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HEADLINES

TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



P:12
Kuldeep joins elite club, second-fastest Indian to 200 ODI wickets

Ten Houses Guttred in Major Midnight Fire in Kishtwar's Warwan

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

KISHTWAR, SEP 30: At least ten residential houses, along with cowsheds, were gutted in a major fire that broke out during the night in Mungli village of the remote Warwan area of Kishtwar district, officials said on Wednesday.

The blaze, which erupted around midnight, rapidly spread through the village, reducing several residential structures and adjoining livestock shelters to ashes. The extent of the destruction was significant, with initial reports putting the number of residential houses gutted at between eight and ten.

No casualties have been reported in the incident so far.

The fire has once again brought into focus the vulnerability of settlements in the far-flung Warwan region, where the absence of dedicated firefighting infrastructure

>>> MORE ON P 02

Modi, Trump Review India-US Ties, Reaffirm Close Engagement

Leaders discuss trade, defence, energy, critical technologies and regional and global developments

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump on Wednesday reviewed the progress of India-US cooperation in trade, defence, energy and critical technologies during a telephone conversation and agreed to maintain close engagement to advance the Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership. The two leaders also exchanged views on regional and international developments, including ongoing efforts to promote global peace and security, according to the Prime Minister's Office.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday held a telephone conversation with US President Donald Trump during which the two leaders reviewed the progress of India-US



bilateral cooperation in trade, defence, energy and critical technologies and exchanged views on regional and international developments, including ongoing efforts to advance global peace and security.

Describing the conversation as "productive", Modi said the two leaders agreed to maintain close engagement to take forward the India-US Comprehensive

>>> MORE ON P 02

Army restores sight to 364 patients under Operation Drishti

LG Sinha hails doctors and soldiers for conducting advanced eye surgeries in Srinagar and border area of Tangdhar

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday attended the closing ceremony of the 11th Mega Eye Surgery Camp organised under Operation Drishti, lauding the Indian Army and Armed Forces Medical Services for restoring the vision of 364 patients through surgeries conducted at Srinagar and Tangdhar in Kupwara. He said the initiative reflected service, compassion, courage and resolve, with 220 surgeries conducted in two days at an underground operation theatre in Tangdhar after modern surgical equipment was airlifted to the border area. The



Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today attended the closing ceremony of 11th Mega Eye Surgery Camp organised under Operation

Drishti, which marks another milestone in the Indian Army's healthcare outreach in the UT of Jammu Kashmir.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor expressed

>>> MORE ON P 02

JK Samadhan to get AI, WhatsApp upgrades as CS reviews grievance redressal

Over 1.36 lakh of 1.60 lakh grievances disposed of; citizen satisfaction and timely resolution stressed



HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Wednesday reviewed the quality and timeliness of public grievance redressal across Jammu and Kashmir, with officials informing that 1,36,977 of the 1,60,685 grievances received through JK Samadhan and CPGRAMS had been redressed or closed as of September 25. The government also outlined plans to upgrade JK Samadhan through artificial intelligence, predictive analytics and WhatsApp integration, while stressing that grievance disposal must be measured by the quality of resolution and

satisfaction of citizens.

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo took a comprehensive review of the public grievance redressal mechanism across Jammu and Kashmir, with particular emphasis on assessing the quality of grievance disposal, the average time taken by departments and districts to resolve public complaints and the level of satisfaction among complainants.

The meeting besides Commissioner Secretary, DoPG was attended by Administrative Heads of other Departments; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/ Kashmir; Deputy Commissioners

>>> MORE ON P 02

Five-Month Wait for Surgery at SMHS Raises Concerns Over Access to Public Healthcare

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 30: A surgery date given to a patient at SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, nearly five months after the patient approached the government hospital, has raised questions over the availability and accessibility of elective surgical care for people who depend

on the public healthcare system.

According to an OPD record dated September 25, 2026, seen by KNT, a patient examined in the surgery department at SMHS Hospital was advised laparoscopic/open cholecystectomy. The date noted for

the procedure is February 19, 2027, nearly five months after the patient's visit to the hospital.

One of the relatives of the patient told the news agency Kashmir News Trust that the case

>>> MORE ON P 02

Shah puts Punjab drug issue at centre of BJP's 2027 election campaign

Union Home Minister Promises drug-free Punjab by December 31, 2029 if party voted to power; AAP rejects allegations

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 30: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday made the drug issue a central theme of the BJP's campaign for the 2027 Punjab Assembly election, promising to make the state drug-free by December 31, 2029 if the party is voted to power. Addressing a rally in Jalandhar at the culmination of the BJP's 13-day Nasha Mukti Punjab Yatra, Shah accused the AAP government of failing to curb narcotics, while the ruling party has rejected the allegations and maintained that its government has taken extensive action against drugs. Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday put Punjab's drug problem at the centre of the Bharatiya



Janata Party's campaign for the 2027 assembly election, promising to make the state drug-free by December 31, 2029 if the BJP is voted to power and accusing Chief Minister

>>> MORE ON P 02

Govt Nursing College approved for Budgam, manpower proposal under consideration

Sakeena Itoo says no proposal yet for nursing college at Beerwah or trauma hospital at Magam

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Health and Medical Education Minister Sakeena Itoo on Wednesday informed the Legislative Assembly that a Government Nursing College has been approved for Budgam and that the proposal for creation of manpower required to make it operational is under consideration. She said there was currently no proposal for a nursing college at Beerwah or a trauma hospital at Magam, while trauma cases were being managed through existing health facilities including DH Budgam, SDH Beerwah, SDH Magam and tertiary hospitals. Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today informed the Legislative Assembly that Government Nursing College has

already been approved at Budgam and the proposal for creation of manpower for the College is under



consideration for making the college operational.

The Minister said this in reply to a question raised by Legislator Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani in House today.

>>> MORE ON P 02

Social Media Regulation Sparks Debate in J&K Assembly on Final Day

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 30: Calls for regulating social media and digital news platforms triggered a debate in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, with members seeking greater accountability for misleading content while PDP MLA Waheed Para cautioning the government against any move that could restrict freedom of expression.

The issue came up during the concluding day of the Assembly session against the backdrop of the controversy surrounding National Conference MLA Altaf Ahmad Kaloo, who had last week objected to a social media video depicting him inside the House. Kaloo had told the Assembly that the substance shown in the video was

>>> MORE ON P 02

Article 370, pre-1953 position can't be linked with statehood: LoP Sunil Sharma

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 30 : Asserting that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) remains committed to restoration of statehood to J&K within the constitutional framework, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Legislative Assembly Sunil Sharma on Wednesday said restoration of statehood cannot be linked with the pre-1953 position or restoration of Articles 370 and 35A.

Talking to reporters after the conclusion of the Autumn Session, the LoP Sharma, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), questioned the statehood resolution passed by the Assembly and criticised references to the pre-1953

position and Articles 370 and 35A.

LoP Sharma said this 7-day session was most unfortunate and historic for the wrong reasons.

Sharma said the Chief Minister is calling it a fruitful session. "Fruitful from which angle? You dashed the hopes of all sections. People were waiting for your Statehood resolution, which you chant as an answer to every question."

"After abrogation of 370, all confusion is over and the full Constitution of India is implemented in J&K. By raking up Pre-53 again, you have prolonged and sabotaged Statehood," Sharma said.

>>> MORE ON P 02

J&K Assembly session ends amid heated exchanges, governance disclosures

Seven-day Autumn Session sees debate over media regulation, bureaucracy, employment, power, ration distribution and public finances



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: The seven-day Autumn Session of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly concluded on Wednesday amid heated exchanges over social

media regulation and the role of bureaucracy in legislative affairs, alongside a series of disclosures on employment, electricity, public finances, ration distribution and governance. The final sitting also witnessed Doda MLA Mehraj Malik being marshalled

out after entering the Well of the House during a debate on social media regulation, while the Assembly was informed about more than one lakh registered casual workers, recruitment

>>> MORE ON P 02

Sadiq congratulates Speaker on successful NeVA rollout



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, SEP 30 : Senior leader National Conference and MLA Zaidil Tanvir Sadiq on Wednesday congratulated Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather and the Assembly Secretariat for the successful operationalisation of the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) during the Autumn Session of the House.

Speaking on the concluding day of the Autumn Session, Sadiq, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), appreciated the efforts of the Speaker and

>>> MORE ON P 02

Rs 3 cr released under SDRF for relief in affected Budgam areas: Dy CM

■ HT News Network

RINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: An amount of Rs 3 crore has been released under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for extending relief assistance in the affected areas of Budgam district, including Beerwah Constituency.

This was stated by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary while replying to a Calling Attention raised by MLA Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani regarding the plight of people affected by the recent flash floods in Beerwah constituency.

The Dy CM informed the House that in respect of the flood-related death case reported from the constituency, ex-gratia compensation amounting Rs 4 Lakh has been recommended for release to the legal heirs of the deceased, as per applicable SDRF norms. He also informed that as per reports a double-storey shopping complex comprising twenty-nine (29) shops, along with one residential shed, was damaged/ washed away in the floods at Qasba Beerwah.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that the concerned departments (PWD-R&B, Municipal committee, Revenue and other concerned departments have made certain preliminary assessment(s) and land title and final assessment of losses/damage regarding the structure is



under process.

Surinder Choudhary informed that a detailed assessment of crop and horticulture damage in Beerwah Constituency has also been carried out by the Agriculture Production Department. He informed that a total crop damage of 5 hectares, comprising 3.15 hectares of Paddy, 1.65 hectares of Vegetables and 0.20

hectares of Maize besides, horticulture damage over an area of 0.334 hectares affecting 7 orchardists, with claims amounting Rs. 30,000/-, has been reported and compensation in respect of these losses shall be extended as per the applicable norms.

He said that the District SDRF Committee has assessed the damage to roads, bridges and culverts in the R&B Division, Beerwah and recommended a fund requirement of Rs. 1,092.92 lakh for their restoration. Further, an amount of Rs. 11.41 Lakh has been recommended for restoration of the 33 KV Ahmad Pora-Beerwah power transmission line under Sub Transmission Division-II, KPDC, Rajbagh, Srinagar. An amount of Rs 3 crore has been released under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for extending relief assistance in the affected areas of Budgam district, including Beerwah Constituency.

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Tanvir Sadiq congratulates Speaker on successful NeVA rollout

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30: MLA Zaidal Tanvir Sadiq on Wednesday congratulated Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather and the Assembly Secretariat for the successful introduction of the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) during the Autumn Session of the House.



Speaking on the concluding day of the Autumn Session, Tanvir Sadiq appreciated the efforts of the Speaker and the Assembly Secretariat in successfully introducing the digital platform for legislative business, describing the initiative as an important step towards making the functioning of the House more accessible and technology-driven.

He said the successful implementation of NeVA would facilitate the availability of legislative business, questions and replies on a single digital platform, enabling members and other stakeholders to access relevant information more conveniently.

Sadiq expressed his appreciation to Speaker JKLA Abdul Rahim Rather for taking the initiative forward and also placed on record his gratitude to the J&K Legislative Assembly Secretariat and all officials involved in the implementation of the project.

He said that it is a significant step towards digitising the functioning of the House. The availability of questions, replies and other legislative business on the platform will make the proceedings more accessible and transparent.

He also said that transition towards digital legislative processes would contribute to the broader objective of a paperless Assembly, while improving the accessibility.

Govt restoring Ramban filtration plant, boosting water supply in Batote: Javed Rana

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30: The government is vigorously implementing the necessary remedial measures to restore the Slow Sand Filtration Plant (SSFP) at ward number 2, Ramban-Maitra Town, which has developed choking and resulted in reduced filtration capacity.

Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmed Rana, stated this while responding to a Calling Attention Notice moved by MLA Ramban, Arjun Singh Raju, MLA Ramban, regarding the shortage of clean drinking water in Batote and Ramban towns due to non-functioning of filtration plants and shortage of water tankers.

The Minister informed that necessary measures are being put in place and the water filtration plant is expected to be made functional shortly. He said that as an alternative and sustainable source of drinking water, drilling of a borewell has also been taken up, with the work presently in progress.

Regarding water supply to Batote Town, the Minister informed the House that the water supply there is presently being catered through a 5,000 GPH Rapid Sand Filtration Plant (RSFP) and another 15,000 GPH RSFP is under execution. He further said that the project is expected to be completed within the current financial year.

On the issue of shortage of water tankers in Ramban, the Minister informed that water supply in water-stressed areas is presently being supplemented through two hired water tankers, which are being deployed in Batote Town and Ramban-Maitra Town as per requirement.

Speaker directs Government to finalise, notify new Car Policy within 15 days

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30: Taking serious note of the prolonged delay in finalising the new Car Policy, Legislative Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather today directed the government to ensure that the policy is finalised and notified within 15 days.

The direction came after Transport Minister, Satish Sharma presented the status report on the Car Policy, saying that the department would undertake necessary inter-departmental consultations and complete the requisite formalities for finalisation of the policy. It is pertinent to mention that the Speaker had earlier taken note of the prolonged delay in formulation of the new Car Policy and directed the concerned Minister to submit a status report on the matter in the ongoing session.



"The new Car Policy should be finalised and notified within 15 days. This matter should not be allowed to remain pending any further. The complaints regarding misuse of public resources are a matter of serious concern and underscore the need for clear and updated rules governing the entitlement and use of Government vehicles," Speaker said.

The Speaker remarked that he would not hesitate to term the use of multiple Government vehicles beyond the prescribed entitlement as misuse of public

resources. He, however, clarified that the issue was not against Government officers, who should be provided the vehicles and facilities to which they are legitimately entitled under the prescribed rules.

In his observations, Speaker said that the matter had been moving from one department to another for nearly five years despite the importance of the issue. He stressed the need for expeditious finalisation of the policy, particularly in view of concerns regarding the proper and judicious use of public resources.

The Speaker observed that the Government had already accepted in principle the need for introducing a new Car Policy and questioned the repeated movement of the proposal between departments, including the need for sending the matter back to the Finance Department.

He emphasised that the

New building for Gandhi Nagar Hospital in Pipeline: Sakeena Itoo

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today informed the House that the proposal regarding construction of new building for Gandhi Nagar Hospital is in pipeline.

The Minister was replying to a Calling Attention Motion moved by MLA Vikram Randhawa regarding declaration of the old hospital building of Government Hospital, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, as unsafe pursuant to the Safety Audit conducted by the Superintending Engineer (Structural Wing), Jammu, necessitating its demolition and construction of a new, modern hospital building at the site.

The Minister informed the House that, during 2025, the old building of Government



Hospital, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, developed severe water seepage and waterlogging issues. Accordingly, a Structural Safety Audit was conducted by PWD (DIQC), Jammu, which highlighted certain safety concerns pertaining to the building, she added.

Keeping in view the safety of patients and staff, the Minister said that all hospital services, except the OPD Block, were shifted to the 200-bedded

MCH Building of GMC Jammu. She added that, simultaneously, the necessary process for construction of a new hospital building at the existing site has been initiated.

Sakeena Itoo informed the House that the requisite floor-wise service plans, duly approved by the Committee constituted for the purpose, have already been submitted to the Chief Architect and Chief Engineer, PWD, Jammu. The total station site plan, required for preparation of the architectural design, is presently under finalization, she added.

The Minister further informed that, upon completion of the requisite formalities and documentation, the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for construction of the new hospital building will be prepared by the PW(R&B) Department.

56 WSSs worth Rs 11649.66 lakh taken up under JJM in Pahalgam Constituency: Javed Rana

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30: Minister for Jal Shakti Department Javed Rana informed the House that the Jal Shakti Department is implementing various Water Supply Schemes (WSSs) under Jal Jeevan Mission, NABARD and UT CAPEX (SASCI) for providing adequate and potable water supply to the habitations of Pahalgam Constituency. The Minister was replying to a Calling Attention notice moved by MLA Altaf Ahmad Wani.

The Minister said that a total of 56 water supply schemes have been taken up under JJM at an estimated cost of Rs. 11649.66 lakh to cover the entire area of Pahalgam constituency with the Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCS). Of these, 31 schemes have been completed and made functional while the remaining 25 schemes are under execution and have achieved more than 75% physical progress, he added. The Minister said that the balance works will be completed and the schemes commissioned within the extended timeline prescribed under JJM 2.0, as the Mission has now been extended up to December, 2028.

The Minister informed that in case of water supply Scheme Regional Dachnipora, the pace of execution could not be maintained as the matter remains sub-judicious since long time due to land dispute. The villages/habitations coming under the scope of WSS Regional Dachnipora viz, Awoora, Dehwatoo, Nagipora, Charigam, Kullar, Wullerhama, Sofipora Hardekathal, Movera, Yanner, Wehdan, Sallar, Livar Zaigund, Bagwani are being provided drinking water supplies partly through an existing old water supply schemes, he said.

The Minister further informed that there is one more water supply scheme (WSS Litroo) which has been taken up under NABARD with an estimated cost of Rs. 564.75 lakh which has achieved 80 percent physical progress.

He said that the water supply to the villages/habitations of Wullerhama, Hardekathal and Sofipora was adversely affected due to back-to-back cloudbursts in Nallah Awoora during July and August. The affected water supply infrastructure has, however, been temporarily restored and a proposal for permanent restoration has been submitted. He informed the



House that the drinking water to these affected areas is being provided through an old existing system besides tanker services are deployed as per the need within available resources.

He said that the proposals for augmentation/coverage of some left out habitations restoration works have been reflected under various other programmes like UT Capex, District Capex and SASCI. The Minister said that the department

is taking all necessary measures to resolve the water supply issues and will continue to take necessary steps to ensure uninterrupted drinking water facilities in the Pahalgam Constituency. The Minister further informed that there is one more water supply scheme (WSS Litroo) which has been taken up under NABARD with an estimated cost of Rs. 564.75 lakh which has achieved 80 percent physical progress.

He said that the water supply to the villages/habitations of Wullerhama, Hardekathal and Sofipora was adversely affected due to back-to-back cloudbursts in Nallah Awoora during July and August. The affected water supply infrastructure has, however, been temporarily restored and a proposal for permanent restoration has been submitted. He informed the House that the drinking water to these affected areas is being provided through an old existing system besides tanker services are deployed as per the need within available resources. He said that the proposals for augmentation/coverage of some left out habitations restoration works have been reflected under various other programmes like UT Capex, District Capex and SASCI.

Govt takes serious note of premature apple fruit fall in Shopian; orders probe, FIR registered: Javid Dar

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30: The government has taken serious cognizance of premature and extraordinary fruit fall reported in apple orchards of Zainapora and other areas of Shopian district and certain areas of Anantnag district.

This was stated by Minister for Agriculture Production, Javid Ahmad Dar, while replying to a Calling Attention Notice raised by MLA Showkat Hussain Ganai regarding premature fruit fall in orchards of Zainapora. The Minister said the issue has caused substantial losses and hardship to fruit growers. He informed that a Joint Enquiry Committee comprising Director Horticulture Kashmir and Director Law Enforcement, J&K, has been constituted to examine the matter from scientific, regulatory, enforcement and crop-damage perspectives. The Committee submitted its status report to the government on September 21, 2026 while the complete report is awaited. As part of the scientific investigation, Javid Dar said multidisciplinary teams from Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology



of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) conducted field inspections in the affected areas on June 18, June 29 and July 3, 2026. During the inspections, 37 villages and 61 farmers/orchards were surveyed and premature fruit drop was observed in all 61 orchards. Of these, 20 growers had reportedly used the fungicide marketed as "Super M-45" alone while 41 had used it in combination with other agro-chemicals. The Minister said the extent of fruit fall in several orchards increased progressively from around 30 percent during the initial inspection to nearly 70 percent during the second visit and close to 90 percent in certain cases during the third visit. Simultaneously, the Law Enforcement Wing of the Agriculture Department undertook verification.



DC Srinagar conducts on-site inspection of development works at Anchaar Soura

Reviews progress in restoration and preservation of Jenab Sahib Soura shrine & its historic spring

HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30: In order to expedite the ongoing development works, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Wednesday conducted an on-site inspection of Anchaar Jenab Sahib Soura and reviewed the progress of works being executed for the restoration and preservation of the historic spring at the site.

In the occasion, the DC also interacted with local residents and listened to their developmental demands.

During the visit, the DC was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, IAS Probationer, Sai Kiran, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Executive Engineer R&B, Suhail Rashid, Executive Engineer KPDCL 4th, Nissar Ahmad, Executive Engineer, KPDCL 3rd, Abrar Hussain, Tehsildar Eidgah, Mohammad Iqbal Zargar, Administrator Jenab Sahib Soura and other concerned Officers.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner took stock of the



ongoing works and reviewed various components aimed at improving and preserving the historic spring while maintaining its heritage and aesthetic character.

The DC was informed that the project has been allotted a cost of Rs 1.20 crore and includes major components such as desilting of the pool area, dry

boulder stone pitching on the floor bed, construction of a peripheral block with Devri stone tile cladding, and provision of ornamental grills around the periphery of the pool area in panels. The project also envisages reconstruction and realignment of the deck area and steps of the spring using Devri stone, construction of

ornamental gates in Devri stone, and installation of ornamental lamp posts around the pool area for illumination.

The DC directed the concerned agencies to ensure timely completion of the works while adhering strictly to prescribed quality standards and maintaining the original character and heritage value

of the site. He also stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among all stakeholder Department to ensure that the restoration and development works are carried out in a sustainable, systematic and aesthetically appropriate manner.

During the visit, the DC also interacted with members of the Management Committee of Jenab Sahib Soura and local residents, who expressed their gratitude to him for the execution of various developmental works in the area, particularly at the Shrine.

Responding to the demands raised by local residents and traders, the DC directed the concerned authorities to facilitate the installation of an ATM at Anchaar Jenab Sahib Soura, aimed at providing greater convenience to the local population, devotees and traders.

He also took stock of the various road & water improvement projects and directed executing agencies to complete the remaining works.

ADC Sopore inspects land for establishment of Government Ayurvedic Medical College

Farooq Rather

BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 30: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sopore, Dr. S.A. Raina today conducted a field visit to Kranshiv Colony, Sopore, to inspect and identify suitable government land for the proposed establishment of the Government Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital in the area.

During the visit, the ADC inspected the identified site and took stock of its suitability, accessibility and other essential requirements for the proposed institution.

The concerned officers were directed to undertake the necessary verification and complete the required formalities for identification and further processing of the land.

The proposed medical college is aimed at strengthening AYUSH healthcare infrastructure and providing improved facilities for education and treatment in the region.

Later, the ADC also inspected Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) School, Chankhan, and took stock of the functioning of the institution, particularly the student enrolment and attendance position.

During the interaction, the ADC expressed



concern over the low student enrolment and impressed upon the teaching staff to make concerted efforts to maximise enrolment by reaching out to the local community and encouraging parents to enrol their children in the school.

He further directed the teaching staff to maintain full attendance and ensure proper academic preparedness of students for the forthcoming examinations.

DC Ganderbal chairs Public Outreach Programme at Lar

Directs Time Bound Redressal of Public Grievances

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, SEPTEMBER 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today chaired a Public Outreach Programme at Tourist Facilitation Centre, Lalmar, Chountwariwar, Block Lar, aimed at listening to the grievances, issues and demands of the general public and ensuring their prompt resolution.

During the programme, the people from the village and adjoining areas apprised the Deputy Commissioner of various issues and demands pertaining to road connectivity, irrigation, drinking water supply, tourism promotion, infrastructure and other developmental matters.

The DC gave a patient hearing to the public and took up the issues with the officers from various line departments present on the occasion.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to examine the grievances raised by the public on priority and ensure their time-bound redressal. Directions for resolution of various issues were issued on the spot, while matters requiring further examination were referred to the concerned departments for necessary action.



The DC directed the concerned departments to address the irrigation-related issues raised by the public and ensure that necessary measures are taken to improve irrigation facilities in the identified areas. He also directed the concerned agencies to examine the requirements of areas facing drinking water shortages and ensure provision of adequate water supply to the affected habitations.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed upon the concerned agencies to accord priority to road connectivity and other essential infrastructure and directed that the issues raised regarding roads and public facilities be resolved at the earliest.

Reviewing tourism related issues and potential, the DC called for greater focus on

promotion of tourism in the area and directed the concerned departments to explore measures for boosting tourism activities and creating better facilities for visitors and trekkers. He stressed upon the concerned agencies to work towards promotion of homestays and other basic facilities at suitable locations to support trekking and tourism-related activities, encouraging local participation in tourism and generating livelihood opportunities for the local population.

The DC further directed the concerned officers to ensure effective publicity of government schemes so that the local population is adequately informed and can avail the benefits of various development and livelihood initiatives.

DC Kulgam reviews ongoing works at EMRS Tangmarg

Farooq Rather



KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC), Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today visited Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS), Tangmarg, Kulgam and reviewed the progress of various ongoing development and renovation works at the institution.

During the visit, The Deputy Commissioner took on-spot review of the renovation of the Girls' Hostel, playground development and renovation works of the Academic Block.

The DC directed the concerned officer associated with the execution of the works to ensure speedy progress and timely completion of the assigned works with adhering to quality norms and approved specifications. The concerned officials assured that all the ongoing works will be completed by November 15, 2026.

The DC also interacted with students and staff members and enquired the teaching learning process and took appraisal of the functioning of the different services and amenities in the institution.

The DC was accompanied by the Chief Planning Officer (CPO), Malik Suheel, Superintending Engineer (SE) Fayaz Ahmad Kar, and other concerned officers and officials.

DC Budgam reviews Bulk Waste Management measures across District

HT News Network

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, chaired a meeting to review the implementation and progress of Bulk Waste Management measures across Municipal Committees (MCs) and blocks of the district.

The meeting focused on assessing the progress achieved against the targets and directions issued during the previous review meeting and taking stock of the measures being undertaken by the concerned departments and field functionaries for effective management of bulk waste.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the progress made by the concerned officers and sought an updated status of the targets assigned in the previous meeting. He stressed the need for sustained and coordinated efforts at the grassroots level to ensure scientific, systematic and environmentally responsible management of bulk waste across the district.



The DC directed all Block Development Officers (BDOs) and Executive Officers (EOs) of Municipal Committees to undertake a comprehensive exercise to identify Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs) as well as potential bulk waste generators falling within their respective jurisdictions.

He further directed the concerned officers to ensure that all identified Bulk Waste Generators are properly registered, and that their waste-management practices are subsequently monitored on a regular basis.

The Deputy Commissioner laid particular emphasis on source segregation of waste, directing the field officers to verify whether registered bulk waste generators are segregating waste appropriately at source and adopting the prescribed waste-management practices. The officers were also instructed to conduct regular inspections and reviews to ensure compliance with the directions and guidelines issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India regarding proper waste management.

ADDC Bandipora inspects ongoing I&FC Works at Sumbal Sub Division

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 30: Additional

District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Bandipora, Nazir Ahmad Mir, today conducted an extensive inspection of various ongoing works being executed by the Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC) Department, Sumbal at different locations across the district.

During the inspection, the ADDC visited Hajin, Check Chadergeer and Bakshi Bal to take first-hand stock of the progress of the works and assess the pace and quality of execution

at the work sites. The ADDC was accompanied by the Executive Engineer, Assistant Executive Engineer, and other officials of the I&FC department, Sumbal. The contractors executing the works were also present at the respective sites. During the inspection, the ADDC stressed upon the concerned officers and executing agencies to ensure quality execution, adherence to approved specifications and timely completion of the works. He also reviewed the progress

made so far and took feedback regarding the requirements and challenges being faced at the sites. The concerned officers and contractors informed that the works are expected to be completed within a period of three months.

The ADDC directed the concerned authorities to maintain close monitoring of the works and ensure that the projects are completed within the stipulated timeline while maintaining the prescribed quality standards.

DC Pulwama chairs District Road Safety Committee meeting

Calls for intensified enforcement, decongestion of Pulwama town and wider awareness of PM-RAHAT scheme

HT News Network

PULWAMA, SEPTEMBER 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom today chaired a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) at the Administrative Complex here, to review the road safety scenario in the district and assess the progress made on various road safety measures and decisions taken in the previous meeting.

At the outset, Superintending Engineer, R&B, gave a detailed presentation on the road safety scenario in the district, covering accident data, enforcement measures, identified hot/black spots, implementation of road safety works, PM-RAHAT scheme, Rah-Veer awareness, road safety audits and the Road Safety Action Plan for 2026-27. The presentation also highlighted the four-pronged strategy of Engineering,

Enforcement, Education and Emergency Care for reducing road accidents and fatalities.

The DC sought detailed information from the ARTO Pulwama regarding the enforcement drives being conducted across the district and directed him to intensify enforcement against over-speeding, overloading, driving without seat belts and helmets, and other traffic violations, with particular focus on accident-prone and congested stretches.

Reviewing the traffic situation in Pulwama town, the DC stressed the need for effective decongestion of major roads and directed the concerned departments to conduct dedicated decongestion and traffic regulation drives twice a week under the supervision of the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Pulwama. He called for coordinated action by the Traffic Police, Municipal Council,



R&B and other concerned agencies to regulate traffic movement, ensure proper parking

and address encroachments and other factors contributing to congestion.

The committee also reviewed the status of hot/black spots identified through e-DAR. Various engineering interventions, including installation of road signages, speed breakers, road markings, crash barriers, rumble strips and solar blinkers, were discussed.

The meeting also discussed identified accident-prone locations and the Road Safety Action Plans prepared by R&B Divisions Pulwama and Awantipora.

The DC directed the concerned engineering agencies to ensure timely implementation of road safety interventions at identified black spots and called for close coordination with the concerned agencies, for addressing safety deficiencies on National Highway stretches. On the occasion, the DC also emphasised greater public awareness regarding the Rah-Veer initiative and directed the concerned departments to

intensify awareness activities and facilitate identification of Rah-Veers so as to strengthen the immediate response and assistance available to road accident victims.

Emphasising the need for sustained and coordinated action, the DC directed all stakeholders to work in close convergence and ensure that road safety measures translate into tangible improvement on the ground. He stressed that enforcement, engineering interventions, public awareness and timely emergency care must be pursued simultaneously to reduce accidents, fatalities and injuries across the district.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Pulwama; Additional SP Awantipora; Chief Medical Officer, Pulwama; Executive Engineers of R&B, PMGSY, PCD NH-444 and Irrigation & Flood Control, ARTO Pulwama and other members of the District Road Safety Committee.





Young Dramatists Society by Suport Sangeet Natak Akademi Presents ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’ at Amar Singh College, Srinagar

A theatrical performance highlights social responsibility, public awareness and the spirit of community service

HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30: The Seva Sankalp Abhiyan, presented by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, was organised at Amar Singh College, Srinagar, today by the Young Dramatists Society. The programme received an enthusiastic response from college students, particularly those from the Department of Mass Media. Heads of various departments, faculty members, professors, lecturers and students attended the programme. The active participation of students highlighted the role of theatre and performing arts as effective mediums for raising social awareness and conveying meaningful messages to the younger

generation. The Principal of Amar Singh College, Prof. (Dr.) Tahmeena Yousuf, was the chief guest, while Dr. S. P. Verma, President of the Padma Shri Gandhi Global Family, attended the event as the guest of honour.

As part of the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan, artists of the Young Dramatists Society presented an impactful theatrical performance conveying messages of social responsibility, public awareness, community service and the importance of fulfilling one's duties towards society. Through their compelling performances and effective dialogue delivery, the artists drew the audience's attention to pressing social concerns and emphasised the importance of developing a spirit of service and collective responsibility.



The play featured Mohammad Shafi Khan, Sheikh Mushtaq, Munazza Yousuf, Nauman Manzoor, Sabir

by Dr. Sohan Lal Kaul and directed by Altaf Hussain. The programme was supervised by Mushtaq Baqal, President of the Young Dramatists Society, and Syed Javed Gilani, Vice President. Wisaqat Maharaj, Shamiq Parvez, Ghalib and Rashid also contributed to the successful conduct of the event. The media coverage of the programme was handled by Jameel Ansari and Tariq Khan. The enthusiastic participation of students and faculty members underscored the significance of theatre and performing arts beyond entertainment. Such initiatives can play a vital role in promoting social consciousness, nurturing a sense of service and responsibility among young people, and strengthening positive social values. At the conclusion of the programme,

Government Higher Secondary School, Damsal Students Visit IIT Jammu for Experiential Learning

HT News Network

Jammu, 30 September 2026: The Outreach Section, IIT Jammu, hosted students of Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS), Damsal, as part of its ongoing school outreach and experiential learning initiatives, with the guidance and support of Prof. Manoj Singh Gaur, Director, IIT Jammu; Prof. Meenakshi Rajeev, Dean, Outreach & Skill Development; and Dr. Sameer Kumar Sarma Pachalla, Associate Dean, Outreach Section. The students visited the Structural Lab of Civil Engineering, briefed on the laboratory facilities,



structural testing, and practical applications of civil engineering. They subsequently visited the Central Workshop, where they observed various tools, machinery, and fabrication processes, gaining an understanding of how engineering components and prototypes are designed and crafted. The students also visited

the PHN Lab, IIT Jammu, where they were introduced to the development and working mechanisms of robots and other technology-based systems, including applications of IoT, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Machine Learning (ML). Through demonstrations and interactions, the students gained practical insights into emerging technologies and their applications. The visit provided students with meaningful hands-on exposure to engineering and emerging technologies, fostering scientific curiosity and encouraging greater interest in STEM learning and innovation.

Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations 2026: Inter-College Symposium, Shanti Doot Presentations held at Amar Singh College

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Amar Singh College, Srinagar, under the aegis of Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Tahmina Yousuf, organised Phase I of the Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations - 2026, featuring an Inter-College Symposium and Shanti Doot Presentations on "Truth and Non-Violence."

The programme was organised by the Debates, Seminars and Conferences Committee in collaboration with NSS and ELC, with participation from colleges across District Srinagar.

Padma Shri Dr. S. P. Verma, President, Gandhi Global Family (GGF), J&K, graced

the occasion as Guest of Honour. Noor-ul-Amin, General Secretary, GGF; Mehjabeen Nabi, Member, GGF; and Aijaz Khan, Chairman, Aijaz Khan Foundation, were also present.

Following jury evaluation by Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Rather, Dr. Master Showkat Ali and Dr. Shabeena Parveen, Aishah Zahoor of Gandhi Memorial College, Srinagar, secured the first position and was adjudged Shanti Doot for District Srinagar. Shahid Pervaiz of Amar Singh College secured second position, while Afeefa Khurshid of Government Degree College for Women, M. A. Road, Srinagar, secured third position.

Kashmiri Girl Students Visit Army Institute of Technology, Pune Under Op Sadbhavana

HT News Network

Pune, 30 September 2026: As part of a Capacity Building Tour under Operation Sadbhavana, 20 aspiring Kashmiri girl students visited the Army Institute of Technology (AIT), Pune. The visit provided the students an opportunity to gain first-hand exposure to the institute's academic environment, technical education and career opportunities. The students interacted with faculty and students, gaining valuable insights into engineering education, innovation, leadership and professional excellence. The tour aimed to broaden their horizons, encourage them to pursue higher education and inspire them to explore diverse career avenues. The visit reinforced the spirit of empowerment, education and national



integration, while motivating aspirations with confidence and young students to pursue their determination.

Director SKIMS calls for community-wide CPR training to strengthen response to cardiac emergencies

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: On World Heart Day, Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) launched 'CPR 360', a structured academic and community outreach initiative to strengthen preparedness for cardiac emergencies and equip people with lifesaving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills. A key component of the launch was a hands-on community CPR workshop. Participants came from diverse sections of society, including the Traffic Police, trekking community, schools and gymnasiums. They received practical demonstrations and training in basic CPR and other essential first-response skills for cardiac arrest and life-threatening emergencies, and were presented with certificates of participation on completing the programme.

Addressing the gathering,



Director SKIMS & EOSG, Prof. M. Ashraf Ganie, stressed that lifesaving skills such as CPR should not remain confined to hospitals and healthcare professionals, but must reach the wider community.

"There is an urgent need to sensitise and train communities at a much larger scale. Timely CPR and an appropriate first response can make a critical difference in saving a life. SKIMS has the expertise, infrastructure and human resources to lead this effort, and CPR 360 should evolve into a sustained, community-

oriented programme," he said.

Prof. Ganie also highlighted the potential of the proposed SKIMS Research Winter/Summer Fellowship Programme to involve students in structured academic learning, research and community outreach, creating a wider network of young health ambassadors who can spread health awareness and lifesaving skills. On the occasion, Prof. Ganie released the Academic Curriculum and Training Module for the three-year Post-Doctoral Training Programme in Cardiology, developed

by the Department of Cardiology. The curriculum provides a structured framework for advanced academic, clinical and procedural training, and reflects SKIMS' commitment to developing specialised expertise in the management and prevention of cardiovascular emergencies.

Speaking at the launch, Prof. (Dr.) Imran Hafeez, Head of the Department of Cardiology, SKIMS, said, "Every citizen who learns CPR becomes a first responder. With CPR 360, our goal is to make bystander CPR a community reflex, so that no one in Kashmir loses a life for want of a few minutes of timely help."

SSP Traffic, Ajaz Ahmed Bhat, also participated in the valedictory function and stressed the need for such initiatives in the community.

The event also honoured former Heads of the Department of Cardiology, Prof. Hilal Ahmad Rather and Prof. Aijaz Ahmad Lone, with Lifetime Achievement Awards in recognition.

12th Death Anniversary of Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA) Observed with Religious and Commemorative Programmes

HT News Network

Srinagar, September 30, 2026: The 12th death anniversary of renowned Islamic scholar, political leader and community figure Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA) was observed across Jammu and Kashmir with Quran Khwani, Fatiha Khwani, Marsiya Khwani and Majalis. Religious scholars, Zakireen, community members and people from different walks of life participated in the programmes and paid tribute to his religious, social and public services.

As part of the commemorative programmes, Quran Khwani was held across 97 Madrasas associated with the All Jammu and Kashmir

Shia Association for Isale-e-Sawaab of Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA). Special Quran Khwani and prayers were also held in Najaf-e-Ashraf, Iraq, and Qom, Iran, in remembrance of the late scholar. In the morning, Quran Khwani, Fatiha Khwani and Marsiya Khwani were held at the shrine of Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA) at Baba Mazaar, Zadihal. Religious scholars and Zakireen associated with the All Jammu and Kashmir Shia Association participated in the proceedings and offered prayers for the departed soul. The commemorative programme subsequently continued at Imam Bargah Shadipora, Sumbal, where a series of Majalis were held. The

first Majlis was delivered by Maulana Mirza Yasoob Abbas, General Secretary of the All India Shia Personal Law Board. Speaking on the occasion, Maulana Mirza Yasoob Abbas recalled the close association between his father, the late Maulana Mirza Mohammad Athar, and Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA), stating that the two had studied together in Lucknow.

Recalling his own interactions with Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA) from his younger days, Maulana Mirza Yasoob Abbas said he had long wished to speak about his life and personality and considered it an honour to do so on his 12th death anniversary. He also spoke about the life, teachings and position of



Imam Ali (AS), emphasising the principles of justice, knowledge, courage and service to humanity associated with the life of Amirul-Momineen Imam Ali (AS).

Hujjatul Islam Maulana Syed Ahmed Ali Abidi, Representative of Ayatollah al-Uzma Sayyid Ali al-Husayni al-Sistani in India and Imam-e-Juma of the main mosque in Mumbai, also delivered a Majlis.

During his address, Hujjatul Islam Maulana Syed Ahmed Ali Abidi conveyed a message from Ayatollah al-Uzma Sayyid Ali al-Husayni al-Sistani, stressing the importance of education within the Shia community. He said the community should strive to educate its children and youth to a level where Shia Muslims become among the most educated communities in India.

Highlighting the importance of education in Islam, he recalled

that the first revealed word of the Holy Qur'an was "Iqra" (Read), underscoring the importance of knowledge and learning in Islamic teachings. He also spoke about the responsibilities of the followers of Ahl-e-Bait (AS) and the need to preserve faith, acquire knowledge and serve society. The 12th death anniversary was also marked by tributes from political, religious and social leaders from across Jammu and Kashmir. Hoardings commemorating the life and legacy of Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA) were installed at various locations across Srinagar, while newspapers and news organisations published articles and tributes recalling his

contribution to the religious and social life of Jammu and Kashmir. Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA) remained a prominent religious scholar and public figure whose life was associated with religious education, community service and the preservation of Shia religious traditions in Jammu and Kashmir. His death on September 30, 2014, was followed by tributes from across the political, religious and social spectrum. As a continuation of the legacy of service associated with Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA), the All Jammu and Kashmir Shia Association also announced an initiative to solemnise the marriages of 25 couples belonging to economically weaker families.



HT EDITORIAL

When Pseudo Journalists Cross the Line, Accountability Becomes Essential

The discussion in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Wednesday over the growing activities of self-styled and unregistered social-media journalists has brought to the fore a serious issue concerning privacy, dignity, journalistic ethics and responsible use of digital platforms. Members across the House expressed concern over what they described as repeated instances of indecent and irresponsible conduct by persons operating through Facebook and other social-media platforms in the name of journalism. The concern was not merely about the absence of registration, but about the manner in which some individuals allegedly record, edit and present material without regard for facts, context, privacy or the dignity of individuals and institutions.

The issue deserves serious consideration because social media has fundamentally transformed the information environment. A smartphone can now reach thousands of people within minutes, and an individual can effectively become a broadcaster without any newsroom, editorial mechanism or system of accountability. This democratisation of information has undoubtedly strengthened public participation and created new avenues for citizens to raise genuine issues. But it has also created space for irresponsible practices in which sensationalism can take precedence over accuracy and public curiosity can be confused with public interest.

One of the disturbing examples raised during the Assembly discussion concerned the videography of unusual or private activities inside a house and their subsequent portrayal as something entirely different. Such conduct raises an important question: does the ability to record something automatically confer the right to publish it in any manner? The answer, from the standpoint of responsible journalism, must be no.

Privacy is not an outdated concept in the digital age. Recording a private activity, removing it from its original context and presenting it to the public with insinuations or a misleading narrative can cause serious damage to an individual's dignity and reputation. Journalism has always carried a responsibility to distinguish between information that the public needs to know and information that the public may simply want to see. The distinction is fundamental.

The concerns raised over activities inside the Legislative Assembly are equally significant. The Assembly is the highest democratic forum of the Union Territory, and its proceedings are a naturally a matter of public interest. Journalists have an important responsibility to report its proceedings and hold elected representatives accountable. But the right to report cannot be separated from the responsibility to observe the rules and maintain basic standards of decency. Recording scenes inside the House in a manner that violates established norms or compromises the dignity of the institution cannot be justified merely in the name of journalism.

The problem becomes more complicated when individuals without an identifiable media organisation, editorial structure or professional accountability begin describing themselves as journalists. There is nothing wrong with citizens expressing their views on social media. Nor should every independent social-media commentator be required to belong to a traditional newsroom. Citizen journalism can make a valuable contribution, particularly when citizens document genuine public-interest issues.

But journalism carries responsibilities in addition to freedom of expression. Verification, accuracy, context, fairness, the right of response, correction of errors and respect for privacy are among the basic principles that distinguish responsible journalism from content created merely for attention.

The race for views, likes, shares and followers has unfortunately created incentives for sensational content. A dramatic video can attract considerably more attention than a carefully verified report. In such an environment, the temptation to exaggerate, selectively edit or deliberately provoke can become difficult to resist. When this happens repeatedly, it does not merely damage the reputation of the person being targeted; it also weakens public confidence in the entire media profession.

This is why the concern expressed by members of the Assembly merits attention beyond party politics. If, as stated during the discussion, incidents of indecent and irresponsible conduct are occurring both inside and outside the House, there is a genuine need for clearly defined standards governing professional digital media activity.

Minister Sakina too, while concluding the discussion, made it clear that the Department of Information and Public Relations would soon come up with guidelines to regulate social-media activities and address the growing menace. She also strongly advocated a policy aimed at promoting media ethics and emphasised the importance of registered and responsible media activity.

The proposed guidelines will be important, but their formulation will require considerable balance. Regulation should not become an instrument to silence criticism, discourage independent reporting or restrict legitimate expression. A democratic society needs a diverse media environment in which governments, political parties and public institutions remain open to scrutiny.

At the same time, freedom cannot mean freedom from responsibility.

Any policy should therefore focus on accountability rather than arbitrary control. It should clearly distinguish between legitimate citizen expression and professional media activity, define basic ethical standards for those presenting themselves as journalists, discourage deliberate misinformation and privacy violations, and provide transparent mechanisms for complaints, corrections and redress.

Registration by itself cannot guarantee ethical journalism. A registered organisation can also publish inaccurate material, while an independent journalist can produce highly credible reporting. What matters ultimately is a culture of responsibility and accountability.

The proposed framework should therefore protect genuine journalism while discouraging those who use the label of journalism as a licence to invade privacy, manufacture controversy, distort facts or compromise decency. The objective should not be to reduce the number of voices in the public sphere, but to raise the standard of responsibility attached to those voices.

The digital age has made journalism more accessible than ever before, but it has also made the consequences of irresponsible publication much greater. Once a misleading video or allegation enters social media, it can travel across thousands of screens before the truth has even had an opportunity to catch up.

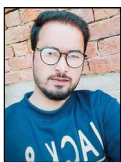
The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly has consequently raised an issue that extends well beyond the conduct of a few social-media operators. It concerns the future credibility of the information ecosystem itself.

A camera does not automatically make its holder a journalist, and a Facebook page does not automatically establish journalistic credibility. Journalism is a public trust. That trust rests on truth, verification, fairness, context, accountability and respect for human dignity.

The forthcoming DIPR guidelines should therefore seek to establish a responsible balance—protecting legitimate journalism and freedom of expression while ensuring that privacy, institutional dignity and basic standards of decency are not sacrificed in the pursuit of clicks and publicity.

In the age of instant information, responsible journalism is not merely a professional virtue; it is a public necessity.

Why Are We Not Aware of Our Surroundings?



Sahil Manzoor

Today, the whole world is fighting against the problem of drug addiction. Why are we not aware of this serious problem in our society? We know about the situation, but unfortunately, we often think only about ourselves. We have become selfish and irresponsible, and we do not pay enough attention to what is happening around us.

We must remember one thing: if our surroundings are not safe, we can never be completely safe. A peaceful and safe society is important for a good and successful life.

It is very unfortunate that many school-going children and young people are becoming involved in drugs, directly or indirectly. It is the responsibility of everyone to take care of our surroundings. Every child is important to us, and we must take these issues seriously.

Drug addiction can spread like a flood and destroy a society within a short time. Before this flood of drugs causes serious damage, we must take strong steps to protect our young generation.

According to biological science, human life passes through different stages. Adolescence is an important stage of life when many physical, emotional, and hormonal changes take place. During this period, the body and mind develop rapidly. Teenagers may sometimes become

impatient, stubborn, rude, or rebellious. Some may also become involved in harmful activities such as drug use or other unhealthy habits.

Therefore, teenagers need proper guidance, counselling, motivation, and support during

physical exercise. Today, sports and fitness activities are becoming popular throughout the country. I would like to encourage my friends, especially young people, to take part in sports and physical activities instead of harmful

experience. First of all, we should motivate ourselves and say:

"I want to stay fit, look good, remain healthy, and stay away from drugs."

I want to motivate my friends towards sports and physical activities so that they can remain fit, healthy, and active.

Today, gyms and fitness centres are available in many places. They have modern equipment and trained trainers. This gives us a good opportunity to exercise and improve our fitness.

After starting exercise, we should also follow a balanced and healthy diet. Diet plays an important role in bodybuilding and fitness. We should eat nutritious food and drink enough water.

Gyms can provide equipment, music, a clean environment, and guidance from trainers. We should always follow proper instructions from a qualified trainer to reduce the risk of muscle and bone injuries.

I suggest that young people take part in sports, exercise, and other healthy activities. These activities can keep us away from drugs and other harmful habits. I hope everyone will feel healthier, stronger, and more confident.

The government administration at the district level should also consider providing gym and sports facilities at the Panchayat level so that young people in rural areas can easily take part in physical activities.

Finally, I would like to say that we should focus on natural and balanced nutrition and avoid unnecessary supplements. Proper exercise, healthy food, discipline, and a positive attitude can help us build a healthy life.

Let us protect our young generation. Let us keep our surroundings safe. Let us choose sports, health, education, and a positive life instead of drugs.

SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI
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this important period of their lives.

Our society has many talented and respected people who have done great things for the nation. We should use their experience and knowledge to guide our young generation. We should also make proper use of the facilities available to us.

The government and administration are making efforts to reduce crime and drug addiction among young people. However, it is unfortunate that we are still far from completely solving this problem. Government departments, schools, parents, teachers, and society must work together.

With the passage of time, we experience both positive and negative events in our society. Every event teaches us something. We should learn from these experiences and guide our young people towards positive activities.

One such positive activity is sports and

activities.

Benefits of Bodybuilding and Exercise
From my own experience, bodybuilding and regular exercise can be useful activities. They can help us stay physically active, fit, and confident.

Some important benefits are:
Exercise can improve our overall health and fitness.

It can strengthen our muscles and bones.
It can help control extra body fat when combined with a balanced diet.

Regular exercise can improve our physical appearance and confidence.

Exercise can help us feel fresh, active, and relaxed.

Physical activity can also support our mental well-being and reduce stress.

These points are based on my personal

A New Language, A New Identity, and New Doors of Opportunity



Dr. Vijay Garg

Language is much more than a means of communication. It is a bridge between people, cultures, ideas and opportunities. Learning a new language does not simply add another skill to our profile; it can expand our understanding of the world and create a new sense of identity.

Every language carries its own history, traditions, literature and way of thinking. When we learn another language, we begin to see the world through a different cultural lens. We become more aware of how people express emotions, relationships, humour, knowledge and social values. In this sense, learning a language can make a person more open-minded and culturally sensitive.

In today's interconnected world, multilingualism is increasingly valuable. Education, tourism, business, science, technology and international cooperation frequently bring people from different linguistic backgrounds together. A person who can communicate in more than one language may find it easier to interact with a wider range of people and access information from different sources.

A new language can also create professional



opportunities. Knowledge of foreign and regional languages can be useful in teaching, translation, journalism, diplomacy, customer service, healthcare, tourism, international business and digital communication. For students, language skills can strengthen their educational journey and help them explore courses, scholarships, literature and academic resources beyond their familiar linguistic environment.

Technology has made language learning more accessible than ever. Digital dictionaries, educational applications, online courses, videos, podcasts and artificial-intelligence-based learning tools allow learners to practise vocabulary, pronunciation and conversation from almost anywhere. However, technology should remain a tool; regular practice, patience and meaningful human interaction remain

essential for genuine language development.

Learning a language also develops mental flexibility. Remembering new words, understanding unfamiliar grammatical structures and switching between languages require attention and practice. More importantly, language learning teaches us that there can be different ways of expressing the same idea. This can encourage flexibility in thinking and improve communication skills.

Regional languages deserve equal respect in this changing linguistic landscape. India's strength lies in its extraordinary linguistic diversity. Punjabi, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Assamese, Odia and many other languages represent rich cultural traditions. Learning and preserving these languages can strengthen

cultural continuity while learning international languages can expand global connections.

Young people, in particular, can benefit from becoming comfortable with multiple languages. Instead of viewing languages only as examination subjects, schools can encourage students to experience them through stories, conversations, literature, music, theatre and practical activities. Such an approach can make language learning enjoyable and meaningful.

A new language does not require perfection from the beginning. Mistakes are a natural part of learning. The first goal should be communication, followed by accuracy and confidence. Even learning a few useful words every day can eventually produce significant progress.

Ultimately, every language we learn adds another window to the world. It introduces us to new people, new ideas and new possibilities. In an age where borders are becoming increasingly connected through education and technology, linguistic ability is not merely a personal accomplishment—it is a form of cultural and educational capital.

A new language can give us a new voice, a broader identity and access to opportunities that may otherwise remain beyond our reach. Learning a language is therefore not just learning words; it is opening a new door to the world.

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Social media and information warfare (New Challenge to India's National Security)



Dr. Satyavan Saurabh

Today, social media has become a vital part of our lives. Through Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, and other digital platforms, people access information about the country and the world in seconds. Social media has made the exchange of information easier, but it has also brought with it some serious challenges. Information can now be used not only to inform people but also to influence their thoughts and emotions. This is why information warfare has become a crucial national security issue.

Information warfare refers to the use of information to influence people's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and decisions. This can include false news, incomplete information, linking old photos or videos to new events, presenting true information in a false context, and persistently conveying a specific message. The goal isn't always to damage a building or military base. It's often to create confusion, fear, anger, or distrust.

Social media has significantly accelerated information warfare. Previously, widespread dissemination of propaganda required newspapers, radio, television, or other media. Today, a video created on a mobile phone can reach thousands or even millions of people in a matter of minutes. People often forward messages without verifying their veracity, making it difficult to prevent misinformation. This challenge becomes even more



significant in a large and diverse country like India. India is home to people of different religions, castes, languages, and regions. If false or inflammatory information about a community spreads on social media, it can have a negative impact on society. A small local incident can be misrepresented and given a religious or communal spin. This can increase distrust and worsen law and order.

The impact of rumors on social media can sometimes be very serious. False accusations against individuals, spreading false narratives against a community, or presenting a false picture of an incident can inflame mob sentiment. In such situations, the police and administration suddenly face a significant challenge. Therefore, it is crucial to quickly provide accurate and authoritative information during sensitive incidents.

Deepfakes are a new form of information warfare. Artificial intelligence can be used to create fake videos by altering a person's face and voice. At first glance, these videos may

appear real to the viewer. If a false video is circulated in the name of a politician, official, military officer, or other famous figure, it can create confusion. Such content can be especially harmful during elections, wars, terrorist incidents, or major crises.

The challenge of information warfare becomes even more serious in the military domain. During a military operation, false information can be spread regarding troop positions, movements, weapons, or casualties. Old war videos can be passed off as current events. Fake military videos or false statements can be presented as real, in an attempt to influence public morale. Therefore, special caution is required when sharing security-related information.

Information warfare isn't just about events within India. Social media can also be used internationally to influence a country's image and policies. Various organisations or foreign networks can manipulate events to suit their own interests. Influencing international public

opinion can be done by continuously spreading specific information on border disputes, terrorism, Kashmir, internal unrest, and other sensitive topics.

Bots and fake accounts are also a significant challenge on social media. While the average person may believe a large number of people share the same opinion on an issue, many accounts may actually be run by the same group. Repeated sharing of the same message may be used to make it appear popular. This makes it difficult to distinguish between genuine public opinion and an artificially created online environment.

Misinformation can also become a serious problem during natural disasters, epidemics, or other major crises. If misinformation spreads about a flood, earthquake, or other disaster in an area, people may go to the wrong place or miss out on necessary assistance. Similarly, misinformation about health can influence people's behavior. Therefore, reliable information systems are crucial during times of crisis.

India must strengthen both its technological and institutional capacities to address this challenge. The use of modern technology should be increased to identify fake news, deepfakes, and bot networks. Artificial intelligence can help identify suspicious content, but final verification by experts is essential. Improved coordination between government departments is also essential to ensure accurate information reaches the public quickly during a crisis.

Governments, as well as social media companies, have a responsibility. They must develop effective systems to identify fake accounts, coordinated misinformation, and dangerous fake content. It is also important to strike a balance between combating misinformation while respecting freedom of expression and citizens' rights.

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

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The Invisible Battlefield:(Yeh Dhuan sa Rehne Doh!)



By M S Nazki

Yeh dhuan dhuan sa rehne do, Mujhe dil ki baat kehne do, main paagal deewana tera,

Mujhe ishq ki aag mein jalne do, Yeh dhuan dhuan sa rehne do!

-The story at hand:

-In today's changing battlefield, national security is not only the responsibility of the Armed Forces. Civilians and technology communities also have an important role to play. As threats and technology evolve, our preparedness must evolve too. CDS Gen. N. S. Raja Subramani!

-But it's double edged sword!

-The men behind technology are still humans!

-Technology can fail but humans cannot while using it!

-Each technological and scientific turning point evolves into an ontological consideration. Anything we think we know today in relation to AI will change tomorrow.

-The bar to become and remain relevant is higher than ever. You need to run faster to stay in the same place, or even likely end up behind. There is a new premium on staying relevant.

-Advances breed faster advances.

...apart from the seemingly magical internet, life in broad material terms isn't so different from what it was in 1953...The wonders portrayed in THE JETSONS, the space-age television cartoon from the 1960s, have not come to pass...Life is better and we have more stuff, but the pace of change has slowed down compared to what people saw two or three generations ago!

-Day by day, however, the machines are gaining ground upon us; day by day we are becoming more subservient to them; more men are daily bound down as slaves to tend them, more men are daily devoting the energies of their whole lives to the development of mechanical life. The upshot is simply a question of time, but that the time will come when the machines will hold the real supremacy over the world and its inhabitants is what no person of a truly philosophic mind can for a moment

question...

-In today's changing battlefield, national security is not only the responsibility of the Armed Forces. Civilians and technology communities also have an important role to play. As threats and technology evolve, our preparedness must evolve too.

-Modern Warfare, Technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI)

-The transformation in modern warfare is not merely tactical but fundamental, requiring a rethinking of military doctrine, international law and the very nature of state power in the 21st century. As precision technology becomes more accessible and autonomous systems more capable, the challenge will be maintaining human control over the conduct of war while preserving the humanitarian principles that have guided international relations for over a century.

--The Evolution of Modern Warfare: How Technology is Transforming the Rules of War!

-The nature of warfare is undergoing a profound transformation. Missiles, drones, precision weapons and cyber attacks have become the dominant tools of modern conflict, fundamentally altering how wars are fought and won. From the ongoing Ukraine-Russia conflict to the recent India-Pakistan escalation in May 2025 and the current Israel-Iran War, we are witnessing a new era of warfare that challenges traditional military doctrines and international legal frameworks. These conflicts demonstrate how technological advances are not only changing battlefield tactics but also increasing the asymmetric nature of warfare, and potentially forcing a reconsideration of the Geneva Convention and established ethics of war III!

-Modern battlefields are shifting rapidly from traditional physical combat to data-driven, multi-domain, and AI-enabled warfare.

-Military leaders, including India's Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan, note that future conflicts rely less on bulky legacy firepower and more on agility, automation, and smart technology!

-Key Drivers of Change Smart Tech and AI: Artificial intelligence, machine learning, and quantum tech now drive decisions faster than human operators can alone.

-Drones and Robotics: Autonomous systems and unmanned aerial vehicles perform real-time surveillance and precision strikes at a lower cost.

-Multi-Domain Operations: Modern conflicts happen simultaneously across land, sea, air, space, cyberspace, and information networks.

-Grey-Zone Conflicts: The lines between peace and war blur through continuous cyber activity, economic pressure, and disinformation.

-The Strategic Shift Indigenous Innovation: Militaries prioritize homegrown software-defined

as the U.S. conflicts in Vietnam and Afghanistan, show that superior gear cannot overcome unclear political goals or an opponent's deep resolve

-Actually Does Force Multiplier: Technology speeds up targeting, protects personnel, and improves



radios and anti-jamming navigation over imported hardware.

-Joint Structures: Armed forces move away from isolated service silos toward integrated commands for faster response times.

-Can technology win a war on its own?

-No, technology cannot win a war on its own because machines cannot seize physical territory, replace political will, or manage the human and logistical realities of a conflict.

-While advanced tools change how battles are fought, ultimate victory requires human operators, economic backing, and strategic decisions.

-The Limits of Machines Terrain Control: Unmanned drones and algorithmic systems can strike targets, but they cannot occupy, control, or hold land.

-Human Judgment: Advanced systems require people to interpret complex, shifting moral and political environments.

-Strategic Failure: Historical examples, such

communication. Efficiency: Modern systems like AI-powered drones process battlefield data much faster than humans alone. Cost Shifting: Innovations alter how much money and material a nation needs to sustain a fight.

-We are in the Tech Mode: :

-The Indian Army is actively modernizing into a technology-enabled force by integrating artificial intelligence, drones, quantum computing, and advanced communication networks into daily soldiering.

-Key Technological Integrations Artificial Intelligence & 'AI-in-a-Box': Compact, portable AI systems function offline in remote, high-altitude regions to provide real-time situational awareness and tactical decision support without internet dependency.

-Drones & Swarm Intelligence: Troops utilize unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), loitering munitions, and AI-enabled swarm drones for aerial reconnaissance, remote demolition, and radar

neutralization.

-Quantum & Next-Gen Comms: Following the introduction of the Military Quantum Mission Policy Framework, the army is shifting toward quantum-secured encryption and 6G-ready tactical networks.

-Smart Soldier Gear: Modern infantry gear incorporates advanced lightweight materials, rugged tactical computing devices, and solar-powered encrypted field tools.

-Indigenous Defense Ecosystem: Programs via iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence) and partnerships with institutions like IIT Ropar bridge academic research with operational military requirements.

-The Technological Revolution in Warfare

-Drone Warfare: The New Frontier

Why Drones are the new frontiers:

-The most visible transformation in modern warfare has been the proliferation of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). By early 2025, drones were accounting for 60% to 70% of the damage and destruction caused to Russian equipment in the Ukraine war, according to the UK-based Royal United Services Institute.

This represents a fundamental shift from traditional military hardware to relatively inexpensive, adaptable platforms that can be mass-produced and deployed rapidly

-Fourth industrial revolution my eye! We haven't yet recovered from the disparities produced by the first, second and third industrial revolutions. Morons keep peddling cold and pompous dreams devoid of humanity, and morons keep consuming them like good little backboneless vermin. Grow a backbone already! We always look at the glorious aspects of industrialization and overlook all those countless lives that are ruined by it.

-Intoxication of tech is yet another fundamentalism. Algorithm without humanity is digital barbarism...[All we want to say that humans do matter!]

-Ukraine's drone production capabilities exemplify this transformation, with plans to produce 2.5 million drones in 2025, up from 800,000 in 2023.4 Similarly, Russia is reportedly matching this pace, with both sides demonstrating how quickly civilian technologies can be weaponized for military purposes.5 The evolution from basic surveillance drones to AI-enabled, autonomous systems capable of operating independently in electronic warfare environments marks a revolutionary leap in military capability.

Searching for scientific consciousness in the market of miracles

Faith is a personal belief, but the future of a nation is determined by logic, evidence, research and innovation.



Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

India's strength lies not only in its faith but also in its knowledge tradition. The problem arises not in worship, prayer, or religious belief, but when miracles are replaced by evidence and superstition by reason. Societal insecurity and uncertainty also operate behind claims of astrology, palmistry, prophecy, witchcraft, or miracles. In such times, a scientific outlook does not mean opposing religion, but rather cultivating the habit of asking questions and seeking evidence. Children must be taught to question rather than simply memorizing answers. Laboratories alongside temples, reason alongside faith, and a scientific consciousness alongside tradition are the true needs of modern India.

Today's India presents an interesting paradox. While the country is advancing in areas such as space exploration, digital technology, medicine, biotechnology, and artificial intelligence, many segments of society remain fascinated by claims of miracles, prophecy, astrology, palmistry, witchcraft, and so-called divine powers. From time to time, new religious sites, spiritual centers, and popular saints enter the spotlight. As a pilgrimage site becomes a center of devotion, the number of followers of a storyteller or saint rapidly increases. This is not just a matter of religion, but also a matter of understanding the psychological and intellectual tendencies of society.

It might be sarcastically said that new "gods" become popular here from time to time. But behind this satire lies a serious question: why do people find such an attraction to miracles and supernatural claims?

Humans are inherently curious and fearful of uncertainties. Illness, unemployment, marriage, children, exams, jobs, financial crisis, and worries about the future drive them to seek answers that offer immediate reassurance. Science often takes time to find answers to problems. In contrast, if someone claims to predict the future, explain the cause of illness, or offer a solution to a problem within minutes, a person in distress may be drawn to them. This is the psychological ground where a market for superstition is created.

In India, many people have become popular,

including those who predict the future by reading palm lines, predicting marriage and career, determining life's direction based on planetary positions, and claiming miracles. Social media has further expanded this trend. Previously, a claim was heard by a limited circle of people; now, a video can reach millions of people in a matter of hours. Visual impact, emotional language, and stories of personal experiences can make a claim seem like evidence, whereas personal experience is not the same as scientific proof.

This is where the need for a scientific approach comes into play.

A scientific approach does not mean that a person should abstain from worship, visit temples, or abandon their religious beliefs. Faith is a matter of personal life, and everyone has the right to



their own beliefs. However, accepting a claim about a natural phenomenon, disease, cure, or miracle based solely on faith is not a scientific approach. The scientific approach says: ask questions, look for evidence, test, and be prepared to change your beliefs if the evidence changes.

The Indian knowledge tradition itself has been filled with questions and curiosity. From Aryabhata to modern Indian scientists, our tradition has made significant contributions to mathematics, astronomy, physics, medicine, and other fields. Even today, Indian scientists and technical experts are demonstrating their capabilities worldwide. Therefore, it would not be fair to say that India is a country unfamiliar with scientific thinking. The real challenge is to ensure that scientific consciousness reaches the last person in society.

Looking at the world's technological development, technologies like GPS, Google, Microsoft, YouTube, Facebook, and artificial intelligence have been built upon years of research, experimentation, investment, and learning from failures. They were not created by claiming miracles, but by identifying problems, asking questions, experimenting, and developing solutions. Such talent exists in India as well. The

question is, where are we channeling that talent?

The role of our schools is crucial here. If a child is given answers to every question simply by citing tradition, their curiosity may be limited. If they are told to ask questions, seek evidence, and investigate for themselves, that same child could become a researcher, scientist, doctor, engineer, or innovative entrepreneur in the future.

To foster a scientific consciousness, families, schools, the media, and social institutions—all must understand their roles. Instead of sensationalizing claims of miracles, the media should factually investigate them. Experiment-based education should be promoted in schools. Families should encourage children's questions rather than suppress them. Instead of immediately believing a video on social media, we must cultivate the habit of investigating its source and evidence.

It's also important to understand that superstition isn't limited to the religious sphere. Believing in rumors, assuming someone is an expert without proof, mistaking everything on social media for truth, and relying on health claims without scientific basis are all manifestations of the same problem.

India doesn't need to take away anyone's faith. What's needed is to strengthen conscience. We need a society where temples are also laboratories, prayers are also research, traditions are also questions, and faith is also respected for evidence.

Our greatest goal for the coming generation should not be the discovery of a new miracle, but the discovery of new questions. An India where children don't ask, "How did this miracle happen?", but instead have the courage to ask, "What is the evidence for this claim?"

The real progress of a nation is reflected not only in the number of its religious places but also in its schools, universities, libraries, laboratories, research institutes and innovation centres.

Have faith, but with discretion.

Have faith, but with room for questions.

Tradition should remain, but with scientific consciousness.

Because the future of a nation is not created by miracles but by knowledge, logic, research and human discretion.

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

Where The Birds Gone? The Changing Sound of the Chenab Valley



BY-MOOL RAJ

The Chenab Valley is more than mountains, rivers, and forests. It is a living ecosystem where birds, wildlife, vegetation, and human communities have coexisted for generations. For many residents, the calls of birds were once an ordinary part of daily life—the morning chorus around villages, birds moving through orchards and forests, and migratory species arriving with the changing seasons.

The upper Chenab region is known for its rich avian diversity. Scientific research covering the Bhot, Marusudar, Kalnai, and Neeru watersheds recorded 251 bird species, including both resident and migratory birds. This highlights the ecological importance of the region and the variety of habitats that support its birdlife.

However, the landscape supporting these species is changing. Road construction, expanding settlements, infrastructure development, deforestation, changing agricultural practices, and increasing human activity are altering mountain habitats. Development is essential for remote communities, but it must be planned with careful attention to the ecological systems on which the region depends.

Habitat loss and fragmentation can affect birds by reducing feeding grounds, nesting sites, and breeding areas. The removal of mature trees, disturbance of forest patches, and changes in natural vegetation may have consequences that are not immediately visible but can gradually influence local biodiversity.

The rivers are equally important. The Chenab and its tributaries connect different ecosystems across the valley and provide habitats for species associated with riverine environments. Changes to riverbanks, water flow, vegetation, and surrounding land use can affect these habitats and the species that depend on them.

Climate change is another emerging

pressure. Birds rely on seasonal patterns for migration, breeding, and feeding. Changes in temperature, rainfall, and food availability can disrupt these natural cycles and influence the timing and movement of different species.

At the same time, claims of widespread bird decline require careful scientific verification. There is a need for more consistent, long-term monitoring across the Chenab Valley to determine which species are increasing, declining, or changing their distribution.

Local residents, birdwatchers, students, photographers, and researchers can contribute to this effort by documenting sightings, nesting locations, and seasonal movements. Regular bird counts and systematic record-keeping could provide



valuable information about the changing ecological conditions of the valley.

Birds are not merely part of the scenery. They are an important component of healthy ecosystems and can serve as useful indicators of changes in forests, rivers, vegetation, and insect populations.

The Chenab Valley is developing rapidly, and the challenge is to ensure that this development does not unnecessarily damage the natural habitats that sustain its biodiversity. Protecting these habitats is not a choice between development and conservation; it is part of ensuring that development remains environmentally sustainable.

The question we should ultimately ask is simple:

What are we changing in the places that birds call home?

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER



Transport Commissioner reviews MVD services, enforcement, road safety in Kulgam

Calls for intensified joint enforcement of traffic rules, prompt disposal of citizen-centric online services

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 30: Transport Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan today visited District Kulgam and chaired a review meeting to assess the functioning and delivery of Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) services in the southern districts of Kulgam, Pulwama and Shopian.

The meeting focused on strengthening enforcement, improving citizen service delivery, enhancing road safety and ensuring greater coordination among the field formations of the Transport Department and Traffic Police.

During the meeting, Transport Commissioner held detailed deliberations with SSP, Traffic, Rural Kashmir, Liaqat Ali and stressed the need for intensified and coordinated enforcement drives by the Traffic Police and Transport Department.

He directed the concerned



officers, ARTOs to undertake effective joint enforcement against traffic violations, regulate traffic movement on critical routes and take proactive measures to reduce road accidents.

Transport Commissioner also

reviewed the performance of various online and faceless transport services.

Interacting with media persons, he highlighted that auto-approval mechanisms have now been integrated into several transport

services, enabling citizens to avail themselves of important departmental services without visiting transport offices physically.

He said that the Department is continuously working towards

making transport services more accessible, transparent, efficient and citizen-centric, with technology being leveraged to reduce the need for physical visits to government offices.

In view of the approaching winter and the possibility of sub-zero temperatures and slippery road conditions, the Transport Commissioner made an earnest appeal to motorists to exercise extra caution while driving during winter.

Transport Commissioner further directed field officers to ensure prompt delivery of citizen services and a visible presence on the ground, particularly on important traffic corridors, so that commuters receive timely assistance and grievances are addressed effectively.

Meeting was attended by ARTO Pulwama, Mohammad Shafiat; ARTO Kulgam, Nasir Ahmed; ARTO Shopian, Mohd Arif and other officers and officials of the department.

ADC Bhaderwah reviews progress of Smart Metering, RDSS Works

■ **HT News Network**

BHADERWAH, SEPTEMBER 30: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sunil Kumar Bhutyal today chaired a meeting in his office chamber to review the progress of smart metering, solar panel installations and works being executed under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) in Bhaderwah and Bhalla areas.

A detailed review was conducted regarding the progress of smart meter installation, with officials informing that the work is being accelerated and has been targeted for completion by October. Smart meter installation in Tesna, Dhreja, Jai Road, Bhalla-Khalleni and Seri has already achieved substantial progress.

The meeting also reviewed the status of solar panel installations on government buildings. The concerned officials informed that solar panels have so far been installed in around 68 government buildings, with the remaining installations being taken up on priority.

The meeting was attended by the Assistant Executive Engineer JPDCL Sub-Division Bhaderwah, besides other officers, technical staff and concerned officials. The meeting was attended by the Assistant Executive Engineer JPDCL Sub-Division Bhaderwah, besides other officers, technical staff and concerned officials.

Ghulam Rasool Dar Elected PDP Zonal President Devsar, Bilal Ahmad Parry Zonal Secretary

■ **Farooq Rather**



DEVSTAR, SEPTEMBER 30: The People's Democratic Party (PDP) on Tuesday conducted the election for the party's Zonal President and Zonal Secretary for the Devsar zone at the residence of Party Vice President and Constituency Incharge Devsar, Mohammad Sartaj Madni. The election proceedings were presided over by PDP District President Anantnag, Javaid Ahmad, who acted as the Presiding Officer. During the organisational election, Ghulam Rasool Dar was elected Zonal President Devsar, while Bilal Ahmad Parry was elected Zonal Secretary Devsar. The proceedings were attended by PDP District President Kulgam Zaffarullah Wani, Vice District President Khurshheed Ahmad, block presidents, youth zonal and block presidents, senior party workers and delegates.

Party workers and delegates congratulated the newly elected office-bearers and expressed hope that they would work towards further strengthening the party's organisational structure in the Devsar zone.

Illegal Mining Routes to Nallah Mawar Blocked in Langate

Geology & Mining Department, Police Disconnect Illegal Access Routes in Tulwari, Chek Shat, Shanoo

■ **DR.AB QAYOOM**

Langate, Sept 30: Several illegal approach roads and exit routes leading towards Nallah Mawar in Tulwari, Chek Shat and Shanoo areas of Langate were disconnected on Tuesday to prevent illegal mining and transportation of minerals. According to the Area In-Charge, Sub-Division Handwara, a joint team of the Geology and Mining Department and Police Post Langate carried out the operation and blocked several routes allegedly being used for illegal mining and transportation activities. The official said the action was aimed at restricting access to Nallah Mawar and adjoining state land where illegal extraction of minerals was allegedly taking place. The routes were disconnected to prevent the movement of vehicles involved in such activities, particularly during night hours. The Area In-Charge said the Geology and Mining Department had already written to the



concerned Revenue Department for assessment and identification of state and private land in the area to facilitate strict action against illegal mining. However, he said no response had so far been received from the Revenue Department, Langate. Locals appreciated the efforts of Tehsildar Langate Mohammad Ismail, saying that he had visited the affected areas several times and interacted with local youth, urging them to stay away from illegal mining activities. Residents, however, also raised concerns over flood protection measures along Nallah Mawar.

They alleged that several stretches from Dornukh-Shatagund to Kharou Langate lack proper protective boundaries and strong flood-defence structures. Locals also raised concern over the role of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department in protecting Nallah Mawar. They said there is no proper flood-protection boundary along the stretch from Dornukh-Shatagund to Kharou Langate. Residents urged the concerned department to strengthen the flood-defence structures and protect the nallah before any major damage occurs. A geologist, speaking on condition of anonymity, expressed concern over increasing mining activity along the nallah. He said uncontrolled extraction of minerals could increase the vulnerability of the area to damage during heavy rainfall or cloudburst events in the upper reaches of Nallah Mawar. The geologist said agricultural and state land in the area could be affected.

Div Com reviews progress of National Highway projects in Jammu Division

■ **HT News Network**

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 30: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, today chaired a meeting to review the progress of various National Highway projects being executed across Jammu Division.

The Div Com undertook a detailed review of different packages of the Jammu-Poonch, Jammu-Doda and Jammu-Kishtwar National Highway projects, besides other ongoing works in the division.

The Div Com interacted with the Deputy Commissioners and conducted a district-wise review of the projects in their respective jurisdictions. Issues affecting the progress of works, including land transfer, mutation, payment of compensation, finalisation of awards and other procedural matters, were discussed in detail. The Deputy Commissioners were directed to take up the pending cases on priority and ensure their expeditious disposal.

Representatives of BRO/Sampark, NHAI and NHIDCL briefed the chair on the physical progress of works under their respective packages, the current status of execution and the timelines fixed for completion.

Stressing the need for timely completion of these strategic projects, the Div Com directed the district administrations to adopt a proactive approach towards identification and removal of bottlenecks. He asked them to hold regular follow-up meetings with the executing agencies and ensure that pending issues are



resolved without delay.

The Div Com also directed the representatives of the executing agencies to adhere strictly to the timelines fixed for completion of the projects. He called for deployment of adequate manpower and machinery, close coordination with the district administrations and strict adherence to prescribed quality standards.

The meeting was attended by Managing Director, JPDCL; Deputy Commissioners of all districts; Director, Geology & Mining, J&K; Regional Officer, NHAI Jammu; Chief Engineer, Project Beacon/Sampark; Chief Engineer, PMGSY Jammu; Chief Engineers of PWD Jammu zone and PWD Chenab Valley Zone; Executive Director, NHIDCL Jammu, along with General Managers; and Project Directors of NHAI, Udhampur, Jammu and Ramban.

Swachhata Karmi Samaan Programme held at Kishtwar

Civic workers provided safety kits, medical check-up and social-security linkages

■ **HT News Network**

KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 30: As a part of the ongoing "Swachhata Hi Seva" campaign, a Swachhata Karmi Samaan Programme was today organised here at the DDC Office building to recognise the valuable contribution of sanitation workers and provide them with essential health, safety and social-security support.

The programme was organised under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Neeraj Kumar



Sharma, Assistant Commissioner Development Manoj Kumar also graced the occasion and appreciated the dedication and services being rendered by sanitation workers in maintaining cleanliness and

public hygiene across the district. Sanitation workers from different blocks of the district participated in the programme with enthusiasm. During the programme, safety kits were distributed among the

Swachhata Karmis to help them perform their duties in a safer and more secure manner. The provision of protective equipment is aimed at reducing occupational risks and promoting the health, safety and dignity of workers engaged in sanitation-related activities.

A special medical check-up camp was also organised on the occasion. The health screening was conducted by Medical Officer, AYUSH Dr. Monica Sharma, who examined the sanitation workers and provided them with necessary medical advice.

BJP's Sahil Bhat Slams Omar Govt Over Jammu Shop Notices, Delayed ULB Polls

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, Sep 30: BJP J&K State Spokesperson and Prabhari Bandipora, Er. Sahil Bashir Bhat, has criticised the Omar Abdullah-led government over notices issued to shopkeepers and commercial establishments in Jammu, urging the administration to adopt a "human and solution-oriented" approach to livelihood-related issues. Reacting to reports of notices issued by the Jammu Municipal Corporation to commercial establishments operating in residential colonies, Bhat said traders facing documentation or Change of Land Use (CLU) issues should

be given a reasonable opportunity to rectify deficiencies wherever legally permissible. "The government cannot ignore the livelihood concerns of ordinary shopkeepers. The festive season is at the doorstep, and this is the time to support traders, not add to their difficulties," he said. Bhat also questioned the delay in holding Urban Local Body (ULB) elections, noting that elected municipal bodies completed their terms in 2023. He said the absence of elected representatives has reduced opportunities for citizens and traders to raise local grievances through democratic institutions. He further raised concerns over



the utilisation of CAPEX funds, arguing that the absence of elected local bodies could affect grassroots planning, prioritisation and execution of development projects. "Public money allocated for development must reach the ground. There is a genuine need for timely identification, approval and execution of

projects so that valuable CAPEX allocations are not left unutilised," Bhat said.

He urged the government to review the notices, provide affected shopkeepers a transparent opportunity to rectify documents wherever legally permissible, and announce a clear, time-bound roadmap for ULB elections. "People need elected representatives, not merely notices. The government must protect livelihoods, restore grassroots democracy and ensure that every rupee earmarked for Jammu's development is utilised transparently and effectively on the ground," he said.

District Admin Budgam holds Workshop on Prevention of Open Leaf Burning

Focus on source segregation, composting and sustainable management of biodegradable waste

■ **HT News Network**

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 30: The District Administration Budgam today organized a one-day District-Level Action Workshop on "Banning Open Waste Leaf Burning and Establishing Composting Alternatives" to sensitise field-level functionaries and promote practical alternatives to the burning of leaves and agricultural residue during the autumn and pre-winter period.

Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, chaired the workshop. The programme was attended by Vasu Yadav, Chairman, J&K Pollution Control Committee; Khurshheed Alam,

Director, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India; JD Planning, ACP Budgam, Chief Agriculture Officer Budgam, Head KVK Budgam, all BDOs and Executive Officers, besides other concerned officers and stakeholders.

Representatives from NGOs, progressive farmers, Civil society members and functionaries from Mission YUVA also participated in the workshop.

Addressing the workshop, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for a coordinated and sustained effort to eliminate open burning of leaves, solid waste and agricultural residue. He called



for a zero-tolerance approach towards such practices and directed field functionaries to strengthen awareness, monitoring and community participation. The DC emphasized source segregation

of waste and urged households to adopt family-level composting pits or make use of community composting facilities for managing biodegradable waste. He said the focus should be on providing citizens

with practical and accessible alternatives so that organic waste is composted or scientifically processed instead of being burnt or dumped. Chairman J&K Pollution Control Committee, briefed participants about major sources of air pollution and highlighted the importance of scientific waste management. He stressed segregation of waste at source and urged departments, local bodies and citizens to ensure that solid waste is not burnt. Director, MoEFCC, Government of India, underscored the importance of coordinated action at the grassroots level, effective implementation of environmental regulations and sustained public awareness. A detailed presentation

by BDO Chadoora highlighted the composting initiatives and decentralized methods being promoted by the District Administration, including community and household composting pits.

Chief Agriculture Officer, Head KVK Budgam, social activists and Financial Literacy Expert, also shared their views on the harmful effects of open burning and measures for sustainable management of agricultural and biodegradable waste.

The workshop stressed the active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions, Urban Local Bodies, field functionaries and community organizations in promoting source segregation and decentralized.



DC Budgam reviews Parcel Rail Services with Fruit Growers, encourages use for Apple Transportation

■ **HT News Network**

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, chaired an interaction meeting with fruit growers of Budgam district, along with Railway authorities, to encourage the growers to make use of parcel rail services for transportation of apples from the Valley to various fruit mandies across the country.

The meeting focused on creating awareness among fruit growers about the facilities and benefits available under the parcel train service and encouraging them to adopt railways as a reliable, economical and efficient mode of transporting their produce to markets outside Kashmir Valley.

During the meeting, officers from the Railways provided detailed



information to the fruit growers regarding the complete parcel booking process, loading facilities, operational arrangements and fare charges applicable for transportation of apples through rail. The growers

were also apprised of the procedures to be followed for booking their consignments and the facilities available at the railway station to facilitate hassle-free transportation. Addressing the gathering, the

Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of exploring cost-effective and efficient transportation options for the horticulture sector, which forms a vital component of the district's rural economy.

He said that parcel rail service is among the cheapest available modes of transportation for carrying apples to different parts of the country and can substantially reduce the transportation burden on fruit growers. He urged growers to make maximum use of the service, particularly during the peak harvesting season.

The Deputy Commissioner further highlighted that Budgam Railway Station is among the most accessible railway stations for fruit growers of Budgam district, making it convenient for growers and traders to transport their produce from the district to various fruit markets and mandies across the country.

The growers were informed that one railway wagon has a carrying capacity of approximately 1,600 to 1,700 boxes of apples, enabling substantial quantities of fruit to be transported in a single consignment. It was further informed that the rail service can help growers send their produce to distant fruit mandies within a few days, thereby facilitating timely market access and reducing the concerns associated with prolonged transportation.

The Deputy Commissioner called upon the concerned departments and Railway authorities to maintain close coordination with fruit growers and provide all necessary facilitation at the booking and loading stages. He also stressed the need for sustained awareness among growers regarding the parcel rail service so that more horticulturists can benefit from the facility.

DDC Pulwama chairs District Steering Committee Meeting on Green India Mission

■ **HT News Network**

PULWAMA, SEPTEMBER 30: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, today chaired a meeting of the District Steering Committee for the Green India Mission (GIM) at the Meeting Hall of the Administrative Complex, Pulwama.

The meeting was convened to deliberate upon the District Perspective Plan under the Green India Mission for the period 2026-27 to 2030-31. A detailed presentation was made before the Chair, outlining the proposed interventions, objectives, restoration and plantation activities, implementation mechanism and financial requirements under the Perspective Plan.

During the meeting, the Committee held detailed deliberations on the proposed plan, including measures for increasing and improving



forest and tree cover, restoration of degraded forest areas, strengthening biodiversity and ecosystem conditions, and enhancing ecosystem services.

The proposed Perspective Plan envisages restoration and plantation works over 15 hectares, with a proposed financial outlay of Rs 25.806 lakh.

The Committee also discussed the proposed implementation mechanism, including the involvement of Village Forest Committees (VFCs) under the technical supervision of the Forest Department, with emphasis on ensuring effective

community participation and sustainable management of restored areas.

The DDC directed the concerned departments to work in close coordination for effective implementation of the Perspective Plan and ensure that the proposed interventions are technically sound and are aligned with the objectives of the Green India Mission.

Dr. Qayoom stressed upon the officers to identify suitable areas for plantation and restoration, ensure proper site-specific planning and maintain prescribed technical standards during execution.

The DDC emphasised the need for effective convergence among the Forest Department, Rural Development and other stakeholder departments, besides ensuring active participation of local communities through Village Forest Committees for long-term protection and maintenance of plantation and restoration works.

PM Vishwakarma Awareness Programme on Branding, Packaging, Marketing organised at Ganderbal

■ **HT News Network**

GANDERBAL, SEPTEMBER 29: The Branch MSME Development & Facilitation Office (DFO), Srinagar, Ministry of MSME in collaboration with the District Administration, Ganderbal, today organised an awareness programme under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme at Ganderbal.

The programme focused on product packaging, branding, marketing, entrepreneurship, artificial intelligence and digital financial services and was attended by more than 130 participants. The programme was chaired by A.K. Tamaria, Joint Director, MSME DFO Jammu, Ministry of MSME, Gol along with the officials of Branch MSME DFO Srinagar.

The programme aimed to sensitise artisans and beneficiaries about various aspects of enterprise development and the support available under the PM



Vishwakarma initiative.

The Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (CIED) conducted a session on product packaging and branding, highlighting the importance of attractive packaging, brand identity and effective product presentation for enhancing marketability.

The J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) delivered a session on entrepreneurship, covering key aspects of enterprise development, business management and opportunities available for artisans.

PMU official delivered a presentation on Artificial Intelligence (AI), highlighting

the use of AI tools for business promotion, content creation, marketing and other entrepreneurial activities.

Officials from India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) facilitated the onboarding of participants and generation of QR codes, enabling them to access digital payment facilities and promote cashless transactions. Representatives from J&K Bank and the District Industries Centre (DIC), Ganderbal, also participated in the programme and apprised participants about financial services, institutional support and various schemes and facilities available to artisans and micro entrepreneurs. The programme provided an interactive platform for participants to gain knowledge about branding, packaging, entrepreneurship, AI and digital payments, while facilitating access to financial and institutional support for strengthening their enterprises and improving market linkages.

JKEDI Srinagar commences 13th Management Development Programme under RAMP at Saida Kadal

■ **HT News Network**



SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), District Office Srinagar, today commenced the 13th Management Development Programme (MDP) under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme at Saida Kadal, Srinagar.

The programme was formally inaugurated by Shabir Hussain Shah, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Srinagar.

The programme aims to equip existing entrepreneurs with essential managerial, financial and strategic skills to enhance their business sustainability and growth.

In his inaugural address, Shabir Hussain Shah highlighted the significance of the RAMP scheme in strengthening the MSME ecosystem and urged participants to take full advantage of the expert-led sessions.

District-Level Meeting on Rabies Elimination Action Plan held in Bandipora

■ **HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 30: A District-Level Joint Steering Committee meeting for implementation and monitoring of the UT Action Plan for Rabies Elimination by 2030 was held at the VC Room, Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

The meeting was chaired by Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Zaffar Hussain Shawl, and focused on strengthening inter-sectoral coordination for rabies prevention and control, improving animal-bite surveillance and reporting, ensuring timely management of animal-bite cases, strengthening availability of ARV and ARS/RIG, dog vaccination and population management, and enhancing community awareness.

On the occasion, the ADC directed the concerned departments to improve the infrastructure and strengthen facilities for rabies prevention and control, while stressing the need to expand coverage to more locations across the district to ensure wider outreach and effective implementation of the action plan.

DLSA Budgam conducts Cleanliness Drive at various Legal Aid Clinics in district

■ **HT News Network**

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 30: In compliance with the directions, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Budgam conducts cleanliness drive at Various Legal Aid Clinics of DLSA Budgam. The cleanliness was organized under the guidance of O.P. Bhat, Principal District and Sessions Judge (Chairman DLSA), Budgam and under the observance of Tabassum Qadir Parry, Secretary District Legal Services Authority Budgam. The DLSA Budgam conducted a series of cleanliness drives and awareness campaigns across the Legal Aid Clinics/Clubs, and at ADR Centre Budgam, as part of the nationwide "Swachhata Hi Seva" initiative. The drives were carried out by the PLVs of DLSA/ TLSCs Budgam. The initiative aimed at promoting hygiene, environmental sustainability and public health by encouraging community participation and a sense of collective responsibility towards maintaining clean and healthy surroundings.

Br MSME DFO Srinagar organises PM Vishwakarma Capacity Building Programme in Anantnag

■ **HT News Network**

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 30: The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), through its field office, Br. MSME Development and Facilitation Office (DFO), Srinagar, organised a District-Level PM Vishwakarma Capacity Building Programme on Branding and Marketing in Anantnag, with the objective of enhancing the business capabilities, market outreach and entrepreneurial potential of traditional artisans.

The programme was graced by Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, as the Chief Guest.

The event was attended by



Assistant Director, Br. MSME DFO Srinagar, Saheel Alaqband, IEDS; General Manager, DIC Anantnag, Nazia Hassan; and Lead District Manager (LDM), Mohammad Shafi Bhat, besides officials, stakeholders and a large number of PM Vishwakarma beneficiaries. Around 200

artisans and participants took part in the programme.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the efforts of Br. MSME DFO Srinagar for organising the capacity-building programme and emphasised the importance of effective implementation of Government of India schemes at the grassroots level. He said that the Government of India has introduced several schemes aimed at promoting entrepreneurship, livelihoods and economic development, and stressed the need for concerted efforts to ensure that the benefits of such schemes reach the intended beneficiaries in an efficient and transparent.

DC Kulgam reviews implementation of Green India Mission

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today chaired a meeting at the Mini-Secretariat, Kulgam, to review the implementation of the Green India Mission (GIM) in Kulgam Forest Division. The meeting discussed the six-year perspective plan of Kulgam Forest Division under the Green India Mission for the period from 2026-27 to 2031-32, with a total financial target of 98.95 lakh. The Mission focuses on protecting, restoring and enhancing forest cover through interventions including ecosystem restoration, improvement of forest quality and ecosystem services, increase in forest cover, urban and peri-



urban tree cover, agroforestry and social forestry, besides wetland restoration. For the current financial year 2026-27, three sites in D.H. Pora Range, viz. N2/Gadran Nandimarg, N3/Gadran Nandimarg and N5/Kundlan Nagam, have been identified for restoration of degraded open forest ecosystems. The sites cover a total area of 27 hectares with 11,582 running feet of wooden fencing proposed. The sites have been finalized in consultation with the concerned Village Forest

Committees. As per the proposal, 10 hectares at N2/Gadran Nandimarg, 12 hectares at N3/Gadran Nandimarg and 5 hectares at N5/Kundlan Nagam have been identified for advance works with fencing. The financial outlay for the current year stands at 9.54 lakh, also covering activities related to soil and water conservation, research and development, monitoring and evaluation, awareness and publicity, and mission organisation. The DC directed the concerned officers to ensure timely execution of the planned works and maintain effective monitoring at every stage and stressed for collaborated efforts among all stakeholders for proper implementation of the Mission and sustainable.

NABARD inaugurates Common Facilitation Centre for Kani Shawl Artisans in Bandipora

■ **HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 30: In a significant step towards the socio-economic empowerment of rural artisans, NABARD inaugurated a modern Common Facilitation Centre (CFC) for the 'Kanisoz' Off-Farm Producer Organisation (OFPO) at Odina, Sumbal in Bandipora.

The facility was inaugurated by Dr. B.R. Premi, Chief General Manager, RMSMED, NABARD, Head Office in presence of Vikas Mittal, Officer-in-Charge (OIC), NABARD J&K, Deputy General Manager NABARD, Srinagar, AGM RMSMED Jammu, AGM (DDM) Bandipora along with other senior officials and representatives of

implementing agency IGSSS.

The Kanisoz OFPO has been established under the OFPO grant based project of NABARD, aimed at organizing rural artisans into registered corporate entities/businesses. Under the project, NABARD has sanctioned a total grant assistance of 45 Lakh over the period of three years covering various interventions such as formal registration of the OFPO as a Producer Company under the Companies Act, capacity-building measures, including the establishment of an administrative office with manpower, specialized training programs and exhibitions for the artisans, creation of design bank, acquiring the licences, conduct



of audit, formulation of business plan and establishment of Common Facilitation Centre (CFC) among others.

An important component of this

comprehensive project is the establishment of CFC which is equipped with specialized machinery procured under the project. The center will allow artisans to undertake essential

post-weaving processing including washing, drying, and ironing of premium Kani shawls, under one roof.

This infrastructure is expected to significantly enhance the final finish and market readiness of the products, thereby ensuring better price realization for the weavers. The Kanisoz OFPO as on date has successfully mobilized 200 traditional artisans from the region, all of whom have been formally enrolled as active shareholder members of the Producer Company.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. B.R. Premi emphasized NABARD's unwavering commitment to fostering rural prosperity through the

promotion of the off-farm sector. He reiterated that collectivizing artisans into OFPOs not only preserves the rich cultural heritage of Kashmiri handicrafts like the Kani shawl but also ensures sustainable livelihood generation and institutional credit linkage for grassroots communities. The Kanisoz OFPO has been established under the OFPO grant based project of NABARD, aimed at organizing rural artisans into registered corporate entities/businesses. Under the project, NABARD has sanctioned a total grant assistance of 45 Lakh over the period of three years covering various interventions such as formal registration of the OFPO as a Producer

Company under the Companies Act, capacity-building measures, including the establishment of an administrative office with manpower, specialized training programs and exhibitions for the artisans, creation of design bank, acquiring the licences, conduct of audit, formulation of business plan and establishment of Common Facilitation Centre (CFC) among others.

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The Ivf Technique



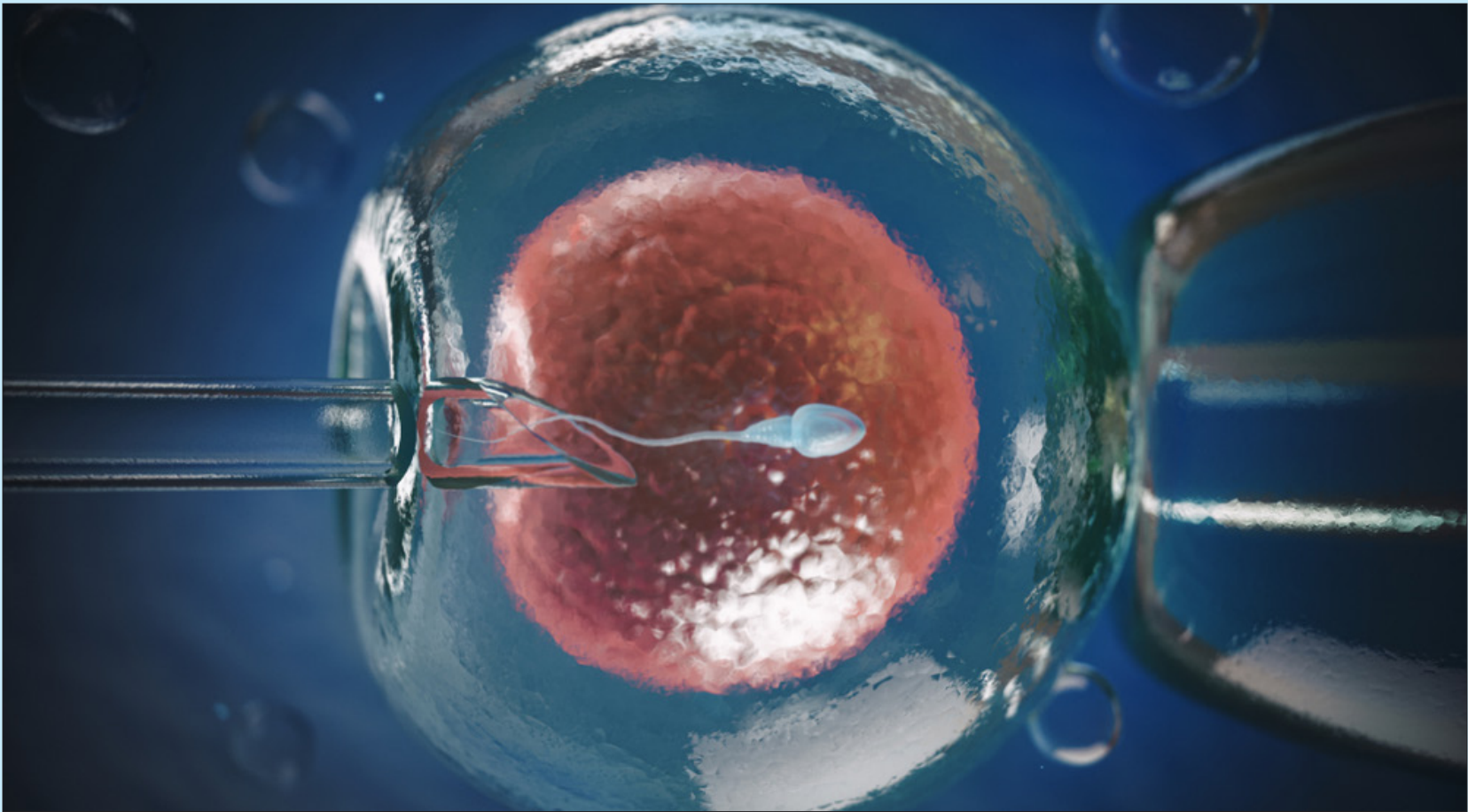
SURINDERPAL SINGH

Parenthood is one of the most emotional aspirations in human life. Yet, for many couples, conceiving a child naturally can become a difficult and emotionally demanding journey. Infertility may result from a wide range of factors involving either partner, including problems with ovulation, blocked or damaged fallopian tubes, reduced sperm quality, endometriosis, advancing age or unexplained causes. In such circumstances, modern reproductive medicine has provided an important option— In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF).

IVF is an assisted reproductive technology in which fertilisation takes place outside the human body in a laboratory. The resulting embryo is subsequently transferred into the uterus with the aim of achieving pregnancy. What once seemed almost unimaginable has now become an established medical technique, offering possibilities of parenthood to many people who might otherwise face significant difficulties conceiving.

The IVF process generally begins with medicines that stimulate the ovaries to produce multiple mature eggs. These eggs are then collected through a carefully controlled medical procedure. At the same time, sperm is obtained from the male partner or where medically appropriate and legally permitted, from a donor. In the laboratory, an egg and sperm may be combined to allow fertilisation. In some situations, a technique called Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI) is used, in which a single sperm is injected directly into an egg.

Following fertilisation, the developing embryo is monitored in the laboratory. An embryo considered suitable for transfer may then be placed inside the uterus. Depending



on the individual circumstances, additional embryos may sometimes be frozen for possible future use. Pregnancy is subsequently confirmed through appropriate medical testing.

Despite its remarkable possibilities, IVF is not a guaranteed pathway to parenthood. Its success can vary considerably according to factors such as age, reproductive health, egg and sperm quality, underlying medical conditions and the specific treatment approach. Multiple treatment cycles may sometimes be required, and the process can involve considerable financial, physical and emotional demands.

It is therefore important that IVF should not be presented as a simple technological solution to infertility. Before beginning treatment, couples should receive proper medical evaluation and counselling. They should be informed about potential benefits, limitations, risks, costs and available alternatives. Decisions should be made in consultation with qualified fertility specialists rather than on the basis of advertisements, social-media claims or unrealistic promises.

IVF also raises important ethical and social questions. The creation, storage and use of embryos, donor conception, genetic testing,

reproductive autonomy and the legal status of stored embryos require thoughtful consideration. Different countries and jurisdictions have developed different regulations concerning assisted reproductive technologies. Responsible medical practice therefore requires both scientific competence and respect for ethical and legal frameworks.

Another issue deserving greater attention is the emotional experience of people undergoing fertility treatment. Repeated procedures, uncertainty about outcomes and social pressure can create significant psychological stress. Infertility should not be treated as a source of shame or as a measure of a person's worth. Families, healthcare professionals and society have an important role in creating an environment of understanding and dignity.

At the same time, IVF should be viewed within the broader landscape of reproductive healthcare. Prevention and early treatment of reproductive disorders, awareness about fertility, healthy lifestyles, appropriate medical consultation and access to evidence-based healthcare remain important. IVF is one option among several approaches used in the management of infertility, and it is not necessarily appropriate for every individual

or couple.

The development of IVF represents an extraordinary chapter in medical science. It demonstrates how knowledge of reproductive biology, embryology, genetics and laboratory medicine can be brought together to address one of life's most complex challenges. Yet the real achievement of science lies not merely in what technology can do, but in how responsibly and compassionately it is used.

As reproductive medicine continues to advance, society must ensure that scientific progress remains accompanied by affordability, informed consent, ethical safeguards and emotional support. IVF can open a door to parenthood for some, but behind every medical procedure is a human story filled with hope, uncertainty and expectation.

Ultimately, the story of IVF is not simply about fertilisation in a laboratory. It is about the continuing ability of science to expand possibilities while reminding us that medicine must always remain centred on human dignity, informed choice and compassionate care.

SURINDERPAL SINGH
FACULTY IN SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
SRI AMRITSAR SAHIB
PUNJAB.

Hidden habits that make your social anxiety worse - and how to break them

It was during her teenage years that Mary began to become anxious in social situations. It got so bad she developed depression and had to have time off school. By the time she started university, she avoided group settings altogether.

"I didn't join clubs and societies like others did," says Mary (not her real name). "I just thought nobody would want to get to know me. I didn't really make a single friend during my whole degree."

Mary's social anxiety was so bad that she was diagnosed as having social anxiety disorder - something that affects up to 12% of people at some point in their lives.

But plenty more report struggling more generally. As students return to uni, we asked experts how to overcome these feelings whether in your first, or final year.

A study by the University of Chichester found more than a fifth of university students face some kind of social anxiety during their studies - and it is linked to lower grades, poorer relationships and isolation.

For many, university marks the first time they have moved out of home - and the expectation is that they will quickly make friends. Mary, who went to the University of Exeter, says she did try. "When I first got there I went to one society, but everybody was talking to each other and I had a sudden fear come over me. I felt I wouldn't fit in and I went home."

Signs you may be socially anxious
Mary, who is now 25, describes her social anxiety as like an out of body experience. When she was talking to new people, heat would rise in her face and her hands would begin to tingle. "I'd almost feel myself separating from my body. I forgot how to form words," she says. "After social situations I was often left with the sense that I'd done something awful. I had



an all-consuming feel of shame. I kept thinking there was something fundamentally flawed in me."

Neil Greening, chair of the Social Anxiety Alliance UK, says this is a typical characteristic of people with social anxiety.

"People think they have a personality flaw. They internalise it rather than seeing it as a recognisable condition that they can get help for."

The key thing to remember: It's fairly normal to feel a little shy or anxious when meeting new people, being in new situations or going for a job interview. Social anxiety is when it actually stops people doing things, Greening says.

For those with a clinical diagnosis it can have a debilitating impact like it did for Mary.

"It can be hard to admit to any form of social anxiety in a world where extrovertism and social

confidence is generally admired. Many people try to hide their social anxiety or use safety behaviours." Signs someone may be socially anxious:

- Keeping quiet
- Giving short answers
- Playing with a phone to avoid interacting
- Always staying close to someone or staying on the edges of a group
- Sticking to safe subjects of conversation like work

Greening says there is some evidence social anxiety is getting worse and that increased use of smartphones and remote working is contributing by "leading to less social interactions and increased levels of anxiety".

How to help yourself
Mary, who has moved on to do a postgraduate course, is now managing her social anxiety better. After her undergraduate degree she got support from the NHS in the form of a talking therapy

called CBT.

It is considered the gold standard treatment for social anxiety and encourages people to re-frame their thoughts and change their behaviours.

Prof David Clark, a psychologist at the University of Oxford, says he would like to see more people come forward for therapy but says people can also take steps to help themselves.

The first step, he says, is to stop obsessive self-focus. "People with social anxiety often monitor themselves constantly during social situations. Am I blushing? Do I sound stupid? Do I look nervous?"

"Focus outwardly on the conversation, other person or your surroundings."

He says you also need to test your fears with behavioural experiments by asking a question in a meeting or saying something in a group and noticing what happens.

"People with social anxiety often assume negative outcomes - that they will embarrass themselves or think others will find them boring. Testing that can help people break that. It's frightening, but it can really help."

He also says they need to drop safety behaviours, such as rehearsing every sentence, avoiding eye contact or sticking close to one particular person.

And finally, Clark adds, try to avoid post-event rumination. "It's so easy to distort what actually happened." This is something Mary can empathise with. "I used to play things over constantly in my mind. What I've learnt is that dealing with social anxiety is a gradual process. The therapy really helped me, but so did something a friend said to me a couple of years ago. "When I said I didn't want to join her in meeting some of her friends, citing my poor social skills, she said she'd never thought that about me and that I shouldn't undersell myself. I was overcome with emotion."

(BBC NEWS)



Molineux to miss Bangladesh ODIs, McGrath to captain

United News Of India

SYDNEY, SEP 30 :Sophie Molineux will miss next month's ODI series against Bangladesh with a hip injury, but Australia are hopeful she will recover in time for the following T20I series against New Zealand.

The Australia captain was named in a 13-player ODI squad revealed by Cricket Australia on Wednesday morning, but speaking to reporters following that release, national selector Shawn Flegler revealed the extent of Molineux's setback, and confirmed deputy Tahlia McGrath would lead her country against the Tigers in Brisbane.

"She suffered a hip injury when she got back from The Hundred ... it seemed a fairly innocuous hip injury initially, just unfortunately it didn't progress as quickly as we thought it would up until the weekend," Flegler said.

"She's now turned a corner but I think it's too tight for the ODI series ... but she'll be right for the T20 games (and) we'll keep assessing her during that particular series."

If Molineux does not get up for the three T20Is against the White Ferns, starting in Sydney on October 18, co-vice-captain Ashleigh Gardner will lead her country for the first time.

McGrath also led Australia in their



most recent one-day series against the West Indies in April when Molineux was sidelined with a back injury.

McGrath was then left on the bench throughout the T20 World Cup in England, the sole member of the 15-player squad unable to break into the XI during the tournament. But the allrounder showed promising signs in South Australia's opening game of the WNCL season on Tuesday, blasting 154 from 137 deliveries against Victoria, while also capturing two wickets. "It was really great that she scored a brilliant hundred yesterday and took a couple of wickets.

, so she should go into that series

with a lot of confidence," Flegler said of McGrath.

"We've got Ash and T-Mac as (co-) vice captains and it's been endorsed by the board for either one of them to step up into the role.

"Tahlia's done a really great job in the past, and if Ash gets that opportunity (in the T20s), I'm sure she'll do a great job as well.

"Soph will be on tour with us anyway, so I can see that leadership group performing really well, they function really well as a group."

Given Australia have just 12 fit players in their one-day squad - quicks Lucy Hamilton (quad) and Darcie Brown

(back) were also unavailable due to injury - Flegler said reinforcements would be added once the current round of the Women's National Cricket League is completed. Hamilton has been named in the T20I squad after suffering a minor quad strain at Queensland training earlier this month, but Brown is set for a longer stint on the sidelines.

The 23-year-old was diagnosed with a disc injury following her return from the Australia A tour of India, where she played two T20s and a one-day, and could miss up to 10 weeks - which would rule the Strikers spearhead out of most, if not all, of Weber WBBL12.

"It just hasn't progressed," Flegler said. "We're going to have to shut her down for a few weeks initially, just offload her from bowling and running in particular, and then

it'll be a reload period after that ... so worst case scenario, it's actually 10 weeks, but we're hopeful that it improves quicker than that."

Flegler confirmed Australia were hopeful Brown could be in contention for the inaugural T20 Champions Trophy in India in February, with several spots in that squad potentially up for grabs.

The three T20Is against the White Ferns will be Australia's only games in the format prior to that tournament, with Flegler saying their dominant World Cup run in England earlier this would put them in good stead.

Canada Super 60 Season 2: Nicholas Pooran, David Wiese headline action-packed opening day

United News Of India

VANCOUVER, SEP 30 : West Indies star Nicholas Pooran and international all-rounder David Wiese headlined an action-packed opening day of Canada Super 60 Season 2 at BC Place, as Brampton Blitz, Toronto Sixers and Mississauga Masters began their men's campaigns with victories.

Pooran smashed 64 off 33 balls, including seven sixes, to power Toronto Sixers to a 16-run win over Montreal Royal Tigers, while Wiese featured for Mississauga Masters in their five-wicket victory over Vancouver Kings.

Defending champions Brampton Blitz also began their title defence with a three-wicket win, while Vancouver Warriors Women made a winning start to the expanded women's competition with

seven-wicket victory over Toronto Sixers

Women.

Brampton Blitz had to work for their first



Kuldeep joins elite club, second-fastest Indian to 200 ODI wickets



United News Of India

GUWAHATI, SEPT 30 :India's Kuldeep Yadav entered an elite club on Wednesday, becoming only the seventh Indian and the second-fastest Indian to complete 200 ODI wickets, reaching the landmark during the second ODI against the West Indies here.

Kuldeep achieved the feat in his 123rd ODI when he dismissed Keemo Paul for three in the 46th over. The left-arm wrist-spinner flighted the delivery on the stumps, prompting Paul to step out and attempt a lofted shot, but the ball caught the higher part of the bat and sailed straight to Virat Kohli at long-on.

Kohli made no mistake, completing the catch that gave Kuldeep his 200th ODI wicket.

Kuldeep had earlier claimed his first wicket of the innings by dismissing West Indies captain Shai Hope for 104. Hope, fresh from a century, failed to pick Kuldeep's googly and top-edged his attempted slog,

with Auqib Nabi taking a comfortable catch at third man.

The landmark puts Kuldeep behind only Mohammed Shami among Indian bowlers in terms of ODIs taken to reach 200 wickets. Shami achieved the feat in 104 matches, while Kuldeep reached it in 123. Ajit Agarkar took 133 ODIs, Zaheer Khan 144, and Anil Kumble and Javagal Srinath 147 each.

Kuldeep also became the third-fastest spinner in ODI history to 200 wickets in terms of deliveries, reaching the milestone in 6,319 balls. Only Pakistan's Saqlain Mushtaq, who took 5,451 balls, and Afghanistan's Rashid Khan, who needed 5,782, reached the landmark faster among spinners. Australia's Adam Zampa is next with 6,385 balls, followed by England's Adil Rashid (6,881) and Australia's Shane Warne (6,983). Kuldeep's milestone came after he had already established himself as one of India's principal limited-overs wicket-takers, with his 200th ODI victim arriving in the form of Paul.

Ticket ballot to go live for Men's Cricket World Cup 2027

United News Of India

DUBAI, SEP 30 Cricket fans around the world can take their first step towards the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027 in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, with the ticket ballot opening on October 1.

The ballot gives fans a fair opportunity to access tickets for the 14th edition of the sport's most anticipated tournament. Entry is free and is not first come, first served. All valid entries received between 1 October and 21 November 2026 will be considered equally, regardless of when in the ballot period they are submitted.

The ballot opens alongside the official match schedule announcement for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027, at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA) in Cape Town.

Representatives of the International Cricket Council (ICC), the Local Organising Committee (LOC), the three host nations and the wider cricket community will mark the occasion and celebrate the Men's Cricket World Cup's return to African soil for the first time in 23 years. This edition will feature 14 teams competing across 12 venues and 57 matches for cricket's most prestigious prize.

Fans may enter for as many matches as they wish, with each match treated as a separate entry.

From six-time Asian Champion to 20-year-old debutant: Indian Wrestlers make their mark at Asian Games

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, SEP 30 :With wrestling in full swing at the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, seven athletes from the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS) are representing India.

Across women's wrestling, freestyle and Greco-Roman, the contingent brings together a mix of experienced campaigners and first-time Asian Games athletes, all shaped by months of camps, competition and hard work.

The build-up was focused on technique, sharpness and learning from the best. The Indian squad trained together at national camps, with a Japanese coach working with the women's wrestlers,

while several members of the Greco-Roman group recently trained in Uzbekistan against some of the strongest wrestlers in Asia.

Among the women, Antim Panghal returns to the Asian Games with the experience of Hangzhou 2022 behind her and a clear sense of what is at stake.

Manisha Bhanwala will make her Asian

Games debut, having moved up from 62kg to 57kg and worked on wrestling from both stances.

"The camp has gone really well. Everyone is training with one mindset, to win a medal



for the country. The Asian Games come only once in four years, so we cannot waste this chance. IIS has been with me since 2022, and their support with physiotherapy, equipment and everything else has helped me arrive here ready," said Antim.

In the men's group, Sagar Jaglan will carry India's hopes in freestyle at 74kg, while the Greco-Roman squad is led by six-time Asian champion Sunil Kumar at 87kg.

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