 44 paise over its previous close.

On Wednesday, the rupee surged 53 paise to close at 94.38

against the dollar.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.17 per cent at 101.60.

Forex traders said near-term dollar liquidity has improved following the Jio IPO, with potential structural inflows supported by hopes of a US trade agreement.

However, this stability remains vulnerable to renewed foreign portfolio outflows or a spike in crude oil prices near USD 120.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading higher by 3.23 per cent at USD 112.33 per barrel in futures trade.

Awareness-cum-Training Programme on POSH Act 2013, SHE-Box Portal held at Tangdar

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, OCTOBER 22: The SANKALP-Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW), Mission Shakti, Department of Social Welfare, Kupwara in collaboration with Tehsil Legal Service Authority Karnah today organised an Awareness-cum-Training Programme on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) and the SHE-Box Portal at Dak Bungalow, Tangdar.

The programme witnessed the active participation of a large number of women and men, along with representatives from various departments, including Health, Police, Education, Roads and Buildings (R&B), ICDS, Social Welfare, and other stakeholders.

Resource persons deputed by the Tehsil Legal Services Authority (TLISA) sensitised the participants about the provisions of the POSH Act, the prevention and redressal of sexual harassment at workplaces, and the importance of ensuring safe and dignified



working environments for women.

The participants were also informed about the SHE-Box Portal, an online platform for reporting and addressing complaints of sexual harassment at the workplace. Various participating departments were sensitised regarding registration on the portal and the constitution of Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs), wherever applicable, to strengthen institutional mechanisms for addressing workplace harassment.

The District Programme Officer, Aijaz

Ahmad Bhat who is also holding the charge of District Social Welfare Officer, Kupwara, appreciated the participation of all departments, resource persons, and other stakeholders and acknowledged their support in making the programme meaningful and successful.

The District Mission Coordinator (DMC) addressed the gathering and highlighted the emphasis being placed by the Government of India and the Ministry of Women and Child Development on women's safety, dignity, and empowerment.



Betrayed by my body: The taboo health issue women are talking about on social media



"The impact goes far beyond what people understand - we're talking about pain, urgency, sleepless nights and missing out on your life," Adrianne tells her roughly 8,000 followers in a video on TikTok.

For nearly five years, Adrianne has lived with a chronic urinary tract infection (UTI) - a condition it took her two years to get a diagnosis for.

In that time she was wrongly told it was colon cancer, Crohn's disease or even that her partner must have been cheating and had given her a sexually transmitted infection.

What started as one UTI in 2022 became a debilitating cycle.

"It has completely stripped me of everything: being able to work properly, my relationships, my friendships, going out, being able to have a normal social life," says Adrianne, who works in digital marketing in London.

The 29-year-old was eventually diagnosed privately with a chronic UTI - something experts estimate could affect up to 1.7 million women in the UK. Men and children are also affected.

Adrianne is not alone in sharing her story and coping mechanisms on social media to fight the stigma surrounding UTIs.

A quick search on Tiktok or Instagram shows hundreds of posts of women of all ages talking about the reality of living with recurrent and chronic UTIs.

"I felt incredibly nervous to put myself out there, but there's now this community of people who can share tips with each other, and understand each other," said Adrianne, saying her posts have had a "really positive response".

"It's very validating."

'Debilitating' symptoms

A chronic UTI, which has no official medical definition, is an infection with persistent symptoms - even after a standard course of antibiotics. It can be caused by bacteria entering the lining of your bladder.

The condition can be unpredictable, but at its worst is "completely debilitating", says Adrianne, describing "the most excruciating abdominal pain, like shooting, spasming pain."

"You need a wee all the time, but it's like weeing lava."

"It's a very claustrophobic feeling, of I'm trapped in this body that is betraying me and is in pain," she adds.

Even on a good day she struggles to leave the house as she worries about having a flare-up.

While sending a urine sample to the lab remains the gold standard to diagnose a UTI, "false negatives" can often occur, says Professor Chris Harding, a consultant urologist at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Another hurdle is the significant

crossover between chronic UTIs and other conditions such as painful bladder syndrome, chronic pelvic pain and endometriosis, says Magda Kujawa, a consultant urologist at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust.

Adrianne says she felt "dismissed" by doctors while trying to get a diagnosis, and frustrated at repeatedly being given advice around hygiene and hydration, while her symptoms persisted.

Both experts say health professionals should listen to the patient's story to understand whether symptoms amount to a recurrent or chronic condition or something else entirely.

Since she started posting online, Adrianne has received messages from other young women who worry they are "dirty" and "not taking care of themselves" or that there is "something wrong with them".

"There's definitely still a lot of stigma around why people get them (UTIs), and it all just comes back to education. We're not taught about them at school," she adds.

Demystifying the condition

Laura Von Müllen, 26, has also been diagnosed with a chronic UTI and documents her experience on TikTok.

She says her symptoms "really badly" impacted university, and became particularly difficult to manage when she started working. She now works remotely from Kent doing social media management.

As well as urinary symptoms, Laura says she also experiences heart palpitations

and panic attacks.

"People don't understand, they think it's just a UTI and that it'll clear within three days, but I've still got mine two years later," she says.

Laura also feels there is still a lot of misconception around UTIs. "People have said to me: who have you been sleeping with then? When that's not the case."

Adrianne and Laura hope more women sharing their experience will help demystify the condition.

Harding agrees, adding that "the more we can talk about these conditions, the more people will present to appropriate specialists and get the right treatment."

But both Harding and Kujawa warn that while social media can be a useful resource, there is the risk of coming across misinformation and harmful advice, including "hacks" that could cause more harm.

"I've seen women on social media sitting in baths of disinfectant, all because they were convinced that that they were dirty, and that's why they were getting infections. And actually, that just made things ten times worse," Kujawa says.

While Adrianne and Laura's symptoms are showing improvements, they say it's a "long road to recovery".

(BBC News)



Nigeria's first Ebola patient holidayed in Uganda, officials say

Nigeria's first confirmed case of Ebola since the outbreak in East Africa began in May is the wife of a diplomat who travelled to Uganda's capital for a holiday, the head of Uganda's health agency has told the BBC.

The woman is originally from Uganda but based in Abuja, where she fell ill three days after arriving home in the Nigerian capital on 3 October, according to Dr Jean Kaseya from the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

Nigeria's health minister has confirmed to the BBC the 42-year-old patient spent two

"Not all of them have been in close proximity. We cast the net wide so that we contain it as broadly as possible," Pate told the BBC.

Kaseya explained that the woman had first developed symptoms on 6 October when she had sought medical help.

"She went to the first hospital, a private hospital, thinking that she had malaria, and then she went to the second private hospital. She was admitted on the 11th," he told the BBC's Newshour programme.

Malaria is endemic in Nigeria and its symptoms - a high temperature, headaches,

weeks.

Ebola is a rare but deadly disease caused by a virus. As the disease progresses, vomiting and diarrhoea develop and it can lead to organ failure. Some, but not all, patients develop internal and external bleeding.

The disease spreads from one person to another by contact with infected bodily fluids such as blood or vomit.

The outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo, which began in May, has claimed at least 4,600 lives, with more than 9,500 cases recorded, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control reports.

Shortly after the outbreak was announced, it was also reported in Uganda, where at least two people died. Uganda declared itself free of the disease in August after its last patient was discharged.

There have been conflicting accounts about the patient in Nigeria and her movements.

Pate and Kaseya's comments contradict a statement issued earlier by the Ugandan ministry of health, which described the woman as a Nigerian national who had gone to eastern DR Congo for business, only transiting through Uganda.

It insisted there were currently no confirmed active Ebola cases in the country and that the woman's passage through Uganda did not mean she had contracted the virus there.

Nigeria's health minister and the Africa CDC chief have sought to play down any tension.

Pate said Nigerian officials were working with Uganda, Ethiopia and the Africa CDC to establish the full facts.

"We respect our sister nation of Uganda," he said. "We have very strong solidarity, we are all in it together."

Kaseya also urged African countries to share information, saying this would help investigators trace the woman's movements and establish where she might have contracted the virus.

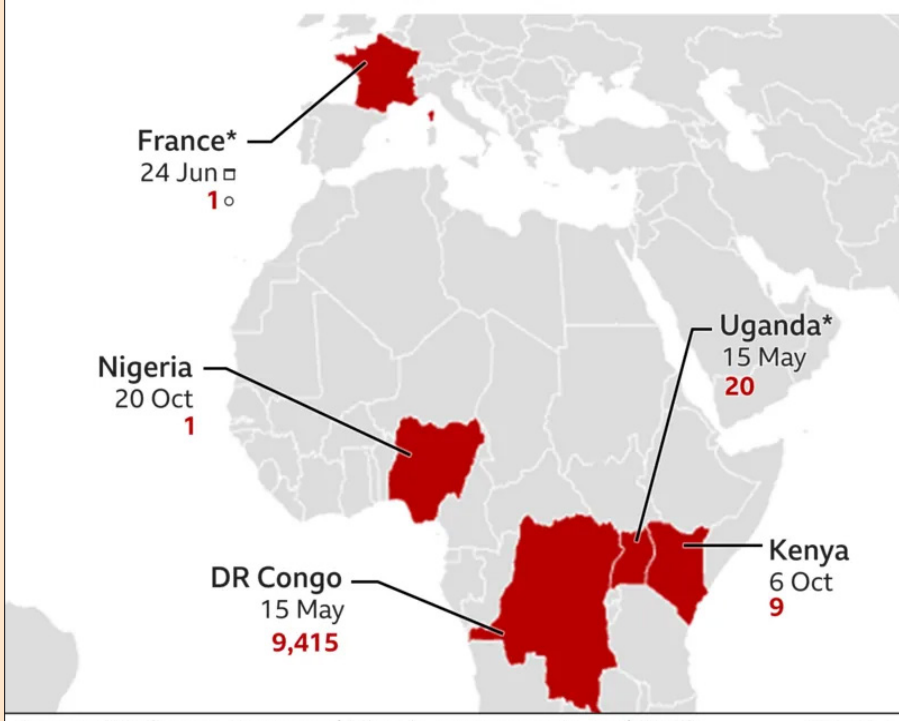
And he encouraged Western countries

Countries that have confirmed Ebola cases

The outbreak was declared on 15 May in DR Congo

○ Cases

■ Date of first confirmed case



not to impose travel restrictions, saying "collaboration and solidarity" were the way to help stop the current outbreak.

The disease recently spread to Kenya, which has reported at least nine infections.

On Monday, the US advised its citizens to reconsider travel to Kenya because of health risks and raised its travel advisory level for the country.

In 2014, Nigeria successfully contained an Ebola outbreak, which had resulted in 20 confirmed cases and eight deaths.

Pate expressed confidence in the country's

ability to repeat that success, citing strengthened disease surveillance, laboratories and thousands of trained epidemiologists.

"Nigeria has muscle memory that has been activated, but we are not fighting the past outbreak in the exactly the same way. We have to be vigilant," he said.

The outbreak in DR Congo has been caused by the Bundibugyo species of Ebola, which is relatively rare, with no approved vaccine or treatment - though trials are under way.

(BBC News)



and a half weeks in Kampala, adding that she also made a two-hour stopover in Ethiopia's capital on her return.

"She's stable, she's improving," Muhammad Ali Pate said.

The authorities were working to prevent the virus from spreading and had identified 44 people who had been in contact with the woman, who tested positive for Ebola on Tuesday, the minister said.

muscle aches, vomiting and or diarrhoea - are similar to those of Ebola.

After her condition failed to improve, public health authorities were alerted on Monday 19 October, Pate said.

Her diagnosis was confirmed the next day following three laboratory tests, he said.

The incubation period for Ebola ranges from two to 21 days, meaning those exposed to the virus may not become ill for several

Real Betis midfielder Bernal handed four-match ban for Yamal headbutt

United News Of India

MADRID, OCT 22: Real Betis midfielder Facundo Bernal has been handed a four-match suspension for headbutting Barcelona winger Lamine Yamal



during his team's 5-2 home defeat in La Liga on Saturday.

The Spanish Football Federation's (RFEF) Disciplinary Committee imposed the ban after Bernal was sent off following a confrontation with Yamal shortly after Betis had equalized at 2-2.

"In the 54th minute, the player (6) Facundo Bernal

Cruz was sent off for the following reason: During a confrontation, this player grabbed an opponent by the neck and delivered two consecutive headbutts to his face, while the ball was not in play."

"The opposing player did not require medical

away from the ball, according to Xinhua. The Spanish Football Federation's (RFEF) Disciplinary Committee imposed the ban after Bernal was sent off following a confrontation with Yamal shortly after Betis had equalized at 2-2. "In the 54th minute, the player (6) Facundo Bernal Cruz was sent off for the following reason: During a confrontation, this player grabbed an opponent by the neck and delivered two consecutive headbutts to his face, while the ball was not in play." "The opposing player did not require medical attention and was able to continue in the match," referee Ricardo de Burgos Bengoetxea wrote in his post-match report. Bernal was punished under Article 103 of the RFEF's Disciplinary Code, which provides for suspensions of between four and 12 matches for assaulting another person without causing injury when the incident occurs while play is stopped or away from the ball, according to Xinhua. The Uruguayan received the minimum suspension under the regulation, but Betis has announced it will appeal the decision. If the ban is upheld, Bernal will miss La Liga matches against Celta Vigo, Malaga and Elche, as well as a Copa del Rey tie away to fourth-tier Navalcarnero. ing reason: During a confrontation, this player grabbed an opponent by the neck and delivered two consecutive headbutts to his face, while the ball was not in play." "The opposing player did not require medical attention and was able to continue in the match," referee Ricardo de Burgos Bengoetxea wrote in his post-match report. Bernal was punished under Article 103 of the RFEF's Disciplinary Code, which provides for suspensions of between four and 12 matches for assaulting another person without causing injury when the incident occurs while play is stopped or away from the ball, according to Xinhua.

Important Champions League wins for Real Madrid & Betis to keep up 100 percent starts

United News Of India

MADRID, OCT 22: Real Madrid warmed up for Sunday's vital 'Clasico' away to FC Barcelona with a convincing 4-1 home win over RB Leipzig, maintaining its 100 percent record in the Champions League under Jose Mourinho.

After Thibaut Courtois made two excellent saves to deny Romulo and Christopher Nkunku in the opening minutes, Real Madrid took the lead. Arda Guler's shot was initially saved by Maarten Vandevoort, but the ball became trapped between the goalkeeper's legs, allowing Bernardo Silva to score. Guler doubled Real Madrid's lead in the 52nd minute after Kylian Mbappe's header left him with a simple finish from close range.

Mbappe scored Real Madrid's third with seven minutes remaining, collecting the ball on the edge of the penalty area before cutting inside and firing into the far corner. There was still time for substitute Yan Diomande to score against his former club. The winger, who moved to Madrid from Leipzig in the summer, struck a powerful

volley in the

87th minute, two minutes after Tidiam Gomis



had scored a consolation goal for the visitors.

Wednesday's other Champions League match involving a Spanish side saw Real Betis beat Feyenoord 1-0 at home, giving Manuel Pellegrini's team three wins from three matches. Isco's 59th-minute penalty secured the victory for Betis, which maintained its perfect start to the competition and strengthened its position in the league phase.

Samson blitz, middle-order fightback power India to record chase against New Zealand

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 22: India survived a middle-order collapse to pull off a nervy four-wicket victory over New Zealand in the opening T20I at Hagley Oval in



Christchurch, chasing down a target of 226 with two balls to spare, and take a 1-0 lead in the five-match T20I series on Thursday.

Sanju Samson's explosive half-century gave the visitors a flying start before Shreyas Iyer, Axar Patel and Naman Dhir stepped up to seal the win after the hosts fought back through their spinners.

New Zealand had earlier posted 225 for four after being put in to bat, their highest T20I total against India, with Glenn Phillips smashing an unbeaten 82 off 40 balls and Finn Allen providing an aggressive start with 45 off 24 deliveries. Allen struck boundaries all

around the ground to take New Zealand to 80 for two inside eight overs. However, India's bowlers initially managed to keep the scoring in check before Phillips and Bevon Jacobs changed the momentum with a 73-run stand off just 33 balls.

Arshdeep Singh, Mayank Yadav and Axar Patel picked up a wicket each, but Bhuvneshwar Kumar went wicketless on his return to international cricket.

India's reply began in spectacular fashion as Samson and Abhishek Sharma added 93 runs for the opening wicket in just 35 balls. Samson dominated the partnership, reaching his half-century off 23 deliveries, while the visitors raced through the powerplay and appeared well placed to overhaul the target.

Sachin Khilari leads India's shot put sweep at Asian Para Games

United News Of India

AICHI-NAGOYA (JAPAN), OCT 22: India's medal tally at the Asian Para Games 2026 rose to 62 as Sachin Khilari led a clean sweep in the men's shot put F46 and Praveen Kumar successfully defended his high jump title here.

The Indian contingent climbed one place to fifth in the overall standings with 14 gold, 22 silver and 26 bronze medals after three days of medal events.

India added 27 medals to its tally on Day 3 on Wednesday, including five golds, 11 silvers and 11 bronzes. Sachin Khilari produced a Games record throw of 15.87m on his sixth and final attempt to win the shot put F46 gold medal, according to olympics.com. Mohd Yasser took silver with a season-best 15.06m, while Parveen completed India's podium sweep with 14.94m. India also secured a one-two finish in the men's high jump T64, where defending champion Praveen Kumar cleared 2.05m to win gold with a Games record.

Inter Kashi FC up against East Bengal FC juggernaut

United News Of India

PUNE, OCT 22: Defending champions East Bengal FC will look to continue their winning start to the MG Indian Super League 2026-27 when they face Inter Kashi FC at the Balewadi Stadium on Friday.

The fixture revisits last season's title-deciding clash, when East Bengal beat Inter Kashi 2-1, with Mohammed Rashid scoring the decisive goal to secure the club's maiden title.

The Red and Gold Brigade enter the contest after a commanding 4-0 win over Churchill Brothers SC, while Inter Kashi drew 1-1 against Odisha FC. The champions face a demanding schedule,

with Friday's match preceding an AFC Champions League Two fixture against Al-Seeb in Oman. Head coach Antonio Lopez Habas confirmed that he would make limited changes while stressing the importance of both matches. "We will make a few changes, but not many.

We have plenty of players ready to take their chance. Teams that want to win trophies must be prepared for a demanding schedule, and I



hope we don't suffer injuries that force us to change our plans," Habas said. Winger Bipin Singh will head into the contest with added confidence after coming off the bench to score twice against Churchill Brothers. The attacker said the goals were important as he looks to earn a starting place, but emphasised that every opportunity must count.

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