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HEADLINES TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



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

6.8 Kg Banned Polythene Seized During Checking Drive in North Kashmir's Baramulla

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

BARAMULLA, OCT 2: Baramulla Police conducted a polythene checking drive at Wagoora Market, seizing 6.8 kilograms of banned polythene and imposing a fine of Rs 5,300, officials said.

An additional fine of Rs 200 was also imposed under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) during the enforcement drive.

The action assumes significance as indiscriminate use and disposal of polythene contributes to plastic pollution, with discarded plastic remaining in the environment for prolonged periods and posing risks to land and aquatic ecosystems. The Central Pollution Control Board has noted that mismanaged plastic waste, particularly single-use plastic, has emerged as a major environmental challenge and has adverse impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

“Truth Must Remain a Guiding Principle for Democracy” : LG Manoj Sinha

At Gandhi Jayanti Celebration, LG Calls For Responsible Use of Technology, Verification of Facts and Dialogue; Says Technology Must Remain Under Human Control

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 02: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today attended the Gandhi Jayanti celebration organised by the School Education Department in collaboration with the Department of Culture, and called upon youth to uphold truth, non-violence, dialogue and human values in an increasingly technology-driven world. He cautioned against misinformation and urged citizens to verify facts before reacting, stressing that “Satyameva Jayate” must remain a guiding principle for democracy.

The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today attended the Gandhi Jayanti Celebration organised by the School Education Department in collaboration with the Department of Culture. He extended heartfelt wishes to the citizens of Jammu Kashmir on the birth anniversary of



the Father of the Nation, Pujya Mahatma Gandhi and congratulated children participating in cultural programmes as well as the toppers of the district-level symposium on truth and non-violence.

The Lieutenant Governor also commended the Kashmiri rendition

of Bapu's bhajan by Shri Gulzar Ahmed and the Hindi performance by students of Institute of Music and Fine Arts and the skit presented by the Girls Higher Secondary School, Kothibag. Highlighting the significance of 2nd October, the

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

PM Modi Speaks to Injured Pilot, Hails Courage in Saving Passengers

PM commends Captain Smit Machchhar's presence of mind and commitment to passenger safety

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 02: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today interacted with Captain Smit Machchhar through a video call and commended his courage, patience and presence of mind in taking critical decisions while attempting to save passengers despite sustaining serious injuries. The Prime Minister wished him a speedy recovery and said the pilot's actions had brought pride to the country, while assuring him of the nation's support.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today interacted with Captain Smit Machchhar through a video call. He began the conversation

by inquiring about his health, assuring him that the entire country is praying for his recovery. He commended the pilot's courage, patience, and



swift presence of mind in taking critical decisions in a fraction of a second to save numerous lives. He pointed out that despite battling life and death and sustaining severe

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

CS Directs DCs to Ensure 100% AgriStack Coverage of Eligible Farmers

Land digitisation reaches all 20 districts as J&K advances Farmer IDs, ULPINs and integration of records with digital lending systems



HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 02: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo today directed Deputy Commissioners to ensure that no eligible farmer is left out of AgriStack or Farmer ID registration, while reviewing district-wise progress in land records digitisation across Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting was informed that all 20 districts, 207 tehsils and 6,818 villages have achieved 100 per cent digitisation of foundational land administrative units, with more than 57 lakh Khasras approved under AgriStack. : Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a

comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of digitisation of land records and implementation of AgriStack across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting has a particular focus on district-wise progress in creation of Farmer IDs, generation of Unique Land Parcel Identification Numbers (ULPINs), digitisation and integration of cadastral maps through Bhunaksha and proposed integration of digitised land records with RBI's Unified Lending Interface (ULI).

The meeting besides ACS, Finance; was attended by Secretary, Revenue; Divisional Commissioner,

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

CUK removes Chemistry HoD pending enquiry into complaint

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

GANDERBAL, OCT 02 : The Central

University of Kashmir (CUK) has removed the Head of its Chemistry Department, Dr. Chinnappan Bhaskar, and attached him to the Dean Academic Affairs office pending an enquiry into a complaint against him.

According to an order accessed news

agency Kashmir News Service (KNS), Dr. Bhaskar, an Associate Professor, has been relieved of all departmental and official assignments, including the headship, with immediate effect.

Pending enquiry into the complaint against Head, Department of Chemistry,

Dr. Chinnappan Bhaskar... is hereby attached with the office of the Dean Academic Affairs with immediate effect and is relieved from all the departmental/ official assignments, including Headship, read the order

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

J&K Notifies Compressed Bio-Gas Policy 2026 to Boost Clean Energy

Policy offers capital support, subsidised government land, deemed approvals and tax incentives to promote waste-to-energy projects and rural employment

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 02: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has notified the Compressed Bio-Gas Policy 2026 following approval by the Council of Ministers, with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah describing it as a major step towards clean energy, circular economy and converting organic waste into wealth. The policy provides capital support of up to 10 crore per project, nominal-rate government land, 60-day deemed approvals, SGST reimbursement and other incentives to promote CBG production.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has termed the Jammu and Kashmir Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) Policy 2026 a major step towards promoting clean energy, strengthening the circular economy and turning organic waste

into wealth in Jammu & Kashmir.

Following its approval by the Council of Ministers chaired by the Chief Minister, the Government has notified the Jammu and Kashmir Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) Policy 2026, providing a comprehensive



framework for converting organic waste into clean automotive fuel and organic fertiliser. The policy aims to promote investment in CBG production by facilitating the utilisation of diverse organic waste streams,

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

Ethanol Blending Will Diversify Agriculture : Nitin Gadkari

Union Minister says farmers can emerge as energy producers as India expands ethanol and biofuel use

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

PATNA, OCTOBER 01: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has said ethanol blending with petrol is aimed at diversifying the agriculture sector towards energy production, while rejecting claims that the practice is damaging vehicles. Addressing the Bihar Investor Summit, Gadkari said ethanol production from agricultural resources could create additional income opportunities for farmers and highlighted the potential of innovation, technology and research in developing alternative fuels. Union minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday debunked claims that blending ethanol with petrol was damaging motor vehicles, asserting that it facilitated diversification of the agriculture sector.

Addressing the inaugural session of the 'Bihar Investor Summit 2026: The Emerging Investment Destination

of India', Gadkari said that since 2022, 4 crore four-wheelers and 20 crore two-wheelers have been running on petrol mixed with ethanol.



"I challenge anybody to come up with the complaint that his or her vehicle has suffered damage on this account. Of course, those with vested interests may have some other story

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

IGP Kashmir Extends Gandhi Jayanti Greetings, Calls for Upholding Truth and Non-Violence

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCT 02 : Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Sujit Kumar, on Friday extended his greetings to the people on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, urging them to embrace the timeless values of truth, non-violence, peace and unity.

In his message, the IGP as per Kashmir News Service (KNS) said the occasion reminds us of the enduring principles championed by Mahatma Gandhi, inspiring efforts to build a just and resilient society.

He extends his greetings on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti. The occasion reminds us of the timeless values of truth, non-violence, peace and unity, inspiring

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

“Education Must Prepare Children for Life, Not Just Jobs”: Sakina Itoo

Education Minister stresses practical knowledge, critical thinking, creativity, values and responsible use of technology

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 02: Education Minister Sakina Itoo has called for an education system that prepares children with confidence,

not merely for examinations and employment but for life, responsibility and social participation. Speaking at a Gandhi Jayanti event at SKICC, she stressed the need to strengthen practical learning, critical thinking, creativity, teacher training and responsible use of technology while ensuring that students remain connected with Jammu and Kashmir's cultural traditions. : Education Minister



Sakina Itoo on Friday said the education system must prepare children not merely to secure jobs or score good marks in examinations, but to face life with confidence, responsibility, practical knowledge and strong values.

Addressing a gathering at the SKICC here in connection with the Gandhi Jayanti commemorative event, minister Itoo as per news agency Kashmir News Service (KNS) said the occasion was not merely about remembering a great personality but also an opportunity to reflect on how Gandhi's

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

J&K Govt Transfers 116 Engineers in Major Jal Shakti Reshuffle

Large-scale postings cover PHE Mechanical, irrigation, groundwater, flood control and allied divisions across Jammu and Kashmir



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, OCTOBER 02: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has ordered a major administrative reshuffle in the Jal Shakti Department, transferring and posting 116 engineers and technical officers across various divisions of the Union

Territory. The order covers postings in PHE Mechanical, irrigation, groundwater drilling, flood control, quality control and other units, with the officers directed to join their new places of posting forthwith without availing joining time.

The Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered a major administrative reshuffle in the Jal Shakti Department, transferring and posting 116 engineers, including Assistant Executive Engineers (Mechanical), across the Union Territory with immediate effect, officials said on Friday.

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

SKIMS Medical College Bemina Suspends Five Students, Interns Over Ragging

HT NEWS NETWORK:

SRINAGAR, OCT 2: The SKIMS Medical College Hospital, Bemina has suspended five MBBS students and interns for one week and imposed a fine of 10,000 on each following their reported involvement in a ragging incident at the institution.

An order issued by the Principal, SKIMS Medical College Bemina, states that the students/interns were involved in an incident of ragging which constituted a “gross violation” of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Anti-Ragging Regulations.

Those suspended include Shubham Verma and Sunil Verma from Batch 2023, Shahdev from Batch 2024, and interns Rupal Sental and Lavish Sharma from Batch 2021.

The action was taken on the recommendation of the institution's Anti-Ragging Committee. The five students/interns have been suspended from classes and

➤➤➤ MORE ON P02

RD&PR organises Special Gram Sabhas across 4,291 Panchayats of J&K

Focus on participatory planning, women, child protection, drug-free communities, inclusive grassroots development

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, October 2: The Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (RD&PR) today organised Special Gram Sabhas across all 4,291 Panchayats of the Union Territory to mark Gandhi Jayanti and observe Reform Utsav 2026. The Special Gram Sabhas witnessed enthusiastic participation from Deputy Commissioners, senior civil and departmental officers, Panchayat representatives, officials of line departments, field functionaries, women, youth and local residents. The initiative brought the administration and communities together to discuss local development priorities and strengthen transparent, inclusive and participatory governance at the grassroots level. Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Indu Kanwal Chib, Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma, Deputy Commissioners of Kulgam and Ramban, and Additional Deputy Commissioner Ramban participated in the proceedings in their respective districts and interacted with local communities. Director, Rural Development, Kashmir, Riyaz Ahmad Wani, participated in the Special Gram Sabha



held at Panchayat Choon in Budgam. Addressing the gathering, he said that the Gram Sabha is the most important platform for citizens to participate directly in local governance and influence the development of their villages. He said that Panchayat Development Plans must emerge from genuine consultation with the people and reflect the actual needs of

every section of society, particularly women, children, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other vulnerable groups. "Development planning cannot be confined to offices. It must begin in the Gram Sabha, where citizens identify their needs, discuss priorities and collectively decide the future course of their

Panchayat. Every voice must be heard, and no section of society should remain excluded from the planning and development process," Wani said.

He underlined that Special Gram Sabhas should not be treated merely as formal meetings but as effective forums for social accountability, public participation and responsive governance. Through the spirit of "Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas," the Special Gram Sabhas reinforced the importance of people-led planning, transparency, accountability and collective ownership of rural development. The Department reiterated that informed and participative Gram Sabhas are essential for building Sashakt Panchayats. Atmanirbhar Panchayats and Viksit Panchayats, contributing to the larger national endeavour of achieving Viksit Bharat. The Gram Sabhas also deliberated on the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan and the role of Panchayats, families, schools, youth groups and community institutions in preventing substance abuse. Citizens were sensitised about the social, economic and health consequences of drug addiction and the need for early intervention, counselling, rehabilitation and sustained community.

District Admin Pulwama celebrates Gandhi Jayanti at GDC Boys Pulwama

■ HT News Network

Pulwama, October 02: The District Administration Pulwama today celebrated Gandhi Jayanti at the Auditorium of Government Degree College for Boys, Pulwama, with a series of activities highlighting the ideals and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, including truth, non-violence, cleanliness, selfless service and community participation. The programme was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Pulwama, Gulzar Ahmad Bhat, Additional Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Ashraf, Principal GDC Boys Pulwama, Prof. Dr. Bashir Ahmad Sheikh, DSP Headquarters Pulwama, Showkat Ahmad Bhat, district officers, college faculty and students.

At the outset, the chief guest, ADDC Pulwama, along with



other officers and dignitaries, paid floral tributes at the portrait of Mahatma Gandhi as a mark of respect and remembrance, recalling his invaluable contribution to India's freedom struggle and his enduring philosophy of truth and non-violence. A plantation drive was also held in the college campus, during which the ADDC Pulwama, along with other officers, planted saplings, underlining the importance of environmental conservation, cleanliness and collective

responsibility towards building a greener and healthier society.

The main programme featured a series of cultural and educational presentations by students of different schools, depicting various aspects of Mahatma Gandhi's life, message and contribution to the freedom movement. Students of Government Upper Primary School Darsoo, Pulwama, presented a programme under the theme "Swachhata Hi Seva", highlighting the importance of cleanliness, sanitation, personal hygiene and responsible citizenship, in line with Gandhi's vision of a clean and healthy society. Students of Government Upper Primary School Wagam, Pulwama, presented a thematic programme on "Non-Violence", portraying Gandhi's philosophy of Ahimsa and his belief in peaceful resistance, tolerance and harmony.

Gandhi Jayanti celebrated at PMTC KVIC Pampore

■ HT News Network

Pulwama, October 02: The Production-cum-Marketing-Training Centre (PMTC) of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Pampore, today celebrated the 157th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi with enthusiasm and reverence at Gandhi Park, PMTC Pampore.

The programme was organised to commemorate the birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation and to highlight his enduring ideals of truth, non-violence, cleanliness, self-reliance and social responsibility.

A floral tribute was paid to Mahatma Gandhi by Principal/Assistant Director, PMTC KVIC Pampore, Anil Kumar Sharma, along with employees, trainees and other participants.

As part of the celebrations, a series of activities were organised, including live spinning and weaving demonstrations by women artisans, a cleanliness drive and a plantation drive.

Drawing and debate competitions were also conducted for school children to promote awareness about Gandhian values and principles.

A pledge-taking ceremony and a rally were also organised, during which participants reaffirmed their commitment to cleanliness,



social responsibility and the ideals propagated by Mahatma Gandhi.

The programme was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Awantipora, Mushtaq Ahmad Lone besides employees, trainees, women artisans, school children and other participants.

Speaking on the occasion, participants highlighted the continued relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's teachings in promoting cleanliness, self-reliance, rural development, sustainable livelihoods and social harmony.

The celebrations concluded with a renewed commitment to carry forward the values and principles championed by Mahatma Gandhi.

DC Kulgam presides over PPC, Reform Utsav and Special Gram Sabha at Pachgam Kund

■ Farooq Rather

Kulgam, October 02: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today presided over a People's Plan Campaign (PPC), Reform Utsav and Special Gram Sabha at Pachgam village of Kund block, with a focus on participatory planning, public involvement and effective implementation of various government initiatives.

A large number of local residents participated in the Gram Sabha and put forth their demands, developmental issues and suggestions before the Deputy Commissioner. The people expressed their gratitude to the DC for visiting the far-flung area and listening to their concerns.

The Gram Sabha deliberated upon participatory preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP), implementation of VB-G RAM G and convergence of various schemes to address local development priorities in a coordinated manner.

As part of Reform Utsav, detailed awareness was provided regarding VB-G



RAM G, Jal Jeevan Mission and Land Records, highlighting key reforms, citizen-centric services and measures aimed at improving the delivery of government

services.

DC directed the concerned officials to ensure that Ward Sabhas are conducted within the current month to facilitate

wider public participation in the planning process of VB-G RAM G. He also urged the local residents to take ownership of JJM assets and ensure their proper upkeep, protection and sustainable use and urged them to participate proactively in the upcoming ward sabhas and gram sabhas for the draft plan formulation.

On the occasion, a resolution was also passed under Bal Vivah Sankalp, reaffirming the community's commitment towards preventing child marriages and promoting awareness about the legal, social and developmental consequences of the practice. The program was attended by the Assistant Commissioner Development, Project Manager, DPMU, JJM, BDO Kund, Panchayat Secretary, technical officials and other concerned functionaries and local public.

Elsewhere, in all blocks of the district, similar nature of activities under People's Plan Campaign and Reform Utsav were conducted which were attended by local people, field functionaries of department under the supervision of BDOs and Designated Nodal Officers of the district administration.

DLSA Shopian observes Gandhi Jayanti with "Swachhata Hi Seva" Campaign at district Court Complex

■ Farooq Rather

Shopian, October 02: On the auspicious occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, the "Swachhata Hi Seva" campaign was celebrated today at the Court Complex, Shopian, under the directions of the Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority.

The event witnessed active participation from the Principal District and Sessions Judge (Chairman District Legal Services Authority) Shopian, Mehmood Ahmad Chowdhury, JMJC Waseem Mirza and ASMM Rameen Rashid.

The Chairman addressed the gathering and delivered a meaningful message emphasizing the importance of maintaining cleanliness in our surroundings. He urged all present to imbibe the spirit of cleanliness and make it an integral part of their daily lives, following the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi.

Chief LADC Shopian, Rafie Ahmad Ganie, also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the significance of the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign. He encouraged everyone to contribute towards a cleaner and healthier environment.



The campaign saw enthusiastic participation from all LADCs (Legal Aid Defense Counsels), PLVs (Para Legal Volunteers), court staff, DLSA staff and Municipality Sanitation workers who came together to support the noble cause of cleanliness and sanitation.

The event concluded with a pledge to continue working towards a cleaner and greener environment, reinforcing the timeless message of Mahatma Gandhi that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." The campaign saw enthusiastic participation from all LADCs (Legal Aid Defense Counsels), PLVs (Para Legal Volunteers), court staff, DLSA staff and Municipality Sanitation workers who came together to support the noble cause of cleanliness and sanitation.

HT EDITORIAL

Gandhi Ji's Message Must Live Beyond Gandhi Jayanti

Gandhi Jayanti is not merely an occasion to remember the Father of the Nation, pay floral tributes and repeat familiar words about truth and non-violence. It is an opportunity to ask ourselves whether the values for which Mahatma Gandhi lived and sacrificed are finding a place in the lives of present and future generations.

Gandhi J's message was fundamentally a message of peace, human dignity, tolerance and coexistence. He demonstrated that the strength of a nation does not lie only in its economic or technological progress, but also in the character of its people, the manner in which they treat one another and their ability to resolve differences without hatred and violence.

At a time when society is witnessing growing intolerance, aggressive discourse, misinformation and an increasing tendency to respond to disagreement with hostility, the relevance of Gandhi's philosophy has become even greater. Truth requires courage, while non-violence requires restraint. Both demand a sense of responsibility towards fellow citizens and towards society as a whole.

The greatest tribute to Gandhi Ji would therefore not be confined to ceremonies held on his birth anniversary. It would be to make his principles part of everyday life. Families, schools, educational institutions, community organisations and public institutions all have a collective responsibility to teach children that disagreement need not become hatred, criticism need not become abuse and strength need not be expressed through violence.

The younger generation is inheriting a world transformed by technology, rapid communication and unprecedented access to information. These developments offer enormous opportunities, but without values they can also deepen divisions and spread hostility at remarkable speed. Technology must therefore be accompanied by responsibility, empathy and respect for truth.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, while paying tribute to Gandhi on the occasion, recalled the enduring relevance of his ideals of truth and non-violence and emphasised the need to ensure that technological progress serves humanity and inclusivity. The larger message, however, extends beyond any particular speech or occasion: development can have lasting meaning only when it contributes to a peaceful, inclusive and dignified society.

India's future will ultimately be shaped not only by roads, industries, technology and economic growth, but by the values carried by its citizens. If children learn to respect human dignity, reject violence, speak the truth, accommodate differences and care for the weaker sections of society, the foundations of a stronger nation will be laid.

Gandhi Jayanti should therefore become a reminder of a collective responsibility. We owe future generations more than material prosperity. We owe them a society where peace is valued, differences are respected, truth is not compromised and every individual can live with dignity.

The most meaningful way to remember Gandhi is to ensure that his message does not remain confined to portraits, speeches and commemorative programmes. It must become a way of life. Only then can the dream of an India that is prosperous, peaceful, humane and worthy of being called the best place to live become a shared national endeavour.

Essence of Village Life: From Hardship to Hope



Sahil Manzoor

Village life has always had its own charm, simplicity and sense of community. However, behind the beauty of rural Kashmir, there were many challenges that people had to face only a decade ago. The difference between villages and cities was clearly visible. Today, with improvements in roads, electricity, drinking water, education and connectivity, many villages are witnessing a remarkable transformation.

Just ten years ago, electricity in many rural areas was so weak that bulbs produced only dim light. It was difficult to see clearly inside a room, even when the electricity was available. Electric poles were rare, and many households depended on temporary and unsafe wiring. Even a few hours of electricity brought immense happiness to villagers.

Road connectivity was another major challenge. Many roads were little more than dusty tracks, full of potholes and uneven surfaces. Even heavy buses moved slowly, shaking badly as they passed over the rough roads. Drivers

had to be extremely cautious, particularly on sharp turns and narrow stretches, because poor road conditions increased the risk of accidents.

The shortage of drinking water was equally

Alhamdulillah, the situation has changed considerably. Today, many remote households have access to improved water facilities. Initiatives such as the Jal Jeevan Mission have helped expand tap-water connections in rural



difficult, especially in the upper reaches. In some places, ten or more households depended on a single water point. Women had to walk long distances to collect water, often carrying heavy containers. During winter, when taps froze, they had no option but to rush to nearby springs to collect drinking water. Water had to be used very carefully, and the lack of adequate facilities often created unhygienic conditions and affected people's health.

Access to clean drinking water has brought considerable comfort to rural families and has reduced the burden of collecting water from distant sources.

At the same time, implementation needs continuous monitoring. In some areas, residents have raised concerns about poor-quality work, incomplete infrastructure and delays. There have also been complaints about labourers being asked to undertake digging work without

proper payment. Such issues should be addressed so that the benefits of public schemes reach the people for whom they are intended.

Road-development programmes, including the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, along with drainage systems, protection bunds and other infrastructure projects, have also brought significant changes to rural life. Many villages are now connected through better roads, and people can travel more easily for education, healthcare, employment and business. Improved connectivity has also helped rural communities connect with markets and tourist destinations.

Electricity access has similarly improved. However, the rising cost of electricity can still place a burden on economically weaker families. There is a need for appropriate support and relief mechanisms for households that struggle to pay their bills regularly. These changes made me reflect on the transformation taking place around us and encouraged me to write this article for a newspaper of the Kashmir Valley. I have always believed that physical fitness and sports can play an important role in shaping young people. When I was in Class 7, I developed an interest in bodybuilding. My aim was to remain healthy and physically active so that I would not feel exhausted or lethargic during school. During my school years, I participated in activities such as scouting, cricket and bodybuilding. These activities taught me discipline, confidence, teamwork and perseverance.

Sahil Manzoor Bhatti
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Preserving Kashmiri Shawls: Protecting a Living Cultural Heritage



Mohammad Hanief

Kashmiri shawls are far more than exquisite pieces of clothing. They are a living expression of Kashmir's cultural identity, artistic traditions and centuries-old craftsmanship. Woven with patience, embroidered with remarkable precision and enriched by designs that carry the memory of generations, the Kashmiri shawl has travelled far beyond the valleys of Kashmir to become a symbol of elegance and fine craftsmanship across the world. Yet, at a time when traditional crafts are confronting changing markets, mechanisation, imitation products and declining artisan participation, preserving the heritage of Kashmiri shawl-making has become an increasingly important cultural and economic responsibility.

The history of the Kashmiri shawl is deeply connected with the cultural exchanges that shaped Kashmir over centuries. Its development was influenced by Persian, Central Asian and Mughal traditions, particularly in the evolution of motifs, colours, weaving techniques and embroidery. Floral patterns, paisleys and elaborate arrangements became distinctive features of Kashmiri textiles. Under royal and aristocratic patronage, shawl-making gradually developed from a practical craft into a highly refined art form, attracting appreciation among rulers, nobles, travellers and connoisseurs.

By the medieval period, Kashmiri shawls had acquired considerable prestige. They were valued not only for warmth and lightness but also for their extraordinary designs and craftsmanship. Shawls became objects of honour, gifts of distinction and treasured possessions.



Their reputation eventually extended to international markets, establishing Kashmir as an important centre of luxury textile production.

Among the most celebrated traditions are Kani weaving and Sozni embroidery. Kani shawls are woven on traditional looms using small wooden bobbins known as kanis, while Sozni shawls are painstakingly embroidered with fine needles. The production of a highly intricate shawl can require months or even years of dedicated work. Designs such as floral patterns, paisleys and elaborate jaal arrangements demonstrate the extraordinary patience and artistic skill of Kashmiri craftsmen.

The materials themselves have historically contributed to the prestige of these shawls. Pashmina, obtained from the fine undercoat of specially adapted Himalayan and trans-Himalayan goats, is renowned for its softness, warmth and lightness. Shahtoosh, once regarded as an exceptionally luxurious fibre, came from the Tibetan antelope. However, because the Tibetan antelope is an endangered species and its hunting is prohibited, the trade in shahtoosh is illegal. Consequently, the preservation of Kashmiri shawl traditions today must be firmly aligned with wildlife protection and sustainable production. Pashmina and other lawful,

responsibly sourced fibres provide the appropriate path for sustaining the craft without compromising ecological values.

The contemporary situation, however, presents serious challenges. Traditional shawl-making is a labour-intensive occupation, while the modern market increasingly demands quick production, competitive prices and changing designs. Machine-made and imitation products can sometimes be sold in ways that make it difficult for consumers to distinguish them from genuinely handcrafted shawls. This affects not only the value of authentic products but also the livelihoods of artisans whose work requires exceptional skill and time.

The artisan is at the heart of this heritage. A shawl cannot be preserved merely by protecting an object kept in a museum or displayed in an exhibition. Its living tradition survives only when the knowledge, techniques and dignity of the artisan are protected. Many traditional skills are passed from one generation to another within families, but younger generations may hesitate to enter crafts that provide uncertain or inadequate economic returns. If this trend continues, some techniques that have survived for centuries could gradually disappear.

Preservation therefore has to go beyond cultural celebration. It must include better

economic opportunities for artisans, access to modern markets, skill development, design innovation and stronger recognition of genuine handmade products. Artisans should receive fair compensation for the time and expertise invested in their work. Consumers, too, have an important role to play by choosing authentic products and understanding the difference between handmade craftsmanship and mass-produced imitations.

There is also a growing need to connect traditional craftsmanship with contemporary fashion without compromising its identity. Kashmiri shawls have already demonstrated their versatility in modern wardrobes. Designers around the world continue to draw inspiration from their colours, textures and motifs. Carefully introducing contemporary patterns, lighter designs and new applications can help traditional craftsmanship reach younger consumers. Modernisation, however, should complement rather than erase the artistic vocabulary that makes Kashmiri shawls distinctive.

Sustainability has become another essential dimension of preservation. In an era increasingly conscious of environmental responsibility, the Kashmiri shawl industry has an opportunity to promote natural fibres, responsible sourcing, environmentally sensitive dyes and low-waste production methods. Traditional handcraft itself generally has a smaller industrial footprint than highly mechanised mass production. Supporting such practices can therefore contribute simultaneously to cultural preservation, artisan livelihoods and environmental responsibility.

Equally important is the need for greater awareness about geographical identity and authenticity.

The author is a senior analyst and environmentalist.
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Women and Opportunity: The Changing Gender Landscape of IITs and IIMs



Dr. Vijay Garg

For decades, the campuses of India's premier institutions were often seen as predominantly male spaces. The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) became symbols of engineering excellence, while the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) emerged as gateways to management, leadership and corporate careers. Women were present in both systems, but their representation was comparatively limited, particularly in some technical and quantitative disciplines.

That picture is gradually changing. More women are now entering prestigious higher-education institutions, competing successfully in demanding entrance examinations and moving into professional careers that were once heavily dominated by men. The changing gender landscape of IITs and IIMs is not simply a story about numbers. It reflects wider changes in aspirations, educational access, family attitudes, career choices and the participation of women in India's professional economy.

From the Classroom to the Boardroom
The journey of a woman entering an IIT or IIM does not end with admission. For many students, these institutions provide access to laboratories, research opportunities, internships, industry networks, entrepreneurship programmes and global exposure.

At IITs, women are increasingly visible across engineering, science, technology and interdisciplinary programmes. At IIMs, women have expanded their presence in management education and are preparing for careers in



consulting, finance, technology, marketing, entrepreneurship, public policy and other sectors.

This creates an important chain:
Education → Skills → Opportunity → Employment → Leadership.

When more women participate at every stage of this chain, the effect can extend beyond individual careers.

Why Is the Change Happening?
Several factors are contributing to the changing landscape.

First, awareness about professional education has increased. Families in towns and villages are increasingly familiar with competitive examinations, scholarships, coaching resources, online learning and career opportunities.

Second, digital education has reduced some traditional barriers. A student does not necessarily need to live in a major metropolitan city to access lectures, study material, test series, mentoring and information about competitive examinations.

Third, changing social expectations have encouraged more girls to consider careers in

engineering, management, science, technology and research.

Fourth, the visibility of successful women matters. When young students see women working as engineers, scientists, entrepreneurs, professors, administrators, managers and corporate leaders, professional success becomes more imaginable.

IITs: Changing the Engineering Classroom
Engineering education has historically had a gender imbalance, particularly in female branches of engineering. Increasing female participation therefore represents an important transformation.

Women entering IITs are not simply increasing the number of female students. They are participating in areas that shape the future—including artificial intelligence, computer science, biotechnology, electronics, renewable energy, mathematics, data science and other emerging fields.

The importance of this participation goes beyond employment. The technologies designed today influence healthcare, transportation, education, agriculture, finance and communication. Greater diversity among

students and professionals can bring a wider range of experiences and perspectives into these fields.

However, representation should not be measured only by admission figures. The more meaningful question is whether women receive equal opportunities to participate in research, leadership, internships, entrepreneurship and high-growth professional sectors.

IIMs: Women and the Changing Management Classroom

Management education has also witnessed significant changes in female participation.

Business schools are training future managers, entrepreneurs, consultants, policymakers and corporate leaders. As more women enter management programmes, the classroom becomes more representative of the society and workforce that these institutions serve.

Women graduates are increasingly entering sectors that were once perceived as predominantly male. They are building careers in finance, consulting, technology, consumer businesses, healthcare, education, startups and public administration.

The presence of women in management education can also influence younger generations. A girl who sees women leading companies or managing major projects may begin to regard leadership not as an exception but as a realistic career possibility.

Placement Packages Are Only One Part of the Story

Higher salary packages and strong placement opportunities naturally attract students toward premier institutions. But the value of IITs and IIMs should not be reduced to the highest salary package announced during a placement season.

The real achievement will not simply be seeing more women entering these institutions. It will be seeing them learn, lead, innovate, create businesses, conduct research, build institutions and shape India's future on equal terms.



Special Gram Sabhas held across Bandipora on Gandhi Jayanti under Reform Utsav

DC participates in Gram Sabhas, emphasises People-Centric Development

■ **HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 02: On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, Special Gram Sabhas were held across all Panchayats of district Bandipora as part of the Reform Utsav, highlighting the importance of empowered Panchayats, participatory governance and people-led development.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, visited several Panchayats, including Nadihal Panchayat C and Banyari-A, and participated in the programmes organised on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that the spirit of Gandhi Jayanti reminds everyone that meaningful change begins with collective participation and responsibility. She called for joint efforts towards building resilient Panchayats and prosperous villages.

At Nadihal, the DC interacted with the participants and listened to various issues raised by the residents. The demands included commissioning and



functionality of the Jal Jeevan Mission scheme, construction of a new building for the already sanctioned NTPHC, establishment of a Fire Service Station, installation of street lights and other local requirements.

The DC directed the concerned officers to note down the issues raised and assured the residents that their genuine demands would be taken up with the concerned departments for appropriate redressal.

Similarly, at Banyari-A, the DC interacted with residents

and heard their demands pertaining to shortage of staff in schools, medical facilities, electricity poles and wires, road connectivity and drinking water.

She assured the residents of necessary action on the genuine demands and issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned departments for early redressal of their basic needs.

The DC urged the residents to actively participate in the formulation of development plans for their respective areas, stressing that greater community involvement in

planning and implementation leads to more effective and sustainable outcomes.

She emphasised that there is always scope for citizens to participate in governance and contribute towards the proper implementation of government schemes, ensuring better and long-lasting results at the grassroots level.

Addressing the participants at Nadihal, the speakers highlighted the significance of Gandhi Jayanti as an appropriate occasion to celebrate Reform Utsav, recalling Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Gram Swaraj and the central role of villages in the development of the country.

The programme focused on strengthening Panchayats through greater autonomy, planned and convergent development, active participation of citizens in the Gram Sabha, transparent and accountable governance, and the creation of prosperous and self-reliant villages.

On the occasion, the participants were informed about the importance of Gram

Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP) in ensuring planned development by bringing together the requirements and priorities of local communities with the resources and schemes of different departments.

The programme also highlighted the vision of Viksit Bharat, Viksit Gram, with emphasis on strengthening rural infrastructure, water security, livelihood infrastructure and works related to disaster management and climate resilience. The importance of convergence between Panchayats and line departments for effective implementation of development works was also underlined.

The Gram Sabhas also stressed that meaningful public participation is essential for achieving sustainable development. Citizens were encouraged to actively participate in Gram Sabha proceedings, preparation of GPDPs, waste segregation and proper disposal, elimination of plastic use and effective implementation of government schemes.

AHWC Kenihama organises Health Camp under People's Plan Campaign

■ **HT News Network**

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 02: As part of the Reform Utsav, a nationwide citizen-driven governance campaign, being observed in conjunction with the People's Plan Campaign (PPC) 'Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas', an AYUSH Health Camp was organised today at Gram Sabha Kenihama under the thematic initiative "Healthy Village".

The camp was organised by the AYUSH Health and Wellness Centre (AHWC), Kenihama, under the supervision of District AYUSH Officer, Budgam, Dr. Muzaffar Hussain, and was conducted by Dr. Nusrat Bashir, Medical Officer, AHWC Kenihama.

A large number of local residents participated in the camp and availed themselves of free health check-ups, AYUSH healthcare services and medicines, including immunity-boosting preparations. The camp also facilitated Prakriti Parikshan of beneficiaries to familiarise them with their individual health constitution and the importance of adopting suitable health and wellness practices.

During the camp, Dr. Nusrat Bashir sensitised the participants and local residents about various preventive and promotive healthcare practices under the AYUSH system, with special emphasis on healthy living, Yoga and the importance of adopting a holistic approach to health and well-being.



On the occasion, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material highlighting the benefits of AYUSH systems, Prakriti Parikshan and healthy lifestyle practices was also displayed and distributed among the participants.

The initiative aimed at strengthening community-level healthcare delivery by extending AYUSH services to the grassroots and creating awareness about preventive healthcare. It also sought to encourage active public participation at the Gram Sabha level towards realising the objective of a "Healthy Village".

The programme reaffirmed the commitment of the AYUSH Department towards promoting accessible, preventive and community-oriented healthcare services and enhancing public awareness about traditional systems of medicine.

Gandhi Jayanti Celebrated at PMTC KVIC Pampore with Focus on Khadi, Swachhata and Self-Reliance

■ **Farooq Rather**

Pampore, October 2, 2026: The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, through PMTC KVIC Pampore, organised a series of programmes at the Training Centre, Pampore, to commemorate Gandhi Jayanti and promote the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, including truth, non-violence, cleanliness, Swadeshi, self-reliance and dignity of labour.

The programme was organised in line with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the guidance and call of KVIC Chairman Manoj Goyal, with an emphasis on taking the message of Khadi, Village Industries, employment generation and self-reliance to the grassroots level.

The Nationwide Seva Sankalp, Khadi Mahotsav-2026 is being conducted from September 17 to October 17, 2026, with a focus on public participation and promotion of Khadi and local products.



On the occasion, Principal PMTC KVIC Pampore Anil Kumar Sharma, officers from the District Administration Pulwama and Police Department, besides local residents, were present.

The celebrations witnessed participation of artisans, trainees, school children, staff members and members of the public. A live spinning demonstration by artisans was organised as a special attraction, showcasing the traditional

art of the charkha and highlighting the importance of Khadi as a means of livelihood and rural empowerment.

An exhibition of Khadi and Village Industries products was also organised, showcasing locally produced items and the skills and craftsmanship of local artisans. The exhibition highlighted the role of Khadi and village industries in promoting entrepreneurship, employment opportunities and economic self-reliance.

District Admin Kupwara holds Special Maha Gram Sabhas across district on Gandhi Jayanti

■ **HT News Network**



KUPWARA, OCTOBER 02: On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, District Administration Kupwara organised Special Maha Gram Sabhas across all Panchayats of the district under Reform Utsav and Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 campaign.

Special Gram Sabhas were held across Blocks including Teetwal, Tangdar, Vilgam, Drugmulla, Kupwara, Karnah and others. At Panchayats Dildar-A, Dildar-B, Hajinar in Block Tangdar, Bramri-B in Block Drugmulla and other panchayats of Block Teetwal and Vilgam, senior citizens, field functionaries of line departments and locals participated actively.

During the Gram Sabhas, participants were sensitised about various Government welfare schemes, Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules 2026, importance of waste segregation at source and new provisions under VB-GRAM G. The ideals and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi were also highlighted.

Swachhata Pledge was administered at all venues with a resolve to keep villages clean, green and garbage-free.

Meanwhile, a district-level function was also organised at Town Hall Kupwara by Municipal Council Kupwara. Officials and staff paid rich tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, took Swachhata Pledge and felicitated Swachhata workers for their contribution.

The programme was aimed at strengthening grassroots democracy, promoting cleanliness and ensuring saturation of government schemes at village level.

KU marks Gandhi Jayanti with floral tribute, art, cleanliness drive

■ **DR. AB QAYOOM**

Srinagar October 2: The University of Kashmir (KU) celebrated Gandhi Jayanti, paying tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and commemorating his enduring legacy of truth, non-violence, peace and cleanliness.

Organised by the varsity's Department of Students' Welfare (DSW), in collaboration with the Shri Pran Kishore Kaul Institute of Music and Fine Arts (IMFA), the event aimed to promote Gandhian values and sensitise students towards social responsibility, community service and environmental cleanliness.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, highlighted the continued relevance of Gandhi's philosophy and emphasised the role of educational institutions in nurturing values of peace and compassion among young people.

"Gandhian values of truth, non-violence and social service remain deeply relevant today.



Educational institutions have an important role in inspiring young people to imbibe these ideals and contribute towards building a peaceful, inclusive and responsible society," she said.

Registrar, KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, noted the significance of preserving and promoting Gandhi's legacy, noting that his ideals of peace, harmony and collective responsibility continue to inspire generations.

Controller of Examinations, KU, Prof. Majid Zaman Baba highlighted the importance of Gandhian ideals in everyday life and stressed on the need to promote discipline, integrity and social responsibility among

students.

Dean Students Welfare KU, Prof. Seema Singh, emphasised the importance of engaging students in activities that promote Gandhian values and encourage active participation in community welfare.

Students of IMFA bought Gandhi's ideals to life through creative expressions in painting and poster art. An open-air exhibition showcased their artistic interpretations, complemented by a cleanliness drive that translated Gandhian ideals of simplicity, service and cleanliness into action. The event was moderated by Cultural Officer DSW KU, Dr. Shahid Ali Khan.

One-Day Theatre Seminar Held at Unisoo, Kupwara

■ **GULFAM BARJI**

Kupwara/October 2: Azad Dramatic Cultural Club (ADCC) organised a one-day seminar on "Present Situation of Theatre in Kashmir" at

Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Unisoo, Kupwara. The programme was organised under the Guru-Shishya Parampara (Repertory Grant) Scheme of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. During the first session, Master Abdul Samad Mir, Masoom Ramzan and Ghulam Rasool Lone presented papers on the present scenario, challenges and prospects of theatre in Kashmir. Mohammad Javid Ahmad, Principal of Government Boys Higher Secondary



School, Unisoo, also attended the programme. The second session featured a theatre play presented by Vomedh, written by Master Abdul Samad Mir and directed by Ashaq Hussain Najar. The performance was appreciated by the audience. Speaking at the concluding session, renowned theatre activist Manzoor Ahmad Mir stressed the need to promote theatre activities and provide greater opportunities to young theatre practitioners.

KVK Kupwara Stresses Sustainable Farming for Future Generations

53 Farmers, 36 SKUAST-K Students Attend Natural Farming Training at Magam

■ **DR. AB QAYOOM**

Kupwara, Oct. 02: Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kupwara organised a comprehensive training programme on natural farming in Magam area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Wednesday, with the participation of 53 farmers and 36 students from Wadoora, SKUAST-K.

The programme was organised to create awareness among farmers and students about low-cost, sustainable and environmentally friendly farming practices and to encourage the adoption of farming methods that can reduce

dependence on costly external inputs. As part of the programme, the participating farmers visited the farm of progressive farmer Sobia, who has been trained and supported by KVK Kupwara. The exposure visit provided the participants an opportunity to observe the practical application of natural farming techniques and interact with a farmer successfully adopting such practices. Dr. G.M. Bhat, Head KVK Kupwara, delivered a detailed lecture on the concept, principles and importance of natural farming. He explained that natural farming is not merely a method of crop production but a holistic approach aimed at improving soil health, conserving natural

resources and making farming systems more sustainable.

Dr. Bhat highlighted four major pillars of natural farming: Save Soil, Save Water, Save Environment and Save Human Life. He stressed the importance of protecting soil structure, improving biological activity, conserving water, reducing chemical pollution, promoting biodiversity and producing safe and nutritious food. During the practical session, farmers were given hands-on demonstrations on the preparation and application of Beej Amrit, Jeev Amrit and Ghan Jeev Amrit.

The participants were explained the ingredients, preparation methods and application techniques, along



with their role in improving soil biological activity and supporting crop growth.

Dr. Bhat advised farmers to make maximum use of locally available farm resources and gradually reduce their dependence on costly external inputs. He said that natural farming, when adopted according to local conditions, can help reduce cultivation costs, improve resource-use efficiency and strengthen farm-based livelihoods.

He also stressed that agriculture should not remain merely a means of subsistence but should become a sustainable source of livelihood and income for rural households. He encouraged farmers, particularly

youth and women, to integrate natural farming with diversified activities such as horticulture, livestock, vegetable cultivation, mushroom production and other locally suitable enterprises.

Other scientific staff, including Dr. Shahid Hakim, Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad, Dr. Firdous Ahmad Raina and Dr. Faisal Nabi, also interacted with the farming community and shared technical information related to sustainable agricultural practices. Speaking on environmental protection, Dr. G.M. Bhat called for a complete ban on the use of polythene in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the Kashmir Valley. He urged the district administration Kupwara and Sub-Divisional

Administration Handwara to take effective measures to prevent construction activities on agricultural and horticultural land. Dr. Bhat said that protecting agricultural and horticultural land is essential for safeguarding the interests of future generations and maintaining the region's agricultural potential. The farmers actively participated in the practical demonstrations and interacted with KVK experts on various aspects of natural farming. The exposure visit to the progressive farmer's farm further strengthened their understanding through a real-life demonstration of the technologies promoted by KVK Kupwara.





Javid Dar calls for collective action to build clean, sustainable, self-reliant J&K

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 2: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today attended the culmination programme of Swachhata Hi Seva and the launch of Reforms Utsav (Gram Sabha), organised on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at Government Degree College, Tangmarg.

The programme was organised by the Directorate of Rural Sanitation, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, J&K.

The aim of the event was to reinforce the message of cleanliness, community participation and grassroots development.

MLA Gulmarg, Peerzada Farooq Ahmad Shah; Director General, Rural Sanitation, RD&PR, J&K, Anoo Malhotra; ACD Baramulla; Principal, Government Degree College Tangmarg; senior officers of the district administration and a large gathering from Tangmarg and adjoining areas were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Javid Ahmad Dar paid rich tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, recalling his unparalleled contribution to India's freedom struggle and his enduring vision of a society based on truth, non-violence, dignity of labour, cleanliness, self-reliance and service to humanity.

The Minister said that Gandhi's considered cleanliness not merely a personal habit but a collective social responsibility



and attached great importance to sanitation, dignity of labour and the upliftment of rural communities. He said Gandhi Ji's vision of Gram Swaraj, with empowered villages and active participation of people in local affairs, continues to hold great relevance in the present times. "Swachhata is life and cleanliness is not the responsibility of one department or one individual; it is a collective responsibility of society as a whole," Javid Dar said. He stressed the need for sustained public participation to keep villages, towns and public spaces clean.

He emphasised the importance of protecting water bodies, natural resources and the fragile environment of Jammu and Kashmir for future generations. He said J&K is blessed with exceptional natural beauty and abundant environmental resources, which impose an equally important responsibility on every citizen to protect and preserve them.

Referring to the launch of Reforms Utsav, the Minister said

that beginning the initiative on Gandhi Jayanti carries special significance as it seeks to further strengthen participatory governance at the grassroots level.

He said Gram Sabhas are an important instrument of grassroots democracy, providing citizens an opportunity to identify local priorities, deliberate upon developmental requirements and participate in planning interventions according to the specific needs of their communities.

Javid Dar said that effective rural development cannot be achieved through government efforts alone and called for greater ownership and participation of people in development and sanitation initiatives.

The Minister maintained that the vision can be translated into reality only when every citizen understands and fulfils their responsibility towards society, environment and the larger public good.

As part of the programme, a plantation drive, quiz competition and flag-off ceremony for sanitation workers were held, highlighting the importance of environmental conservation, awareness and dignity of sanitation work.

The Minister appreciated the contribution of sanitation workers and stressed that their services play a vital role in maintaining healthy and hygienic communities.

MLA Gulmarg, Peerzada Farooq Ahmad Shah, also addressed the gathering and highlighted the significance of cleanliness, community participation and sustainable rural development.

Later, the Minister visited Government Degree College Tangmarg and inspected the Multi-Sports Hall and Library-cum-Reading Room. He took stock of the facilities and infrastructure available for students and interacted with the college administration regarding the requirements and amenities being provided to the students.

DC Rajouri presides over Special Gram Sabha at Vibrant Village Pukharni under Reform Utsav

HT News Network



RAJOURI, OCTOBER 02: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma, today presided over a Special Gram Sabha under Reform Utsav at Pukharni, a Vibrant Village situated near LoC in Sub Division Nowshera, reaffirming the District Administration's commitment to inclusive development and strengthening grassroots governance in border areas. The Gram Sabha was attended by ADC Nowshera Pritam Lal Thapa, Akash Garg IAS, Nodal officer Agristack, ACD Sheraz Chowhan, BDO Nowshera, officers of various line departments, public representatives and local residents. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised that Gram Sabhas must function as effective platforms for direct interaction between the administration and the people, enabling villagers to identify their development priorities, raise local issues and actively participate in decisions concerning their Panchayats. He stressed that border villages deserve focused attention and that geographical location should not become a barrier to accessing quality public services, infrastructure and welfare benefits. Special emphasis was laid on the generation of Farmer IDs under the Government of India's AgriStack Mission. The Deputy Commissioner explained the importance of creating a digital identity for every eligible farmer to facilitate access to agricultural services and Government initiatives. He urged the farming community to come forward and register themselves under AgriStack. The concerned Revenue and Agriculture functionaries were directed to undertake Farmer ID generation on mission mode, conduct village-level mobilisation, assist farmers in completing the registration process and ensure that no eligible farmer remains uncovered.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified that the applicant namely Aijaz Ahmad lone F/o Arjumand Aijaz R/o Arath Tehsil NARBAL District BUDGAM applied for the issuance of BIRTH certificate of his daughter Arjumand Aijaz D/o Aijaz Ahmad Lone The applicant intends to register the Date of birth of her own as school records 25 / 07 / 2014 If any one has objection in this regard, he can approach concerned Births and Death authorities within the period of seven days after the publication of said Notice . No objection will be entertained .

29 / 09 / 2026

Sheikh-ul-Alam (R.A) Day Celebrated At Cardiff School Charar-i-Sharief; Late Ghulam Ahmad Dilbar's Final Book 'Naavi Taras Kya Demai' Released

Prof. Dr. Gazanfar Ali Calls For Preservation of Kashmir's Literary Heritage, Announces Free Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) Books For Private Schools

HT News Network

Budgam, 02 Oct, 2026: Sheikh-ul-Alam (R.A) Day was celebrated at The Cardiff School, Charar-i-Sharief, Budgam, to commemorate the spiritual and literary legacy of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (R.A), the revered Sufi saint, mystic and Kashmiri poet popularly known as Nund Rishi and Alamdar-e-Kashmir. The occasion also witnessed the release of "Naavi Taras Kya Demai," the final book by renowned Kashmiri poet and writer Late Ghulam Ahmad Dilbar, honouring his lasting contribution to Kashmiri language and literature.

The event brought together eminent literary personalities, scholars, educationists, religious scholars, media representatives, civil society members, teachers and students to reflect on the spiritual teachings of Sheikh-ul-Alam (R.A), the richness of Kashmiri language and literature and the enduring contribution of Late Ghulam Ahmad Dilbar to the region's literary heritage.

The programme highlighted the importance of preserving Kashmir's indigenous literary traditions and passing on its spiritual, cultural and intellectual legacy to future generations through educational institutions and literary platforms.

The event was graced by Prof. Dr. Gazanfar Ali, renowned doctor, writer and President of Markazi Adab Wa Sakafat Kashmir, as the Chief Guest. The Guests of Honour included Hujatul Islam Maulana Ghulam Hussain Mattoo, President of Muthahari Sakafati Center Kashmir & Founder of Payam Educational Academy, renowned poet writer G.N. Adfar Bilal Ahmad Bhat, President of the (Regd.) Jammu & Kashmir Private Schools Association (J&K-PSA); M. Syed Wani, General Secretary of J&K-PSA; Farooq Ahmad Wani, Editor-in-Chief of Brighter

value of Kashmir's Sufi literary tradition, Prof. Gazanfar Ali announced that he would



Kashmir; Sajad Hussain, Director of Payam Educational Academy; Dr. Owais Mattoo, Director of Cardiff School, District President Budgam and Director of Media and Communications, J&K-PSA; Hilal Ahmad Khan, District President J&K-PSA Shopian; Nazir Ahmad Mir, renowned sports personality; Sajad Hussain, Zonal President, B.K Pora and Inayat Gul, General Secretary of Markazi Adab Wa Sakafat Kashmir, Budgam, who hosted the programme.

Mohammad Iqbal Mattoo, son of Late Ghulam Ahmad Dilbar and the person associated with the publication of his father's final book, was also present. He acknowledged the support extended by Dr. Owais Mattoo and the management of Cardiff School in facilitating the book's release and ensuring that the literary work reached readers.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest Prof. Dr. Gazanfar Ali paid rich tributes to Late Ghulam Ahmad Dilbar, describing the preservation of Kashmiri literary heritage as a collective responsibility. He stressed the need to encourage students to read the works of Kashmir's great poets, scholars and spiritual personalities so that they could develop a deeper understanding of their roots, language and cultural identity.

Emphasising the educational value of Kashmir's Sufi literary tradition, Prof. Gazanfar Ali announced that he would

provide books on Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) free of cost to the J&K Private Schools Association for distribution among schools.

He observed that students should be familiar with the great personalities and intellectual traditions of their own land, alongside their knowledge of eminent personalities from other parts of the world. He underlined that making such literature available in school libraries would help younger generations appreciate the spiritual wisdom, moral teachings and literary excellence of Kashmir's revered figures.

His announcement was welcomed as an important initiative towards strengthening cultural education and encouraging reading habits among students.

Hujatul Islam Maulana Ghulam Hussain Mattoo, President of Muthahari Sakafati Center Kashmir and Founder of Payam Educational Academy, delivered a special address on the spiritual, moral and social philosophy of Sheikh-ul-Alam (R.A).

He highlighted the Sheikh-ul-Alam (R.A)'s extraordinary contribution to Kashmiri society through his poetry, spiritual teachings and emphasis on human values. He stressed that Sheikh-ul-Alam's message of righteousness, humility, compassion and moral responsibility continues to hold relevance in contemporary

society.

He also emphasised the role of educational institutions in introducing students to the teachings of great spiritual personalities and nurturing character, ethical awareness and respect for cultural traditions.

Renowned writer G.N. Adfar presented an insightful literary appreciation of the works and enduring legacies of Hazrat Sheikh-ul-Alam (R.A) and Late Ghulam Ahmad Dilbar. He highlighted their profound contributions to Kashmiri language and literature, reflecting on the depth of their thought, richness of poetic expression and lasting influence on Kashmir's spiritual, literary and cultural heritage.

He emphasised that literary gatherings and book-release ceremonies provide valuable opportunities to revisit the works of distinguished writers and preserve their contributions for future generations. He also stressed the need to document, publish and promote Kashmiri literary works so that they remain accessible to students, researchers and the wider reading community.

Bilal Ahmad Bhat, President of the (Regd.) Jammu & Kashmir Private Schools Association, appreciated Cardiff School for organising an event that brought together education, spirituality, literature and cultural awareness on a common platform.

Satish Sharma Visits Chhamb, Lays Foundation Stones for Development Projects, Inaugurates Works worth 13 Cr

HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 02: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology, Information Technology, ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, today undertook an extensive visit of the Chhamb Assembly Constituency and participated in a series of foundation-laying and inauguration programmes for development works worth 13 Cr. aimed at improving road connectivity, administrative infrastructure and essential public services.

The Minister visited Akhnoor, Barui Sangani, Kandi, Balla, Maira-Sather and Payain, where he laid foundation stones for various projects and inaugurated completed works. He also interacted with local residents and took feedback on developmental issues concerning the respective areas.

At Akhnoor, Satish Sharma laid the foundation stone for construction of the Tehsil Supply Officer (TSO) Building. The new infrastructure is aimed at strengthening the field-level administrative setup of the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department and facilitating better delivery of services to the public.

The Minister subsequently visited Bandi Mohalla, Barui Sangani, where he laid the foundation stone for construction of a road. The project is expected to improve local connectivity and provide easier access to the area.



At Kandi, Sharma laid the foundation stone for construction of the road from Middle School Kandi to Kandi East. He also laid the foundation stone for construction of a lane and culvert at Kandi, aimed at strengthening internal connectivity and facilitating smoother movement of residents.

At Mohalla Bachan Singh Balla, the Minister laid the foundation stone for construction of a link road, which will provide improved connectivity to the locality and adjoining areas. At Maira-Sather, the Minister inaugurated the blacktopping of the Maira-Sather Road.

Speaking on the occasion, Sharma said that quality road infrastructure is critical for socio-economic development and plays an important role in improving access to education, healthcare, markets and other essential services.

He directed the concerned executing agencies to ensure

adherence to prescribed quality standards and timely completion of ongoing works.

At Payain Panchayat Balgara, the Minister laid the foundation stone for construction of a link road at Mohalla ST, aimed at improving connectivity for the local population.

He later inaugurated various PHE development works at Payain, aimed at strengthening water infrastructure and improving delivery of essential services to the people.

The Minister stressed that public utility projects should be executed with due regard to quality, sustainability and the requirements of the local population.

During the visit, Sharma interacted with local residents, public representatives and officers and received feedback regarding roads, water supply, civic amenities and other developmental issues.

He directed the concerned

departments to maintain close coordination and regularly monitor the progress of works to ensure their timely completion and quality execution.

"Development works must translate into visible improvement in the lives of people. Every project undertaken with public funds should be completed within the stipulated timeframe and maintained properly so that people derive sustained benefits," the Minister said.

Satish Sharma called upon the officers and executing agencies to remain responsive to public concerns and undertake regular field visits to identify and resolve bottlenecks affecting development works.

The Minister also emphasised the need for effective inter-departmental coordination, stating that departments should work in a concerted manner to accelerate development and improve





ICC revamps Playing Conditions across Tests, ODIs and T20Is with effect from Oct 1

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 2 :The International Cricket Council (ICC) has introduced a series of changes to its Playing Conditions, covering time-wasting, ball specifications, fielding laws and several format-



specific regulations.

The changes came into effect for international series beginning on October 1 or later, while ongoing series will continue under the previous regulations. ICC men's cricket committee chair Sourav Ganguly said the changes were aimed at keeping the laws aligned with the modern game.

"There are some important changes to the Playing Conditions, including provisions relating to cricket balls, greater clarity around certain aspects of fielding and measures aimed at improving the pace of the

game.

"These changes have been carefully considered to ensure the Playing Conditions continue to reflect the needs of the modern game while maintaining its integrity and consistency," the former India skipper said.

According to the new rules, batters who are not ready to face the ball within the prescribed time will now receive a warning for the first offence and a final warning for the second. A third and every subsequent offence will result in five penalty runs for the fielding side. Repeated offences can also attract action under the Code of Conduct.

The new rules also suggested changes on the size and weight of balls. The ICC has introduced separate size and weight specifications for men's,

women's and junior cricket balls. Previously, manufacturers often used a single ball for women's and junior cricket, with limited tolerances permitted.

The definition of an overthrow has also been clarified. An overthrow is an attempt to direct the ball towards the stumps to prevent runs or effect a run-out, while a misfield does not qualify as an overthrow. Umpires will also have greater discretion in deciding when a ball is finally settled. It no longer necessarily has to be in the bowler's or wicketkeeper's hands.

For a fielder to be considered to have held the ball during a run-out or stumping, complete control is required. Merely touching the ball with a hand as it breaks the stumps will not be enough.

Pink balls may be used in daytime Tests on a trial basis if both teams agree before the match, primarily to reduce interruptions caused by bad light. Once agreed, the decision cannot be reversed during the Test.

According to the new rules, play will also no longer automatically end when a wicket falls during the final over of the day if the over remains incomplete and conditions are suitable. The remaining deliveries will instead be completed.

T20Is will now have a fixed 15-minute innings interval, which can be reduced to a minimum of 10 minutes if time has been lost. In ODIs and T20Is, the head coach or a designated member of the coaching staff can now enter the field during drinks intervals.

The wide-ball rule previously trialed in limited-overs cricket has also been made permanent. The batter's leg position at the point of delivery will be used as the reference for judging a wide, even if the batter subsequently moves across to the off side. UNI TB AAB

Saptak stays in medal hunt as India fifth in men's golf after second round at Asian Games

United News Of India

AICHI-NAGOYA, OCT 2 :Saptak Talwar kept India's medal hopes alive in men's golf, following up his opening-round 66 with a two-under 68 to sit tied seventh at the halfway stage of the Asian Games here on Thursday.

Talwar's six-under 134 left him just three shots off the pace at the par-70 Kasugai Country Club East Course, keeping the Indian firmly within striking distance with two rounds still to play.

The 27-year-old, currently leading the DP World PGTI Order of Merit, overcame three bogeys with five birdies in a fluctuating second round.

China's Wenyi Ding and Chinese Taipei's Wei-hsuan Wang shared the lead at nine-under 131, setting up a tightly packed leaderboard heading into the second half of the competition.

Talwar was the only Indian inside the top 10, but Veer Ahlawat and Yuvraj Sandhu also



made progress in the second round.

Ahlawat, the 2024 DP World PGTI Order of Merit champion, shot a three-under 68 after his opening 71 to move to one-under 139 and tied 16th. He carded five birdies, including three in succession, against three bogeys.

Abhishek's last-gasp strike sends India past Pak 4-3 into Asian Games hockey final



United News Of India

GIFU (JAPAN), OCT 2 :Abhishek struck with seconds remaining as India survived a stunning Pakistan fightback to win a seven-goal thriller 4-3 and storm into the men's hockey final of the Asian Games here on Thursday.

India looked to have the semifinal firmly in their grasp after captain Harmanpreet Singh's brace and Sukhjeet Singh's goal gave them a commanding 3-0 lead, but Pakistan refused to fold and fought back with three unanswered goals to level the contest, just when the match appeared destined for extra time, Abhishek produced the decisive moment,

finding the net in the dying seconds to send India into their second successive Asian Games final. Harmanpreet opened the scoring through a penalty corner in the first quarter before doubling India's advantage with another powerful drag-flick. Sukhjeet then made it 3-0 early in the second quarter following a well-worked

move. Pakistan, however, showed remarkable resilience.

Abu Mahmood pulled one back before Hannan Shahid reduced the deficit further. Waheed Rana then completed the comeback in the fourth quarter, making it 3-3 and leaving India staring at the prospect of a major semifinal upset.

India held their nerve in the closing stages and kept pushing for the winner. Abhishek eventually delivered, finding the net in the dying seconds to settle one of the most dramatic matches of the tournament. Harmanpreet's two goals took his tournament tally to 10, while India continued to underline their attacking strength after entering the knockout stage as the competition's highest scorers.

India had topped Pool A with five wins from five matches and a massive plus-45 goal difference. Their pool campaign included a 13-1 win over Indonesia, 16-1 demolition of Sri Lanka, 8-2 victory over South Korea, 2-0 win against Japan and 10-0 rout of Bangladesh.

Manu, Prince win India's first Asian Games silver in men's skiff

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 2 :India won their first Asian Games silver in men's skiff sailing on Thursday as Manu Francis and Prince Kurisinkal Noble finished runners-up in Aichi-Nagoya, adding to the country's medal tally in the event.

The Indian pair finished the nine-race series with 23 net points at the Kaiyoh Yacht Harbor, behind China's Liu Tian and Wen Zaiding, who retained their title with 16 points. Hong Kong China took bronze with 24 points.

The medal was India's second in the men's skiff at the Asian Games. Varun Thakkar and KC Ganapathy had earlier won bronze in the men's 49er at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta.

anu and Prince produced a strong showing across the nine races, winning Race 3 and finishing second in Races 1, 5 and 9. They accumulated 29 points in all, with their sixth-place finish in Race 8 discarded to leave them with a net score of 23.

Sailing follows a low-point scoring system, with a race winner receiving one point, the second-placed boat two and so on. The lowest overall score wins, with the worst result discarded after the prescribed number of races. Skiffs are small, light boats.

Asian Games: Japan's Kondo siblings strike gold as judo opens in Nagoya

United News Of India

NAGOYA (JAPAN), OCT 2 :Japanese siblings Mitsuki and Hayato Kondo won gold within half an hour of each other as judo began at the 2026 Asian Games on Wednesday, while China

Mitsuki, 21, set the family celebration in motion with an ippon victory over Kazakhstan's Abiba Abuzhakynova in the women's 48kg final. Her elder brother followed in the men's 60kg final against Kazakhstan's Yeldos Smetov, the 2024 Paris Olympic champion.

Hayato scored a yuko midway through the contest and added another in the closing minutes before surviving Smetov's late attack to secure Japan's second judo title of the day.

"Mitsuki is a strong player so I expected her to win. When I actually saw her accomplish that right

n front of me, it really pressed a switch in

me and got me fired-up. I was like 'All right, let's go.'" Hayato said.

The Kondo siblings claimed two of the four golds on offer at the Aichi International Arena.

Mongolia's Yolk Kazirbyek won the men's 66kg title, his country's first judo gold of the Games, while Uzbekistan's Sita Kadamboeva was crowned in the women's 52kg. China's Ma Yulin, beaten by Hayato Kondo in the quarterfinals, returned to face defending champion Yang Yung-wei of Chinese Taipei for the bronze.

Neither scored in regulation time. After a lengthy golden score contest, Ma countered Yang's attack for a waza-ari, ending the bout after 12 minutes and 49 seconds, according to Xinhua. China collected two more bronzes. Xue Ziyang beat Kazakhstan's Gusman Kyrgyzbayev in the bronze medal match of the men's 66kg division, while Xu Aoyu defeated Mongolia's Urantzaya Bayanmunkh in the women's 52kg category.



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