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HEADLINES

TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



Fresh Probe Ordered Against JE in 2021 Corruption Case

Government rejects earlier inquiry report and orders fresh departmental proceedings against Arshad Amin

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, OCTOBER 05: The Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered a fresh departmental inquiry against Junior Engineer Arshad Amin in connection with a 2021 corruption case after rejecting the findings of an earlier probe. Amin was arrested under the Prevention of Corruption Act, and the fresh inquiry has been entrusted to senior engineering officials with directions to submit their report within one month.

The Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered a fresh departmental inquiry against a Junior Engineer arrested in a 2021 corruption case, after rejecting an earlier probe report, officials said on Monday.

Arshad Amin, a resident of Thatthri in Doda district, was arrested under Section 7 of the

>>> MORE ON P02

LG Sinha Calls for Farmer-Centric Agricultural Technology

At ISAE convention, LG stresses affordable AI, robotics and greater opportunities for women innovators

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 05: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today called upon agricultural scientists, engineers and innovators to develop affordable technologies that can work in real farming conditions and benefit small and marginal farmers. Addressing the 60th Annual Convention of the Indian Society of Agricultural Engineers, co-hosted by SKUAST-Kashmir, he urged innovators to measure success by the tangible improvement their technologies bring to farmers' lives. The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today addressed the 60th Annual Convention of the Indian Society of Agricultural Engineers (ISAE), co-hosted by Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST), Kashmir. Extending a warm welcome to distinguished guests, the Lieutenant Governor congratulated ISAE



on completing six-decades of service to the nation and commended SKUAST-Kashmir for its pioneering role among India's leading agricultural universities.

In his remarks, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the significance of the convention's themes- Women-Led Engineering Innovations in Smart Farming

>>> MORE ON P02

Common Duct Policy Major Step Towards Modern Urban Infrastructure: Omar Abdullah

J&K policy aims to end repeated road digging through shared underground utility corridors and digital mapping

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 05: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has described the Jammu and Kashmir Common Duct Policy 2026 as a major step towards modernising urban infrastructure and improving utility management. The policy provides for shared underground corridors for power, water, telecom, gas, sewerage and digital networks, besides coordinated Right of Way clearances and digital mapping.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today described the Jammu and Kashmir Common Duct Policy 2026 as a major step towards modernising urban infrastructure, improving utility management and creating cleaner and more orderly cityscapes across Jammu and Kashmir.

Following approval by the Council of Ministers, the Government has notified the Jammu and



Kashmir Common Duct Policy 2026, establishing a framework for shared underground utility corridors for power, water, telecom, gas, sewerage and digital networks. The policy mandates integration of common ducts in the planning

>>> MORE ON P02

J&K Moves Towards Zero-Casualty Corridors

Chief Secretary reviews road safety measures as fatalities fall to 756 till mid-September 2026



HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 05: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo today directed agencies to accelerate measures aimed at developing zero-casualty corridors across Jammu and Kashmir while reviewing the Road Safety Action Plan. The meeting was informed that road fatalities had declined from 1,090 in 2024 to 756 till mid-September 2026, while total accidents also fell from 5,808 to 4,222. Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level meeting to take comprehensive stock of the Road Safety Action Plan, accident data, i-RAD, black spot rectification, trauma care, digital enforcement and other road safety interventions across the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by

Additional Chief Secretary, PWD; Principal Secretary, Home; Secretary, Transport Department; Inspector General of Police, Traffic; Transport Commissioner; Representatives from BRO; NHA; NHIDCL and other concerned senior officers.

The Chief Secretary directed all the executing agencies to accord top priority to the time-bound rectification of identified black spots and hazardous stretches, stressing that every identified engineering deficiency should be addressed through short- and long-term corrective measures.

He also enjoined upon all concerned to maintain sustained momentum on road safety interventions and

>>> MORE ON P02

Rain, Snow Likely in J&K From October 6

Thunderstorms and gusty winds expected as weather changes after prolonged dry spell

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 05: Weather conditions are expected to change across Jammu and Kashmir from October 6, with the Meteorological Centre Srinagar forecasting thunderstorms, gusty winds and rain at some places, while higher reaches may receive light snowfall. A more significant spell of rain and snowfall is likely between October 8 and 11 under the influence of a Western Disturbance. After a prolonged dry spell and unusually warm daytime temperatures, weather conditions are expected to change across Jammu and Kashmir from Tuesday, with the Meteorological Centre Srinagar forecasting thunderstorms and gusty winds at some places and the possibility of rain, while higher reaches may receive light snowfall.

According to the latest forecast issued by the Meteorological Centre Srinagar,

weather is expected to remain generally dry on Monday, Oct 5, before partly to generally cloudy conditions develop from Oct 6. Light rain and light snowfall over higher reaches are likely at a few places during the initial phase of the change.



The latest IMD warning indicates the possibility of thunderstorms, lightning and squall on Oct 6, followed by further thunderstorm and lightning activity on Oct 8 and from Oct 9 to 11. No warning has been issued for Oct 5.

>>> MORE ON P02

Rajnath Singh to Launch Navy's First Fleet Support Ship

Defence Minister to inaugurate upgraded HSL facilities and lay keel of fifth vessel in the series

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 05: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will on October 6 launch the Indian Navy's first Fleet Support Ship and lay the keel of the fifth vessel in the series at Hindustan Shipyard Limited in Visakhapatnam. He will also inaugurate an upgraded slipway and a 300-tonne Goliath crane, strengthening HSL's capacity to undertake larger shipbuilding projects.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will on Tuesday launch the Indian Navy's first Fleet Support Ship (FSS-1) and lay the keel of the fifth vessel in the series at Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Visakhapatnam.

According to defence spokesperson in Jammu, Singh will also inaugurate the upgraded Slipway-4 and a 300-tonne Goliath crane at the shipyard on October 6, according to the Ministry of Defence. The upgraded slipway, with an

extended length and higher load-bearing capacity, will enable HSL to build and launch vessels of up to 45,000 DWT, expanding its capacity to undertake



larger shipbuilding projects.

FSS-1 is the first of five Fleet Support Ships being built for the Indian Navy. The 43,500-tonne vessels are designed to replenish warships at sea, allowing them to remain

>>> MORE ON P02

Drug Control Team Inspects 11 Medical Stores in Dialgam; Two Licences Suspended

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

Anantnag, Oct 5: The Drug Control Department conducted an enforcement drive in Dialgam and adjoining areas of Anantnag district, inspecting 11 medical stores and checking compliance with drug licensing conditions and record-

keeping requirements.

During the inspection, officials detected violations at two establishments and suspended their licences for non-compliance. The action was taken against Haya Pharmacy, Dialgam, owned by Ajaz

Ahmad, and New Al Mukhtar Medical Store, Bon Dialgam, owned by Fayaz Ahmad.

The department said the inspections were aimed at ensuring that drug retailers maintain proper records, comply

>>> MORE ON P02

Two Arrested in Alleged Employment Fraud in Budgam

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

BUDGAM, OCT 5: Police have arrested two persons in connection with an alleged employment fraud in Budgam in which several job aspirants were reportedly duped through fabricated appointment letters and promises of government employment, SSP Budgam Hariprasad K.K. said during a press conference at Beerwah on Monday.

Briefing the media, the SSP said the accused have been identified as Advocate Jehangir Ahmad Dar, son of Ghulam Mohammad Dar of Ratsun, Beerwah, and Firdous Nabi of Zabgul, Beerwah, chairman of the Jammu Kashmir People's Front (JKPF). Both accused are presently being questioned

Govt Exploring Solution to Vocational Trainers' Issues : Tanvir Sadiq

NC leader says trainers may meet Health Minister; seeks early completion of daily wagers' regularisation report

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 05: National Conference chief spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq today said the government was exploring a solution to the issues of protesting vocational trainers and indicated that they may meet Health Minister Sakina Itoo. He also urged the government to expedite a pending report on regularisation of daily wagers, saying the Assembly's six-month deadline had already passed nearly a year ago.

National Conference chief spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq on Monday said the government is looking for a way to resolve the issues of protesting vocational trainers, even as he flagged that a report on regularisation of daily

wagers has not been completed even a year after the Assembly set a six-month deadline for it.

Speaking to news agency Kashmir News Service (KNS) MLA Zaidibai said the vocational trainers may be meeting the concerned minister and that a solution is being explored.

Look, the vocational trainers came here too. They may be meeting health minister Sakina Itoo today. We are looking for a way. In this too, you understand that when this happened, in what environment it happened," he said.

On the larger issue of daily wagers awaiting regularisation, the NC leader said the Assembly had given six months to submit a report but it remains incomplete after a year.

>>> MORE ON P02

Mohammad Amin Bhat Conferred Atiqa Bano Memorial Award-2026

Meeras Mahal Museum Honours Celebrated Kashmiri Playwright, Cultural Activist ; HT Editor-in-Chief Jehangir Bukhari Hails Recognition as a Tribute to Bhat's Lifelong Service to Kashmiri Language, Literature and Theatre



HT NEWS DESK

SOPORE, OCTOBER 5: Celebrated Kashmiri playwright, theatre director, author, television host and cultural activist Mohammad Amin Bhat has been conferred the prestigious Atiqa Bano Memorial Award-2026 for his outstanding

and sustained contribution to Kashmiri language, literature, theatre and the preservation of Jammu and Kashmir's cultural heritage.

The award was presented on Youme-Meeras on October 4 by Meeras Mahal Museum, Sopore, in association with Majlis-un-Nisa J&K, Sopore, in recognition of Bhat's contribution spanning more than four decades.

Born and brought up in Baramulla, Bhat began his artistic journey as a founder member of the Mehboob Cultural Society, Baramulla, and went on to establish

>>> MORE ON P02

Sajad Lone Raises Concerns Over EWS Certificates, JJM Delays

JKPC leader seeks review of regional disparity in EWS certificates and faster implementation of water schemes



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 05: Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Conference leader Sajad Gani Lone today raised concerns over governance, regional disparity in the issuance of EWS certificates and delays in Jal Jeevan Mission projects. He called for a review of the existing EWS criteria and urged authorities to prioritise completion of pending water-

>>> MORE ON P02

Dr Darakhshan inaugurates Sabaat Complex & High-tech Conference Hall at Chrar-e-Sharief

“Development is now synonymous with J&K Waqf Board, and this mission will continue”: Dr Andrabi

■ **HT News Network**

Chrar-e-Sharief (Budgam), October 5: Chairperson, J&K Waqf Board Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi today inaugurated the newly constructed Sabaat Complex and a High-tech Conference Hall at the revered Ziarat Sharif of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA) at Chrar-e-Sharief, Budgam. Dr Andrabi was accompanied by Waqf Board Members Dr Ghulam Nabi Haleem and Syed Mohammad Hussain Haqani, along with Ishiyah Mohiuddin, Tehsil-dar-cum-Executive Magistrate of the J&K Waqf Board. The newly constructed facilities mark a significant milestone in the ongoing development of Chrar-e-Sharief and reflect the J&K Waqf Board's continued focus on strengthening infrastructure at important religious and spiritual centres across Jammu & Kashmir. Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Dr Andrabi highlighted the importance of these infrastructure projects, stating that the development



of facilities at revered shrines is essential for improving arrangements for devotees and visitors while preserving the spiritual and cultural heritage of these historic places. “Development is now synonymous with the J&K Waqf Board, and this mission will continue. We are committed to transforming our religious institutions through planned infrastructure development,

improved facilities and better management. Our endeavour is to ensure that our revered shrines retain their spiritual sanctity while providing better amenities to the people,” Dr Andrabi said. Waqf Chairperson later convened a meetings with the Board authorities, local management and the eminent persons from the civil society of the town. She emphasized that Chrar-

e-Sharief holds immense spiritual, historical and cultural significance, being closely associated with the life and teachings of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA), the revered patron saint of Kashmir. She said that the development of the shrine and its associated infrastructure would contribute to enhancing facilities for devotees and strengthening the heritage value

of this important spiritual destination. Dr Andrabi reiterated that the Waqf Board would continue its development initiatives across Jammu & Kashmir with a focus on infrastructure upgradation, improved public amenities and the preservation of religious and cultural heritage. “The inauguration of the Sabaat Complex and Conference Hall adds to the ongoing infrastructure development initiatives of the J&K Waqf Board aimed at improving facilities at important shrines and religious institutions throughout the Union Territory,” said Waqf Chairperson. The engineering team headed by Executive Engineer Er. Qazi Mushtaq, besides other officers and officials including Incharge Officer Engineer Rehmatullah Bhat, Administrator Chrar-e-Sharief Mohammed Amin Dar, Assistant Executive Engineers Ghulam-e-Murtaza Shah and Amir Yaqoob & Assistant Engineer Javed Ahmad also were present in the inauguration ceremony.

DDC Kulgam visits Animal Birth Control Centre, reviews arrangements for operationalisation

■ **Farooq Rather**



KULGAM, OCTOBER 05: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today visited the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Centre at Kulgam and took stock of the arrangements being put in place for its operationalisation.

During the visit, the DDC inspected the various facilities at the centre and reviewed the preparedness with regard to infrastructure, equipment, sanitation, animal handling facilities and other essential arrangements required for commencing operations.

The DDC directed the concerned officers to ensure that all requisite arrangements are completed in a time-bound manner and that the centre is made fully functional with focus on maintaining proper hygiene, animal welfare and effective management of the facility.

The concerned officers briefed the DDC regarding the status of the arrangements and the steps being taken for early operationalisation of the centre. The Animal Birth Control Centre is aimed at facilitating scientific and humane management of the stray dog population through sterilisation and vaccination, thereby contributing towards a safer and cleaner environment in the district.

Food Safety Team conducts Inspection Drive in Anantnag

■ **Farooq Rather**

ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 05: The Food Safety Team, Anantnag, today conducted an inspection drive of food vendors across the district to check compliance with prescribed food safety standards and hygiene norms.

During the drive, the team specifically checked the use of synthetic food colours, use of printed newspapers for wrapping or serving food, repeated use of cooking oil, and overall sanitary and hygienic conditions at food establishments.

As part of the inspection, two food samples were procured and sent for detailed analysis at the laboratory. Further, six Food Business Operators (FBOs) were found violating various provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act and the Rules/Regulations.

Necessary action has been initiated against the erring FBOs under the relevant provisions of law. As part of the inspection, two food samples were procured and sent for detailed analysis at the laboratory. Further, six Food Business Operators (FBOs) were found violating various provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act and the Rules/Regulations.

3rd J&K International Conference on Breast and Allied Cancers begins at KU

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar Oct 05: The Department of Bioresources, University of Kashmir (KU), began its Third J&K International Conference on Breast and Allied Cancers at the Main Campus on Monday. The conference aims to bridge the gap between fundamental cancer research and clinical application by providing a platform for experts and researchers to deliberate on recent advances in precision oncology, cancer genomics, immunotherapy, artificial intelligence in oncology, early detection, biomarkers, drug discovery and personalized cancer care. The three-day conference is being organised in collaboration with the Breast Cancer Patients Benefit Foundation and is sponsored by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Anusandhan National Research



Foundation (ANRF), Ministry of Science & Technology, J&KST&IC and J&K Bank. The event brings together leading oncologists, surgeons, pathologists, molecular biologists, public health experts, data scientists and young researchers to exchange recent scientific findings and promote interdisciplinary collaborations. Delegates are participating both in-person and online.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration between basic

research and clinical practice in the fight against cancer. She stressed on the need to promote early detection, scientific innovation and accessible cancer care, particularly in the context of breast cancer. “Research must ultimately translate into better prevention, early detection and care for patients,” she said.

Vice-Chancellor, Gautam Buddha University, Prof. Rana Pratap, noted the growing importance of interdisciplinary and collaborative research in addressing complex health challenges. He highlighted the need for stronger linkages.

Semiconductor Push, Make in India Mark Major Milestones Under Modi Government: Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar, October 5: Rajya Sabha Member and BJP leader Engineer Ghulam Ali Khatana on Sunday highlighted India's growing capabilities in the semiconductor and manufacturing sectors, saying the developments under the Narendra Modi-led government are strengthening the country's position in advanced technology and manufacturing.

Khatana said India's semiconductor mission has progressed from announcements towards production, commercialisation and localisation. Semiconductor projects worth around 1.65 lakh crore are being developed across six states, while India accounts for nearly 20 per cent of the global chip-design and VLSI workforce.

He said the growth of the semiconductor ecosystem is creating opportunities for Indian engineers, researchers and technology companies and is strengthening the country's role in critical technology.

On Make in India, Khatana pointed to the performance of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes, which, according to the government figures cited in the report, have attracted 2.58 lakh crore investment, generated 23.79 lakh crore in production and sales, 15.53 lakh crore in exports and 14.57 lakh jobs. He also highlighted the expansion of India's electronics industry, with electronics production rising from 1.9 lakh crore to 13.11 lakh crore, while electronics exports increased from 38,000 crore to 4.24 lakh crore.



“These developments reflect the government's focus on Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat, while creating new opportunities in technology, manufacturing and innovation,” Khatana said.

He said the continued expansion of semiconductor manufacturing, electronics production and other strategic industries would further strengthen India's domestic industrial base and its integration with global technology and manufacturing supply chains.

DC Bandipora reviews progress of District Capex Budget 2026-27 Directs Time-Bound execution of Works

■ **HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 05: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Monday chaired a meeting at the Mini Secretariat to review the physical and financial progress of works under the District Capex Budget 2026-27 and directed concerned departments to accelerate execution and ensure optimal utilisation of available funds.

During the meeting, a comprehensive review of the sector-wise progress was undertaken on the basis of figures updated on the District Monitoring Portal. It was informed that a total of 2,087 works have been taken up under the District Capex Budget during 2026-27, including 1,966 new works and 120 ongoing works. Of these, 1,870 projects/works have been accorded Administrative Approval, while estimates for 96 works are pending.

The meeting was further informed that 1,503 works have been tendered and 1,195 projects/works have been allotted for execution. So far, 175 works have been completed, including 54 ongoing and 121 new works.

With regard to the financial progress,



an approved outlay of Rs 47.57 crore has been reported, against which funds amounting to Rs 22.46 crore are available. Expenditure of Rs 2.36 crore has been incurred so far, reflecting 5 per cent expenditure against the approved outlay and 11 per cent against the funds available. The DC directed all executing agencies

to expedite the tendering, allotment and execution of pending works and ensure that projects are completed within stipulated timelines without compromising on quality. She stressed the need for close monitoring of works at every stage and directed officers to identify and remove bottlenecks affecting implementation.

Emphasising efficient utilisation of public funds, the DC called upon the concerned departments to align physical progress with financial expenditure and ensure that available funds are utilised judiciously and in a timely manner. She also directed officers to keep the District Monitoring Portal updated with accurate and current figures, stating that portal-based progress should reflect the actual status on the ground.

The concerned officers were further directed to accord priority to works nearing completion and ensure regular field-level monitoring so that completed assets are made available to the public without unnecessary delay.

The meeting was attended by senior officers of the concerned engineering and development departments, including Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers, Assistant Commissioners and other district-level officers. The meeting was attended by senior officers of the concerned engineering and development departments, including Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers, Assistant Commissioners and other district-level officers.

MSME Ministry Field office Srinagar organises MDP on Business Marketing Management at Anantnag

■ **HT News Network**

ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 05: The Branch MSME Development & Facilitation Office (MSME-DFO), Srinagar, in collaboration with the District Industries Centre (DIC), Anantnag, today commenced a five-day Management Development Programme (MDP) on “Business Marketing Management” for entrepreneurs from the manufacturing and service sectors.

The programme is aimed at equipping Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with contemporary marketing knowledge and practical tools to strengthen their businesses, expand market outreach and compete effectively in an evolving business environment. Prof. Parvez Ahmad Mir, Head, CIED, IUST, attended the inaugural session as the Chief Guest, while the General Manager, DIC Anantnag, presided over the programme as the Guest of Honour.

Addressing the participants, Prof. Parvez Ahmad Mir provided detailed insights into the latest marketing scenarios and emerging trends, highlighting the growing opportunities available to MSMEs. He emphasised the need for enterprises to adopt innovative marketing approaches, leverage technology and build competitive capabilities so that MSMEs can



emerge as champions of economic growth and employment generation.

The General Manager, DIC Anantnag, while addressing the gathering, welcomed the initiative and termed such programmes a positive and timely step towards the development of the industrial sector. She stressed the importance of capacity building and continuous learning for entrepreneurs to enable them to effectively respond to changing market requirements.

Assistant Director, MSME-DFO Srinagar, Saheel Alaqband, in his keynote address, highlighted the importance of the five-day programme and its role in strengthening the managerial and marketing capabilities of MSME entrepreneurs. He also expressed gratitude to the General Manager, DIC Anantnag, and the DIC team for their support and cooperation in organising the programme.



DDC Kulgam reviews implementation of Mission YUVA

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, OCTOBER 05: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall, Kulgam to review the implementation and progress of Mission YUVA.

The meeting was held in connection with the visit of the GDI Team to the district for an assessment of Mission YUVA. A detailed review was undertaken of beneficiary-wise progress, applications under process, loan sanctions, bank linkages, enterprise establishment and the overall implementation of Mission YUVA.

The DC directed the concerned officers to ensure effective handholding of beneficiaries, expeditious disposal of pending cases and stronger coordination among SBDUs, BHDs, banks, JKEDI and other implementing agencies so that eligible youth receive timely financial and institutional support.

Emphasizing an outcome-



oriented approach, the DC stated that the success of Mission YUVA would be measured not merely

by the number of applications processed or loans sanctioned, but by the actual establishment

of viable enterprises, generation of sustainable livelihoods and creation of employment

opportunities for local youth.

Tejal Sharma, Officer from the GDI Team made a brief presentation highlighting the implementation status, achievements, progress of beneficiaries and key areas requiring further intervention.

As part of the review, Mission YUVA beneficiaries representing different stages of the entrepreneurial journey including fresh applicants, entrepreneurs who have already commenced their enterprises, and beneficiaries whose loans have been sanctioned and enterprises are under establishment, interacted with the GDI Team and shared their experiences, progress and challenges.

The meeting was attended by the ADDC, Altaf Ahmad Khan and other officers including Assistant Director, DE&CC Kulgam, DNO, JKEDI, Lead Bank Manager, Kulgam, SBDU/BHD members and other concerned officials associated with the implementation of Mission YUVA.

ADDC Kupwara chairs Development Review Meeting at Karnah

Emphasises accelerated execution, quality works and effective implementation of beneficiary-oriented schemes

■ **HT News Network**

KUPWARA, OCTOBER 05: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Kupwara, Ghulam Rasool today chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Sub-Divisional Headquarters, Karnah, to take stock of ongoing developmental initiatives and implementation of various Government schemes across the Sub-Division.

During the meeting, the ADDC conducted a detailed sector-wise review of developmental works being executed by PWD (R&B), PMGSY, Jal Shakti, KPDC, Rural Development Department, focusing on physical progress, timelines, quality of execution and bottlenecks affecting completion.

The ADDC directed the executing agencies to proactively accelerate the pace of works while maintaining prescribed quality standards and ensuring timely completion. He stressed regular field monitoring and close inter-departmental coordination for prompt resolution of issues impeding execution.

The meeting also reviewed implementation of various beneficiary-oriented schemes of Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry Departments. The concerned departments were directed to intensify awareness and outreach camps to ensure maximum coverage of eligible beneficiaries and effective delivery of scheme benefits at the grassroots level.

Special emphasis was laid on Farmer ID generation, with directions for coordinated efforts between the Revenue and Agriculture Departments to expedite the process and achieve the assigned targets within stipulated timelines.

Earlier, SDM Karnah, Mohd Raiyaz presented a detailed sector-wise presentation highlighting the status and progress of ongoing developmental works, implementation of Government schemes



and issues requiring intervention.

The meeting was attended by Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Tangdhar, Executive Engineer Hydraulics, Executive Engineer PMGSY Kupwara, Tehsildar Karnah, BMO Karnah, ZEOs, CDPO Tangdhar, representative of RDSS, AEE KPDC and other officers of the concerned departments.

Following the review meeting, the ADDC conducted spot inspections of various works under execution across Karnah to assess their progress and quality on the ground.

He inspected the ongoing OT works at SDH Tangdhar, NTPHC Hajinar, Naibat Tangdhar, construction of Revenue Hut and ongoing works at Naichayan. During the inspections, the ADDC interacted with the concerned officers and executing agencies and directed them to maintain quality of execution, adhere to stipulated timelines and expedite completion of the works so that the intended benefits reach the public at the earliest. The ADDC reiterated that developmental works and public welfare programmes should be monitored closely at the field level, with emphasis on timely execution, quality, accountability and tangible outcomes for the people of Karnah.

District-Level Workshop on Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan under VB-G RAM G organized at Kupwara

■ **HT News Network**



KUPWARA, OCTOBER 05: The Department of Rural Development & Panchayat Raj J&K in collaboration with District Administration Kupwara today organized a district-level one-day workshop on the Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan (VGPP) under the VB-G RAM G initiative, with the theme "From Planning to Action."

The workshop focused on strengthening grassroots development through effective, participatory and outcome-oriented Panchayat-level planning.

The workshop was chaired by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan, and Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Kupwara, Abdul Rasheed, Assistant Commissioner Panchayats, Abdul Rasheed Sheikh, State Level IEC Consultant RD&PR, Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Khan, Block Development Officers, Programme Officers, Panchayat Secretaries and other field functionaries also participated in the proceedings.

Addressing the participants, the officers underscored the importance of participatory governance, robust grassroots-level planning and effective implementation of development initiatives at the Panchayat level. They stressed the need for coordinated efforts among Rural Development functionaries and Line Departments to ensure systematic planning, efficient execution and timely monitoring of developmental works.

The workshop also focused on strengthening the Gram Panchayat development planning process and enhancing the capacity of field-level functionaries to effectively translate approved development plans into tangible outcomes on the ground. The programme provided a platform for knowledge-sharing, importance of Gram Sabha, permissible works under VB G RAM G and its planning and convergence for inclusive and sustainable rural development.

VC JKLCMA conducts inspection of Dole Demb area

Assesses scope for beautification, development of site

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 05: Vice Chairman (VC), Jammu and Kashmir Lake Conservation and Management Authority (JKLCMA), Khurshid Ahmad Shah, today conducted an extensive inspection of the Dole Demb area to review the existing condition of the water body and its surrounding areas and assess the scope for beautification and development of the site. The Vice Chairman was accompanied by the Superintending Engineer, Collector Land Acquisition, FA&CAO, Executive Engineers of Lake Division 1st and Lake Division 2nd, Technical Officer, Assistant Executive Engineers, Junior Engineers, and other officers and officials of the Authority. Emphasizing the importance of developing the site in a planned and sustainable manner, the Vice Chairman directed that the beautification proposal should incorporate modern landscaping, suitable plantation, improved pathways,



aesthetic features, and other necessary amenities. He stressed that the area should be developed as a state of the art public space while maintaining the ecological character of the water body. He observed that the development of Dole Demb would also contribute towards enhancing the overall tourism potential of the area and attract more visitors to Dal Lake.

The Vice Chairman directed the concerned officers to immediately undertake bush cutting along the site and carry out other necessary site clearance works to improve

the overall appearance and accessibility of the area, so that further dredging and restoration works in the Dole Demb area can be taken up. He further instructed the Engineering Wing to prepare detailed estimates for the proposed beautification and development works at Dole Demb. The Vice Chairman further directed the concerned officers to ensure close coordination among the Engineering, Revenue, and field wings so that the proposed works are planned and executed in a time bound manner. He emphasized that the development should focus

DC Samba reviews progress of Mission YUVA

■ **HT News Network**

SAMBA, OCTOBER 05: Deputy Commissioner

Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a meeting to review the progress and implementation of Mission YUVA in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner undertook a detailed review, with particular focus on applications received, cases sanctioned and loans disbursed to eligible beneficiaries. She directed the concerned officers and field functionaries to intensify outreach and awareness activities to substantially increase the number

of applications under the Mission. She emphasized the need for greater awareness among aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly at the grassroots level, to ensure that eligible youth and prospective entrepreneurs are able to avail the benefits of the scheme. She further directed the concerned departments, banks and field-level teams to work in close coordination for expeditious processing and disposal of cases, with special focus on enhancing the number of sanctioned

and disbursed cases. The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for a result-oriented and coordinated approach by all stakeholders towards achieving the objectives of Mission YUVA and facilitating aspiring entrepreneurs in establishing sustainable self-employment and livelihood ventures. The meeting was attended by ADDC Champa Devi, ACR, GM DIC, SDMs of Vijaypur and Ghagwal, AD Employment, Cluster Head J&K Bank, officers of NRLM.

DC Budgam visits Charar-i-Sharief, reviews arrangements for Urs

Directs departments to ensure smooth facilities for devotees

■ **HT News Network**

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 05: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today visited Charar-i-Sharief to review arrangements for the forthcoming Urs and facilities for devotees.

The Deputy Commissioner paid obeisance at the revered shrine of Sheikh Nooruddin Noorani (RA) and inspected the ongoing development works, including the under-construction Guest House comprising 12 rooms and two halls.

During visit, the DC interacted with local residents

and stakeholders and assured them that their genuine concerns would be examined on priority.

The Deputy Commissioner subsequently chaired a meeting at Town Hall Charar-i-Sharief with concerned officers to review preparations for the Urs. He directed PDD to ensure uninterrupted power supply and keep backup arrangements in place. Officers from Jal Shakti Department were instructed to ensure adequate water supply and availability of water tankers.

For seamless transport facility, the ARTO was directed to ensure adequate public transport and proper parking arrangements to facilitate smooth traffic movement. CMO

Budgam was asked to establish a medical camp near the shrine.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed concerned Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Charar-i-Sharief, to ensure cleanliness, sanitation and proper illumination in the town and around the shrine.

Similarly, the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department was directed to ensure timely distribution of ration of October month.

While the Food Safety Department was asked to intensify market inspections and prevent adulteration, overcharging and sale of substandard food items.

The Deputy Commissioner



stressed close coordination among all concerned departments and directed

officers to remain available on the ground and ensure prompt redressal of issues during the Urs.

He reiterated that all arrangements should be completed well in advance to ensure a safe, peaceful and hassle-free pilgrimage for devotees.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner also visited the revered shrine of Syed Mohammad Ali Aali Balkhi (RA), Pakherpora and paid his obeisance. He took stock of ongoing works and stressed on their timely completion.

The DC was accompanied by SDM Chadoora, CMO, concerned R&B, PHE and KPDC

officers, Tehsildar Charar-i-Sharief, ARTO, EO MC Charar-i-Sharief and other officers. The Deputy Commissioner subsequently chaired a meeting at Town Hall Charar-i-Sharief with concerned officers to review preparations for the Urs. He directed PDD to ensure uninterrupted power supply and keep backup arrangements in place. Officers from Jal Shakti Department were instructed to ensure adequate water supply and availability of water tankers.

For seamless transport facility, the ARTO was directed to ensure adequate public transport and proper parking arrangements to facilitate smooth traffic movement.



HT EDITORIAL

A Bus Pass Is Not Enough : J&K Must Make Inclusion a Reality

A society is judged not by how it treats the strongest among its citizens, but by how easily its most vulnerable can move through everyday life.

The Jammu and Kashmir Government's decision to provide free travel to persons with disabilities on designated public transport services is therefore more than a concession. It is a recognition that the ability to move from one place to another is closely linked to dignity, independence and equal opportunity.

But there is a larger question that cannot be ignored: What happens when the bus journey ends?

A person may be allowed to travel without paying a fare, but what if the pavement outside the bus stop is broken? What if the government office has stairs but no ramp? What if a hospital has no accessible toilet? What if a school building cannot accommodate a wheelchair? What if a qualified person reaches an interview but finds the workplace inaccessible?

These are not isolated inconveniences. Collectively, they can determine whether a person with a disability is able to participate in society on equal terms.

Jammu and Kashmir now needs to move from a welfare-oriented approach to a broader culture of accessibility. New infrastructure should be designed from the beginning with the needs of persons with disabilities in mind. Accessibility should not be something added after construction, following complaints or inspections. It should be built into the blueprint itself.

The same principle should apply to transport. Accessible buses, safe boarding facilities, designated seating, audible announcements and trained personnel can make public transport genuinely usable. Technology can also help through better passenger information systems and accessible digital services.

But infrastructure alone will not solve the problem.

Education remains one of the most powerful instruments of independence. Schools, colleges and universities must be equipped to accommodate students with different physical and sensory needs. Teachers and administrators should also receive appropriate awareness and training so that disability does not become a reason for exclusion.

Employment is equally important. A person with a disability does not merely need assistance; they need opportunity. Skill development, accessible workplaces, fair recruitment and effective implementation of employment-related provisions can help shift the focus from dependence to economic participation.

Jammu and Kashmir must also look beyond its major towns. For people living in remote and rural areas, access to rehabilitation, assistive devices, specialised services and government schemes can be far more difficult. An inclusive policy that does not reach the last village remains incomplete.

The administration should therefore consider establishing a clear accessibility framework with measurable standards and accountability. Departments responsible for roads, buildings, education, health, transport and urban development should work towards common accessibility goals rather than treating disability as the responsibility of a single department.

There is also a need to listen more closely to the people these policies are intended to serve. Regular consultations with persons with disabilities and representative organisations can reveal practical problems that may never appear in official files.

Free travel can open a door. But inclusion requires that there are doors to enter, paths to reach them and opportunities waiting on the other side.

The real ambition for Jammu and Kashmir should therefore be much larger than subsidised or free transportation. It should be the creation of an environment where disability does not automatically mean dependence, isolation or restricted opportunity.

The destination should not simply be free travel. The destination should be equal access to life itself.



Sahil Manzoor

Today, we often see books being sold on footpaths, while shoes and other things are displayed in beautifully decorated shops. This makes us think: Is this progress or destruction of our society?

Books are not ordinary things. They are a source of knowledge, wisdom, and education. Whatever the world has achieved today is largely because of knowledge and education. Educated people have contributed greatly to the development of society.

Therefore, books deserve respect and a special place in our homes. We should encourage people to buy books and develop home libraries for themselves and their children. We can keep a separate space for books with proper shelves, good lighting, and comfortable furniture. A beautiful home library can attract children and encourage them to read books instead of spending too much time playing games or using smartphones.

I have seen many people who have a strong



interest in learning. They study at home whenever they get free time and also encourage their children to study. Home libraries can bring a positive change in our families and may even start a revolution in our reading habits.

We should keep different types of books, such as religious books, storybooks, books on reasoning, poetry, economics, geography, history, science, and other subjects. In this way, every family member can find something interesting to read instead of wasting time.

The Importance of Public Libraries

The public can also play an important role in changing society. Libraries play a vital role in the intellectual, moral, and professional development of society.

In today's fast-changing world, knowledge has become one of the most important tools for personal development and national progress.

Therefore, it is important to establish well-equipped public libraries at the district and tehsil levels across the Kashmir Valley. These libraries should ideally provide long working hours, including 24x7 access where practical and feasible, especially for students preparing for competitive examinations.

Modern libraries should have updated books, digital resources, computers, internet facilities, printing services, newspapers, journals, and trained librarians. A good public library can become a strong center for learning, innovation, and success. Nowadays, public libraries have become an important demand among students and competitive-exam aspirants. Many young people are asking for better study facilities. Libraries can provide a common place where students from different backgrounds can sit together, study, share ideas, and work

towards their goals.

Education is the key to empowerment, and libraries support education by making knowledge accessible to everyone.

Education and Modern Technology
Today's world is full of advanced technology. Artificial intelligence, digital learning platforms, smartphones, computers, and modern machines have changed the way we learn and work.

When almost every sector is moving forward with technology, education should also keep pace with modern developments. Libraries should therefore combine traditional books with digital learning facilities.

As the famous saying goes, "Education is the most powerful weapon which can change the world."

Education does not discriminate between rich and poor. It gives everyone an opportunity to learn, grow, and improve their lives.

If we understand the needs of the present time, we should not hesitate to introduce meaningful changes. The demand for better public libraries should be seriously considered by the authorities. Education is important not only for an individual's personal development but also for the progress of a nation. Strong education systems have helped the world produce scientists, doctors, engineers, teachers, writers, and innovators. Libraries have always been silent but important supporters of this progress.

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Service while alive, this is the true Shraddha

If parents are not respected and supported in their lifetime, then the rituals after death are incomplete.



Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

In Indian culture, parents are considered divine. Our values reflect a world of love, sacrifice, and compassion at the feet of a mother, while a father's life is marked by hard work, responsibility, and protection. Parents put aside their own desires for their children's future. They sacrifice their own needs to fulfill their own. Their happiness resides in their children's smiles, and their lives are spent nurturing their families. But the irony is that at the very age when they need the most love, respect, and support, many elderly people are neglected in their own homes.

In our society, there is a tradition of remembering our ancestors during Shraddha, Tarpan, and Pitru Paksha. People reverently offer food, give donations, and perform religious rituals. This tradition symbolizes our cultural memory and gratitude to our ancestors. But we must ask ourselves one question: is the meaning of this reverence limited only to the rituals performed after death? If we hesitate to offer our parents two meals a day, a few words of respect, and affection while they are alive, how can a grand feast after their death conceal our insensitivity?

Today, economic prosperity has increased in families, but in many places, emotional prosperity seems to be declining. Amidst the hustle and bustle of modern life, jobs, businesses, and personal ambitions, finding time for parents is becoming increasingly difficult. Many elderly people feel lonely even while living at home. Fathers who toiled to build their homes are

now seen as obstacles in their sons' busy lives in old age. Mothers who suppressed their hunger to feed their children are sometimes neglected in their own homes.

The most painful situation is when living

Therefore, in old age, their greatest right is not property, but respect and belonging.

The growing need for nursing homes also forces us to reflect. Not every nursing home is a symbol of a bad system. Sometimes,



parents are taunted, their needs are considered a burden, and their feelings are disregarded. After death, long queues form to offer flowers to their portraits. Grand celebrations are held for those with whom we never had time to interact during their lifetime. This contradiction is not just a family problem, but also a serious question mark on our social sensitivity.

A father's life is often a story of struggle for his family. Within limited resources, he cared for his children's education, marriage, housing, and future. He fulfilled his own dreams, putting his own on hold. A mother also devoted a significant portion of her life to the family's needs. Staying up all night during illness, rejoicing at the smallest joys of her children, and standing as a shield during difficult times—parental love cannot be measured in monetary terms.

circumstances dictate that the elderly require specialized care. But when choosing a nursing home because one's own children lack the time, patience, or respect for their parents, the problem becomes serious. Their emotional displacement from the home they built with their own hard work is a test of our family values.

The true meaning of Shraddha lies not just in food and charity, but in devotion. And devotion should not only be for the dead, but also for living parents. Feeding crows, donating to Brahmins, and performing religious rituals may be important in their own right, but if a mother is hungry at home, a father is waiting for medicine, and children are unwilling to even speak to them, we must reconsider the meaning of our religion and karma.

Serving parents isn't a favor. It's not even

an attempt to fully repay a debt no child can ever repay. It's simply a duty—a human duty, a familial duty, and a moral duty. Sitting with them for a while, listening to them, taking care of their medications, showing them respect, understanding their likes and dislikes, and sharing their loneliness—these small acts can become a great joy for them.

We must impart these same values to our children. They will learn what they see us do. If children see their grandparents respected, they too will develop compassion for the elderly. Family isn't just about living under one roof; it's the feeling where a vulnerable person first finds support.

It's easy to offer flowers after death, but difficult to wipe someone's tears while they're still alive. Putting a garland on a photo is easy, but sitting for a few minutes every day and listening to your parents is the true test. A greater virtue than hosting a feast is to respectfully feed your living parents. Before searching for God at pilgrimage sites, it's important to recognize the two faces at home who gave meaning to our lives.

Therefore, Shraddha and Pitru Paksha should not only remind us of our departed ancestors, but also remind us of our responsibility towards our living parents. Before offering Pind Daan, there should be a gift of love, before rituals, there should be compassion, and before devotion, there should be service. Because at the feet of our parents resides not only a pilgrimage site, but the world of our own roots.

Honoring them while they're alive is the greatest tribute. Bringing joy to their eyes while they're alive is the greatest offering. And sharing their loneliness while they're alive is no greater act of righteousness.

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

Exploring the Inner Self and the Outer Universe



Dr. Vijay Garg

Human curiosity has always moved in two directions: inward and outward. We look outward to understand the Earth, the stars, galaxies, planets and the vast universe. At the same time, we look inward to understand our thoughts, emotions, memories, consciousness, dreams and identity.

The two journeys may appear completely different, but together they represent one of humanity's oldest quests—the desire to understand who we are and where we belong in the universe.

The Universe Outside Us
When we look at the night sky, we see only a small part of an enormous cosmic reality. Modern astronomy has shown that the universe contains billions of galaxies, and each galaxy contains enormous numbers of stars. Our Earth is a tiny planet orbiting an ordinary star in one galaxy.

Yet this small planet has produced something remarkable: life capable of looking at the universe and asking questions about its origin.

Telescopes have allowed us to observe distant galaxies, stars and planets. Space missions have explored the Moon, Mars and other celestial bodies. Scientists continue to search for clues about the origin and evolution of the universe.

Every discovery reminds us that the universe is far larger and more complex than our everyday experience suggests.

The Universe Within Us
While telescopes explore the outer universe,



another extraordinary instrument exists much closer to us—the human mind.

The brain contains billions of neurons connected through an extraordinarily complex network. It enables us to learn, remember, imagine, communicate, create music, solve mathematical problems and reflect upon our own existence.

But many mysteries remain.

How does consciousness arise? How are memories formed? Why do we dream? How do emotions influence decisions? How does the brain create our sense of identity?

These questions show that understanding the human being can be as challenging as understanding distant galaxies.

The Connection Between Inner and Outer Worlds

The outer universe and the inner world are not completely separate.

Our knowledge of the universe exists because the human mind observes, measures, calculates and interprets it. Every telescope, spacecraft and scientific equation is ultimately an expression of human curiosity and intelligence.

At the same time, our understanding of ourselves is influenced by our relationship

with the world around us.

Nature, society, culture, relationships and experiences shape our thoughts and identities.

In this sense, the journey outward and the journey inward constantly influence each other.

Science and Self-Discovery

Science encourages us to question assumptions and examine evidence. These habits are useful not only for studying the physical world but also for understanding ourselves.

Self-discovery begins when we become curious about our own thoughts and behaviour. Why do we react differently to similar situations? What influences our choices? Which fears limit us? What values guide us? What gives our lives meaning? Such questions do not always have simple answers. But asking them can lead to greater self-awareness.

Self-awareness does not mean believing that we know everything about ourselves. It means being willing to observe ourselves honestly and continue learning.

The Role of Silence and Reflection
Modern life is filled with information, notifications, conversations and constant digital stimulation.

In such an environment, silence has become increasingly valuable.

A few moments of quiet reflection can help a person observe thoughts without immediately reacting to them. Reading, writing, walking in nature, meditation or simply spending time away from screens can create opportunities for reflection.

The purpose is not to escape the world but to understand our relationship with it. Sometimes, we need to become quiet outside so that we can hear what is happening within.

Nature as a Teacher
Nature provides another bridge between the inner and outer worlds.

A forest teaches interconnectedness. A river teaches movement. A changing sky reminds us that nothing remains exactly the same. The life cycle of plants and animals demonstrates adaptation, growth and renewal.

Scientific observation of nature can produce knowledge, while thoughtful observation can also inspire humility.

The more we discover about nature, the more clearly we see that human beings are part of a much larger system.

The Search for Meaning

Scientific knowledge can explain many aspects of how the universe works, but human beings also ask questions of meaning.

Why are we here? What makes a life meaningful? What responsibilities do we have toward other people and the natural world?

These questions belong to philosophy, ethics and personal reflection as much as to science.

A technologically advanced society still needs wisdom.

Knowledge tells us what may be possible. Wisdom helps us consider how that knowledge should be used.

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Indian Army's landmark humanitarian initiative called "Operation Drishti"



By M S Nazki

Karnah valley in Kupwara district is rich in ancient legends and mythological associations, but it does not have a distinct, localized romantic folklore unique to its geography in the manner that the Chenab valley cherishes Sohni-Mahiwal or Heer-Ranjha. Instead, the romantic and legendary narratives tied to Karnah are rooted in broader Kashmiri and epic mythologies!

-But this story is different!

-If you had weak eyes, they needed exercise to get strong. Glasses were like crutches. They prevented people with feeble eyes from seeing the world on their own.

-How alive is thought, invisible, yet without thought there is no sight. After all the Sun watches the Sun!

-The eyesight for an eagle is what is to a man.....

—Dejan Stojanovic, The Creator

-If I save my insight, I don't attend to the weakness of eyesight

-There is nothing invisible in this universe! There is only our lack of eyesight! Visionaries see beyond the boundaries of eyesight

-A woman of vision may have lost her eyesight, but she can see afar; because through her mind, she conceives far beyond what eyes can see

-Mythological Connections King Karna and Raja Karan: Local tradition attributes the very name of Karnah (historically Karan-nah) to King Karan or a local ruler named Raja Karan who supposedly dwelt on the Krannu/Karano mountain, where ruins locally known as "Raja Karan Diyan Shaheriyar" still exist.

-While epic retellings feature Karna's loyal

marital bonds (such as with Vrushali), regional folklore treats these as part of the broader Mahabharata tradition rather than localized love stories born in the valley.

-The Pandavas and Lord Krishna: The Karnah Valley preserves structural traces and place names

for a specific local ballad, song, or oral legend from the Pahari or Kashmiri traditions of Tangdhar and Karnah, please share any names or fragments you remember so I can help trace them.

-Yes, local folklore and historical tradition suggest that the Karnah valley and tehsil in Jammu and



from the Pandavas' exile, including Pandavpulp (Pandav Bridge) and spots said to be visited by Lord Krishna, which eventually gave the Kishanganga River its local significance.

-However, these are tales of divine presence, exploration, and landscape-naming rather than traditional love ballads. Traditional Kashmiri Fables of Romance When exploring classic romantic daastans (folklore) traditionally narrated across the northern mountains during long winters, storytellers focus on pan-Kashmiri legends rather than Karnah-specific ones: Heemal and Nagrai: The iconic Kashmiri epic of a human princess and a serpent prince.

-Aka Nandun: A poignant folk ballad centering on devotion, separation, and trials. If you are looking

Kashmir are named after the Mahabharata character Raja Karna (or Raja Karan). Origins of the Name Karan-nah: Legend states that the area was associated with Raja Karan, leading to the name "Karan-nah," which translates to "pertaining to Karan" and eventually evolved into Karnah. Karnav: Historical texts and chroniclers like M.A. Stein notes that the area historically bore names like Karnav, Karnau, or Karnaha.

-Local Landmarks: Beliefs tie local peaks, such as the Karanu mountain, and historical ruins in the region to this ancient legend.

-The name and history of the Karnah valley (located in the Kupwara district of Jammu and Kashmir) are deeply tied to Raja Karan (widely associated with Karna from the Mahabharata epic).

-According to local folklore and historical regional texts: To Found a Kingdom and Settle: Local legends state that Raja Karan arrived in the region to establish his rule. He built a prominent royal palace on top of the Kranno (Karanu) Mountain, right in the middle of the valley. The ancient ruins of his capital are still referred to by locals as "Raja Karan Diyan Shaheriyar".

-The Mythological Connection (The Pandavas): Local history links the region to the mythological times of the Mahabharata. Traces of the Pandavas' arrival are recorded in the valley, marked by landmarks like the Pando Pull (Pandav Bridge) over the Kaji Nag stream.

-The Great Desiccation Project: Local tradition states that the Karnah valley was originally a massive lake. Raja Karan came and settled along the mountain heights. He allegedly ordered a strategic breach in the mountain at a place called Ari Dal to drain the lake, revealing the fertile valley land that exists today. Ultimately, his presence was so monumental to the region that the track was named Karan-Nah (meaning "pertaining to Karan"), which eventually evolved into modern-day Karnah.

-We have a story to end the first half of the story:

-The morning mist usually hangs low over the Kishan Ganga river, but today the air in Karnah felt different. For Zoya, a 23-year-old aspiring botanist from Tangdar, the rugged mountains of the Kupwara district weren't just home—they were a living laboratory. For Adnan, a digital nomad and landscape photographer from Srinagar, Karnah was a hidden paradise waiting to be captured through his lens.

-Keep in mind the words lens:

-Their worlds collided not on a crowded street, but at the edge of a terraced walnut orchard. Adnan was struggling to get his drone to calibrate against the steep mountain terrain. Zoya, walking back from collecting plant samples, watched his frustration with a quiet amusement before stepping in.

"The wind currents from the valley pass always mess with the sensors," she said, pointing toward

the towering peaks. "Try facing the Teetwal side. "He took her advice, and the drone soared seamlessly into the sky. That afternoon, over cups of steaming noon chai and local bread, they exchanged stories. Adnan spoke of high-speed internet, bustling cafes, and the fast-paced life of Srinagar.

-Zoya spoke of the quiet resilience of Karnah, the folklore of the hills, and her dream of documenting the region's endangered medicinal plants. Before Adnan left Karnah, they exchanged Instagram handles. What started as a brief encounter quickly evolved into a modern-day digital courtship.

-Over the next six months, their relationship was built on voice notes sent late at night when the valley network was stable, and reels sharing snippets of their vastly different daily lives. Adnan sent her videos of city rain and neon lights; Zoya sent him photographs of the first winter snow blanketing Tangdar.

-The distance only fuelled their creativity. Adnan began a photography series dedicated entirely to the landscapes Zoya described in her voice notes. Zoya, inspired by Adnan's encouragement, applied for a prestigious research grant to study alpine flora—and won. The climax of their story brought Adnan back to Karnah, not as a tourist, but as Zoya's partner. He arrived just as the spring buds were breaking through the soil. Standing near the same walnut orchard where they first met, Adnan didn't just bring his camera this time; he brought a promise to split his time between the chaos of the city and the peace of the mountains. In a valley historically known for its isolation, Zoya and Adnan proved that modern love doesn't just survive the ridges of Karnah—it bridges them.

-The story which we had in our hands:

Chief of Army Staff General Dhiraj Sethi visited Karnah and interacted with ex-servicemen and veterans in the forward area. During his visit, the Army Chief also witnessed the ongoing OP Drishti Mega Eye & Cataract Surgical Camp at FSC Tangdar, aimed at providing eye-care services to the local community

Privacy in the Digital Age Rights and Growing Challenges



Dr. Satyawan Saurabh

Today, a person's digital identity has become as important as their physical existence. What we search for, where we go, what we buy, who we communicate with, and what topics we are interested in—all of these leave a digital trail. The question then is not only who has our information, but also how much control we have over it. In this context, the issue of privacy in the digital age has emerged as a serious constitutional and social challenge concerning individual freedom, dignity, and autonomy.

Privacy is an individual's right to control others' access to their personal information, identity, and private life. This right gained historical significance in India when the Supreme Court, in *K. S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017), recognized privacy as a fundamental right protected by the Constitution. The Court linked privacy to life and personal liberty, dignity, and autonomy. It also clarified that any intrusion on privacy must comply with constitutional standards such as law, legitimate purpose, and proportionality. The proliferation of digital technology has broadened both the scope and challenges of this right.

First, the state's growing surveillance capabilities pose a significant challenge to privacy. Technologies such as facial recognition, biometric identification, location tracking, and digital communication analysis can be useful in crime control and national security. However, without adequate legal limits and independent oversight, these same technologies can become a means of mass surveillance. Striking a balance between security and privacy is therefore a crucial responsibility of democratic governance.

On the other hand, the massive collection of personal data by private digital companies is also a matter of concern. Social media, e-commerce, search engines, and mobile applications collect vast amounts of data about our behavior. By combining this information from different sources, detailed behavioral profiles of individuals can be created. This makes it possible to personalize services, but this process also creates the potential to influence consumer preferences, behavior, and decisions. Thus, data becomes not just information but a source of economic and social power.

Privacy threats aren't limited to large-scale data collection. Incidents like doxing involve the disclosure of a person's address, phone number, photo, or other personal information without

their permission. This can lead to online harassment, threats, and physical safety threats. Similarly, deepfake technology has added a new dimension to identity and reputation abuse. Artificial intelligence can be used to create content that appears authentic, using a person's face or voice. This can impact privacy as well as a person's dignity and reputation.

Additionally, data breaches and cyberattacks pose a serious threat to citizens' privacy. Theft of financial information, health records, identity documents, and other sensitive information can lead to identity theft, financial fraud, and blackmail. Compounding the problem is algorithmic profiling. When automated systems make decisions about people based on personal data, inaccurate or

completely restricting state security needs or technological innovation. In some circumstances, access to information may be necessary to combat crime, terrorism, and national security. The challenge is to ensure that such powers are lawful, necessary, and proportionate, and that their abuse is effectively monitored and remedied.

India has taken significant steps in this direction through the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. What is needed now is effective implementation, robust institutional oversight, and a simple grievance redressal mechanism for citizens. Furthermore, "privacy by design" should be integrated into the technology architecture of digital governance and the private sector. This means embracing principles such



biased data can lead to discriminatory outcomes. If such decision-making processes are not transparent, it becomes difficult for individuals to understand or challenge decisions made against them.

Another characteristic of the digital economy is that data is no longer confined to a single entity. Governments, private companies, advertising agencies, app developers, cloud service providers, and technology vendors may be involved in various processes related to an individual's data. As a result, it becomes difficult to trace the full chain of data flow and establish responsibility. Cross-border data flows further exacerbate this problem, as a citizen's information may be collected in one country and stored or processed in another.

One of the biggest practical difficulties in protecting privacy is "consent fatigue." Users click "I Agree" without reading long and complex privacy policies. In this situation, consent becomes a legal formality but no longer a truly informed choice. Another challenge is that technological innovation often moves faster than regulation. Artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and new data-analysis techniques can create risks that were not anticipated when existing laws were created.

However, protecting privacy does not mean

as data minimization, secure storage, encryption, and limited data collection from the outset, rather than adding privacy protections after a technology is built.

The accountability of digital platforms should also be increased. There should be a quick and accessible mechanism for complaints of doxing, deepfakes, and identity misuse. Citizens also need to be educated through digital literacy about how to protect their personal information. Measures such as strong passwords, multi-factor authentication, proper use of privacy settings, and caution against suspicious links can strengthen personal security.

Ultimately, in the digital age, viewing privacy solely as a matter of data protection is insufficient. It is a question of protecting individual dignity, freedom, identity, and the right to self-determination. Just as freedom of expression is essential for citizens in a democracy, control over their data is also essential in a digital democracy. Therefore, India must develop a digital system where technology is a tool of power, not control; data is a tool of development, not exploitation; and citizens' freedom and privacy are equally protected along with security.

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

Loneliness Don't See Behind Closed Doors



BY-MOOL RAJ

Loneliness, therefore, is not necessarily about the number of people around us.

Through counselling, I have repeatedly observed another painful pattern: The loneliness of people who are carrying the burden gracefully and not complaining are expected to be strong.

The opposite of loneliness is not simply having people around us. Loneliness is like an iceberg – it goes deeper than we can see.

When was the last time someone asked you, "How are you?" and genuinely waited for the answer? Not the hurried question exchanged in a corridor. Not the WhatsApp message followed by a disappearing blue tick. Not the polite question we ask because social etiquette requires it. I mean: "How are you and I have time to listen?" We live in an age of extraordinary connectivity. Our phones can connect us to people thousands of miles away within seconds. We see what our friends are eating, where they are travelling, what they are celebrating and how successful their lives appear to be. We may have hundreds of contacts, followers and online conversations. Yet behind those glowing screens, many adults quietly ask themselves: "Does anyone really know me?" This is the loneliness we don't see.

Over the years, the people I meet behind the closed doors; through my counselling and therapeutic work, I have listened to people carrying enormous stress, grief, relationship difficulties, professional pressures and personal challenges. What has stayed with me is not only what they are struggling with, but how alone many of them feel while struggling. They may have families, colleagues, friends or hundreds of contacts on their phones. Yet when they finally sit down for counselling, many say something remarkably similar: "I have nobody I can really talk to."

Sometimes they have carried a problem for months or even years because they don't want to burden anyone. Sometimes they fear being judged. Sometimes they believe their family will not understand. Sometimes they are the person everyone else depends upon and feel they have no permission to become vulnerable themselves. Might the people around them simply don't realize they are struggling. This is perhaps the most

invisible dimension of loneliness. A person can be socially surrounded but emotionally isolated. A professional may spend the entire day talking to people and return home feeling completely alone. A mother may spend years caring for everyone while having no space to talk about her own exhaustion. A father may silently carry financial worries because he believes he must always appear strong. A young adult may communicate constantly online yet have nobody with whom to share their deepest fears. An older person may live with family yet spend most of the day without meaningful conversation. The house may be full, the heart may still feel empty.

Psychologist and neuroscientist John Cacioppo helped establish an important distinction between objective isolation and the subjective experience of feeling disconnected. A person can have many relationships and still experience profound loneliness. Loneliness, therefore, is not necessarily about the number of people around us. It is about the quality of connection we experience. Perhaps the opposite of loneliness is not simply company, it is connection. Loneliness is not always dangerous. At times, feeling lonely is a natural signal that we need meaningful human connection. The concern begins when loneliness becomes persistent, intense and difficult to escape. It may begin quietly with boredom, emotional emptiness, irritability, reduced motivation or a desire to withdraw. If it continues, a person may experience: persistent sadness or anxiety, poor sleep and constant tiredness, difficulty concentrating, loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities, declining confidence and self-worth, withdrawal from family and friends, excessive dependence on social media or screens, unhealthy eating or neglect of personal care or increased use of cigarettes, alcohol or other substances as coping mechanisms.

Chronic loneliness is also associated with poorer physical and mental health. The World Health Organization has linked social isolation and loneliness with increased risks of conditions including cardiovascular disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes, as well as poorer mental health and premature mortality. The WHO Commission on Social Connection reported in 2025 that approximately one in six people globally experience loneliness, with young people particularly affected. The Commission estimated that loneliness and social isolation contribute to more than 871,000 deaths annually worldwide.

The Author Is A Regular Columnist And Freelance Writer



Mandeep Kour chairs stakeholders consultation meeting for GIS Based Master Plans under AMRUT 2.0

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 05: Commissioner Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD), Mandeep Kour, today chaired a comprehensive stakeholders' consultation meeting to deliberate upon the draft GIS-based Master Plans for Baramulla, Sopore and Pattan being prepared under AMRUT 2.0, at Dak Bungalow, Baramulla.

The meeting was attended by Member of Legislative Assembly Baramulla Javid Hassan Beigh; MLA Sopore Irshad Rasool Kar; MLA Pattan Javid Reyaz Bedar; MLA Wagoora-Kreeri Irfan Hafeez Lone; Deputy Commissioner Baramulla S.F. Hamid, ADDC Baramulla, ADC Baramulla, ADC Sopore, senior officers from the HUDD and other line departments, public representatives, stakeholders,



representatives of various organisations and members of civil society.

The meeting had a comprehensive presentation on the draft Master Plans highlighting the major provisions, proposed planning interventions, land-use considerations, infrastructure requirements, development priorities and other components envisaged for the systematic and sustainable

development of the three towns.

The Commissioner Secretary held detailed discussions with the participants on various provisions of the draft plans and sought their suggestions and observations.

The elected representatives and other stakeholders also put forward their views and suggestions concerning urban development, infrastructure, connectivity, public amenities, institutional requirements

and other local priorities.

MLA Baramulla Javid Hassan Beigh highlighted the limited availability of state land within Baramulla town as a major challenge. He suggested that the Master Plan should identify suitable peripheral areas where the government offices and projects that do not require daily public access could be shifted.

MLA Sopore Irshad Rasool Kar stressed the need to address the scattered location of government offices and suggested provision for a Mini Secretariat in Sopore in the Master Plan. MLA Wagoora-Kreeri Irfan Hafeez Lone emphasised that development envisaged under the Master Plan should be sustainable and balanced with adequate safeguards to protect the region's agricultural and horticultural land and livelihood interests.

Meanwhile, Reyaz Bedar

highlighted the need for widening of road in Pattan town, provision of a truck terminal, and effective utilisation of available state land for various developmental projects.

Various other stakeholders and representatives from civil society also raised issues. They offered suggestions concerning land utilisation, infrastructure, connectivity, public amenities, traffic management, institutional requirements and future development of the three towns.

Responding to the inputs, Mandeep Kour emphasised that the Master Plan is an important long-term planning document that will shape the future growth, infrastructure development and urban management of Baramulla, Sopore and Pattan and therefore requires extensive consultation with all concerned stakeholders.

DC Samba reviews Change of Land Use Applications

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, OCTOBER 05: Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a meeting at the DC Office to review applications pertaining to Change of Land Use (CLU).

During the meeting, a total of nine CLU cases were examined threadbare with detailed inputs and technical observations from the concerned departments. After comprehensive deliberations, three cases were accorded approval, one case was rejected, four cases were kept pending, while one case was reverted for necessary compliance. The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to ensure strict adherence to statutory provisions, regulatory norms and prescribed procedures while scrutinising CLU applications. She emphasised that each proposal must be examined with due diligence, keeping in view legal requirements, environmental considerations and developmental priorities.

She further stressed upon the officers to maintain fairness, transparency and efficiency in the CLU approval process and ensure timely disposal of cases in accordance with the prescribed guidelines.

The meeting was attended by ACR Ajay Bharti, GM DIC, Executive Engineers and other concerned officers, who provided technical and procedural inputs during the examination of the cases.

Mendhar Treasury Without Accountant For a Year, Public Demands Immediate Posting

■ MS Nazki

Poonch, October 5 Treasury Office Mendhar in Poonch district is functioning without a permanent Accountant for the last one year, causing immense hardships to pensioners, senior citizens, general public and employees of various government departments.

Sources told HT that despite repeated representations to Director Accounts & Treasuries Jammu and District Treasury Officer Poonch, the key post continues to remain vacant. The Accountant is considered the backbone of Treasury functioning, responsible for scrutiny of bills, financial advice, implementation of Finance Department circulars and instructions, pension matters and coordination with DDOs. Locals said that Mendhar being a remote and border area, people have to travel long distances to reach the Treasury for their pension and other financial works. In absence of a regular Accountant, pensioners and senior citizens are the worst sufferers as their cases remain pending for want of proper technical guidance. They said that though the present staff is managing the affairs to the best of its ability, lack of an experienced Accountant has created a vacuum in supervision and interpretation of financial rules.

Prominent citizens, pensioners and retired employees of the area have appealed to the Directorate of Accounts and Treasuries Jammu to post a regular and experienced Accountant at Treasury Mendhar immediately in the larger public interest, terming it not just an administrative need but a public necessity.

DC, Labour Commissioner J&K review progress of AgriStack farmers' registration in Udhampur

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 05: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Minga Sherpa and Labour Commissioner J&K Charandeep Singh, who is also the District Mentor for digitisation of revenue records and effective monitoring and supervision of its implementation, today jointly chaired a meeting to review the progress of farmers' registration and data updation under AgriStack in the district.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh and Assistant Commissioner Revenue Dr. Umesh Shan, while all Sub-Divisional Magistrates and Tehsildars participated through virtual mode.

While reviewing the progress, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to ensure maximum coverage of eligible farmers under the AgriStack



registration process. The SDMs and Tehsildars were directed to organise farmer registration camps and facilitate the timely disposal of inheritance mutation cases in identified villages to accelerate the registration process and ensure maximum enrolment of eligible farmers. He informed the meeting that necessary steps are being taken for the generation of farmer IDs and directed all concerned to expedite the process. The District Mentor directed all concerned departments and field functionaries to intensify efforts and ensure completion of Farmer ID generation by October 31,

2026. He emphasised the need for close coordination among all concerned departments and effective mobilisation of field functionaries to achieve the assigned targets within the stipulated timeline. The District Mentor directed all concerned departments and field functionaries to intensify efforts and ensure completion of Farmer ID generation by October 31,

ADC Jammu reviews arrangements for Navratras, Ram Navami, Dussehra

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 05: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Jammu Anusya Jamwal today chaired a meeting to review preparedness for the Navratras, Ram Navami and Dussehra festivals in the district.

Arrangements at major shrines, including Bahu Fort Temple, Kol Kandoli Temple and Laxmi Narayan Temple were reviewed in detail. The arrangements planned for the Dussehra venues at Parade Ground, Sainik Colony, Channi Himmat and Gandhi Nagar were also reviewed.

The ADC directed Police and Traffic Police to ensure foolproof security, barricading, crowd management, traffic diversions and designated parking. She asked for Ram Leela permissions to be processed expeditiously, subject to safety norms.

The JMC was directed to ensure thorough sanitation and regular garbage lifting, deploy mobile toilets and carry out fogging against mosquitoes. Functional streetlights and adequate night illumination at temples, Ram Leela venues and Dussehra grounds were stressed. PDD and Jal Shakti were directed to ensure regular power and water supply.

The Health Department was asked to deploy medical teams, ambulances and first-aid facilities at key locations.

Underlining the role of religious bodies, the ADC called for their close cooperation



with the district administration in ensuring safety, convenience and facilitation of visitors. She stressed that organisers of langars must strictly adhere to food safety protocols.

The meeting was attended by SDM South Manu Hansa; SDM North Dr Deepak Kumar; Assistant Commissioner General Sania Haq Khan; Addl SP Traffic City Arvinder Singh; SDPO City North Vikram Bhaur; officers of various departments besides representatives of religious bodies. The JMC was directed to ensure thorough sanitation and regular garbage lifting, deploy mobile toilets and carry out fogging against mosquitoes. Functional streetlights and adequate night illumination at temples, Ram Leela venues and Dussehra grounds were stressed. PDD and Jal Shakti were directed to ensure regular power and water supply.

The Health Department was asked to deploy medical teams, ambulances and first-aid facilities at key locations.

GDC Ramgarh organises Poster Making Competition on "Nasha Mukh Bharat"

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, OCTOBER 05: Government Degree College (GDC) Ramgarh organised a Poster Making Competition on the theme "Nasha Mukh Bharat: Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life" under the banner of the 100 Days NCORD Campaign. The programme was conducted under the guidance of the Principal Prof. (Dr.) Meeru Abrol.

Addressing the students at the beginning of the programme, the Principal emphasised the serious physical, psychological, academic and social consequences of the substance



abuse. She encouraged students to adopt healthy lifestyles, remain aware of the risks associated with drug abuse and actively contribute to creating a responsible and drug-free society. She also highlighted the important role of youth in spreading awareness and supporting the vision of a Nasha

Mukh Bharat. The competition was organised by the NCORD Committee of the College and convened by Dr. Shivali Panigotra, with the active support of Dr. Sneha Devi, Dr. Uma Prashar, Dr. Susheel Kumar and Darpan Malhotra. The activity formed part of the college's ongoing awareness

initiatives under the 100 Days NCORD Campaign.

Students participated enthusiastically and expressed their views on substance abuse through creative and meaningful posters. The entries highlighted the adverse effects of the drugs on physical and mental health, education, family and society, while conveying strong messages encouraging young people to make healthy and responsible choices.

The entries were judged by Prof. Sandeep Kumari and Prof. Brahm Dutt, who appreciated the creativity, relevance and impactful messages presented by the participants.

BJP Conspiring Against NC Government to Disturb Peaceful Atmosphere in J&K: Rattan Lal Gupta

"Urged the Centre to take concrete steps to restore full statehood as committed"

■ HT News Network

Jammu, October 5: Senior National Conference leader and Provincial President Jammu, Rattan Lal Gupta, Adv., today accused the BJP of conspiring against the Omar Abdullah-led government with the alleged intention of disturbing the peaceful atmosphere in Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing a colourful joining programme of the JKNC Student Wing, held under the chairmanship of Harshvardhan Singh, President, Student Wing Jammu at Party headquarter Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, Mr. Gupta



said that the BJP appears confused and frustrated by the good governance and all-round developmental achievements of the Omar Abdullah-led government during the last two years. Mr. Gupta expressed concern over what he described as serious questions being raised by democratic and political

circles regarding the functioning of the Election Commission. He said that allegations concerning the deletion of a large number of voters from electoral rolls are a matter of grave concern and deserve complete transparency and clarification. The right to vote is a fundamental component

of democratic participation, and no genuine voter should be deprived of this right without due process and an opportunity for correction. Mr. Gupta also reminded the Central Government of its repeated commitments regarding the restoration of Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the Prime Minister and Union Home Minister had publicly committed to restoring Statehood, and stressed that the people of J&K are eagerly awaiting fulfilment of that commitment. He urged the Centre to take concrete steps at the earliest to restore full Statehood.

First-of-its-Kind Pilot Project under MCAD-SAMRIDHI Scheme launched at Patyari Cluster Samba

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 05: In a significant initiative towards modernization of irrigation infrastructure and promotion of efficient water management in Jammu & Kashmir, the Command Area Development Department Jammu has initiated the first-of-its-kind pilot project under the Scheme "Modernisation of Command Area Development and Water Management (MCAD-SAMRIDHI)," in the Patyari Cluster of Block Ghagwal, district Samba. The project is one amongst 38 pilot projects approved by Govt. of India for implementation all over the country.

The cluster extends over nearly 400 Ha. rainfed area and lacks assured irrigation

facilities with a total project cost of Rs. 1198.26 lakh.

A significant milestone in the implementation of the project was achieved today with the signing of the Agreement between the Command Area Development Department, Jammu and the Irrigation Service Provider, M/s RMS Contractors and Consultancy, Bhopal. The project has now entered the implementation phase and is expected to mark a new chapter in the modernization of irrigation infrastructure and water management practices in Jammu & Kashmir.

The project envisages the development of a Pressurized Pipe Irrigation Network (PPIN) for efficient conveyance and distribution of irrigation water to agricultural fields. The system will be



further strengthened through the integration of SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) and IoT (Internet of Things) technologies, enabling improved monitoring, regulation and management of irrigation water. The adoption of pressurized irrigation will help minimize

conveyance and distribution losses and ensure that water is delivered to the agricultural fields in a more controlled, efficient and equitable manner. The integration of modern technological interventions is expected to facilitate better monitoring of water use and improve

the overall efficiency of the irrigation system. Speaking on the occasion, the Director Command Area Development Jammu Pankaj Magotra emphasized that the project represents an important shift towards technology-based and sustainable irrigation management in the Union Territory. "The guiding principle of this initiative is 'Per Drop More Crop'. Our endeavour is not merely to provide irrigation water, but to ensure that every drop of available water is utilized judiciously and efficiently to produce more. Through Pressurized Pipe Irrigation, SCADA and IoT-based interventions, coupled with active participation of farmers, we aim to establish a modern and sustainable micro irrigation model that can be replicated in other Command Areas of

Jammu & Kashmir with solar power on-grid facility." The Director further emphasized that farmer participation will remain a key component of the project, with Water User Societies (WUSs) playing an important role in the operation, management and sustainable utilization of the irrigation infrastructure. The involvement of farmers is expected to promote a sense of ownership, improve water management practices and strengthen community participation in irrigation management. Around 400 farmers of the Patyari cluster in Samba are very keen to see the project grounded and have already registered a Water User Society for taking over the operation and maintenance of this project after its commissioning.





Green India Mission Perspective Plan for Kupwara approved

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, OCTOBER 05: A meeting of the District Steering Committee (DSC) for the Green India Mission (GIM) was held today at the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Sh. Shrikant Suse, IAS to deliberate upon and approve the GIM Perspective Plan for District Kupwara for 2026-27 to 2031-32. At the outset, DFO Kamraj made a detailed presentation on the objectives and components of GIM, achievements under the previous Perspective Plan and proposed interventions for

the new planning period. The Green India Mission, one of the eight Missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change, adopts a landscape-based and participatory approach aimed at enhancing forest and tree cover, restoring degraded landscapes, strengthening ecosystem services and improving livelihoods of forest-dependent communities. It was informed that under the previous Perspective Plan, 409.36 hectares had been treated against a target of 541.40 hectares, while 1,48,470 plants had been raised/planted. The meeting also took note of livelihood initiatives under



GIM, including distribution of sewing machines among women SHGs, potter wheels to local artisans, wood-carving tool kits to trained youth and honey boxes among members of the tribal community.

The new Perspective Plan envisages treatment of 141.50

hectares during 2026-27 to 2031-32 with a total financial outlay of 424.53 lakh. Proposed interventions include restoration of degraded open forest ecosystems, rehabilitation of abandoned mining and stone quarry areas, urban and peri-urban plantation, eco-

restoration of wetlands, agroforestry and social forestry, and alternative fuel and livelihood support.

While deliberating upon the Perspective Plan, the Deputy Commissioner stressed that GIM interventions should be implemented through convergence with ongoing schemes of the Agriculture, Rural Development and other allied departments. He also called for greater focus on urban greening and beautification, particularly at the entry of Kupwara town, along with focused interventions for beautification and eco-restoration of wetlands and water bodies.

Emphasising livelihood enhancement, the Deputy Commissioner stressed greater support for tribal and forest-dependent communities through value addition, processing and market linkages for locally available NTFPs and forest-based products. In this context, the Perspective Plan provides for establishment of an NTFP Processing Centre in Kamraj Forest Division, besides Training Centres and Nursery Research Centres in Kamraj and Kehmil Forest Divisions.

The Deputy Commissioner also called for measures towards making Lolab Valley plastic-free, including establishment of suitable.

DAHJ reviews progress of Animal Husbandry sector programmes

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 05: The Director Animal Husbandry Department Jammu Dr. Jugal Kishor today convened a review meeting here in the Meeting Hall of the Directorate, to assess the progress and implementation of the developmental programmes and schemes under Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP), CAPEX, NABARD and Special Assistance (SASCI) for upgrading veterinary infrastructure and the livestock.

The meeting was attended by Chief Animal Husbandry Officers of the Division and Deputy Director Planning and Statistics, Accounts Officer and Extension Officer Publicity Wing AHD Jammu.

The meeting held detailed discussions on the physical and financial progress of ongoing projects, implementation, status utilization of allocated funds, achievement of targets and issues requiring timely intervention. The officers concerned apprised the meeting about the progress of the activities being undertaken under the respective schemes.

The meeting also reviewed the status of projects at the field level with emphasis on effective utilization of funds, timely completion of works and achievement of intended outcomes for the livestock and dairy farming community.

3 Medical Shops sealed in Gool for violations of norms

■ HT News Network



RAMBAN, OCTOBER 05: A joint inspection drive was conducted today in Gool by the Police Department and the Drug Inspector Ramban, to ensure strict compliance with drug control regulations and curb the misuse of psychotropic medicines. Several medical establishments were inspected. The team checked licences, availability of trained pharmacist, drug sale records and other mandatory documents. Three medical shops were found violating the prescribed regulatory norms and the same were sealed by the concerned authorities. The inspection drive forms part of the ongoing efforts of the district administration Ramban and Police Department to ensure strict enforcement of drug control laws, check the misuse of medicines and safeguard public health. The authorities reiterated that strict action will be taken against establishments found violating statutory provisions or indulging in the unauthorised sale or misuse of medicines.

DC Udhampur reviews progress of District plan, RDD works

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 05: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Minga Sherpa today chaired a meeting to review the progress of works under the District Capex Budget 2026-27 and RDD schemes.

The meeting also reviewed the uploading and processing of Forest Clearance cases through the PARIVESH Portal.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Jugal Kishore; DFO Udhampur; CPO Uttam Singh; ACD Om Parkash; ACP Dr Ashwani Hansa; besides officers and representatives of the line departments.

The DC directed stakeholder departments to expedite the clearance of bills pertaining to completed as well as ongoing works to ensure timely financial progress. He further directed to complete the ongoing works within the stipulated timelines



and ensure optimum utilization of the funds allocated for the current quarter.

The ACD was directed to maintain a detailed month-wise record of works completed and ensure that the physical and financial targets assigned for each month are achieved within the prescribed timelines.

Later, the DFO Udhampur sensitized the officers about the provisions of the Van Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan

Adhiniyam-2023 and the procedure for uploading and processing forest cases through the PARIVESH Portal. The ACD was directed to maintain a detailed month-wise record of works completed and ensure that the physical and financial targets assigned for each month are achieved within the prescribed timelines.

Later, the DFO Udhampur sensitized the officers about the provisions of the Van Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan Adhiniyam-2023.

One day workshop organised at Rajouri to orient field functionaries on VB-G RAM G

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, OCTOBER 05: To familiarise field functionaries with the implementation framework for Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar & Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G), the Rural Development Department today organised a day-long workshop here in the Conference Hall of PWD Dak Bungalow.

The workshop, conducted on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma, was attended by all Block Development Officers, technical staff and other concerned field functionaries. The proceedings focused on Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan Preparation which also included understanding of VB G RAM ACT 2025 being implemented with effect from July 1, 2026.

Additional District Development Commissioner Malikzada Sheraz Ul Haq presided over the workshop and emphasised the importance



of proper understanding of the guidelines laid down in the Act and coordinated efforts for effective implementation of VB-G RAM G Scheme.

Assistant Commissioner Development Sheraz Chowhan, while addressing the participants, highlighted key aspects of the programme, stressing upon systematic planning, effective coordination and timely execution.

Master Trainers briefed the participants on the key provisions, planning requirements and

implementation modalities of VB-G RAM G.

The State Level Master Trainer also participated virtually, delivering a technical presentation on gap identification, compilation of works which have been done and preparing VGPP in a much holistic way.

The session focused on strengthening their understanding and preparedness for effective implementation of the programme at the grassroots level.

J&K Prosecution Deptt secures 3 major convictions in 2 days

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 05: In a major breakthrough demonstrating unwavering legal diligence, the Prosecution Department of Jammu and Kashmir has secured three significant convictions within a 48-hour span (September 29-30, 2026). The verdicts, delivered by Sessions Courts across Udhampur, Ganderbal and Jammu districts, cover two high-profile murder trials and a major narcotics trafficking case. The Special Court under the NDPS Act convicted Sajjad Ahmed Bhat for illegal possession of 1.500 kg of charas. Sentenced under Section 20 of the NDPS Act, the convict was sentenced to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs.1,00,000. The Special Public Prosecutor Sunil Kumar successfully conducted the prosecution. The Court of Additional Sessions Judge, Udhampur, found Arwant Singh guilty of murdering a 70-year-old man in village Sarmali, Majalta. The court sentenced him to life imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs. 20,000.

Medical camps being organised across Kathua district Schools

Healthcare services provided at GHSS Girls: DC interacts with Students

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, OCTOBER 05: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today visited Government Girls Higher Secondary School, where the Health Department organised a medical camp for the students to promote preventive healthcare and health awareness among the younger generation.

The Deputy Commissioner took stock of the facilities and healthcare services being provided to the students and interacted with them, enquiring about their health, studies and overall well-being. He also appreciated the Health



Department for organising the camp and emphasised the importance of regular health screening and timely medical care. "Good health is the foundation of academic excellence and a fulfilling life," the DC noted and encouraged students to adopt healthy lifestyle practices, maintain personal hygiene, follow a

balanced diet and remain physically active. He further stressed that awareness and preventive healthcare play a vital role in identifying health concerns at an early stage.

The Deputy Commissioner informed that similar medical camps are being organised for students across the district to strengthen preventive healthcare, facilitate timely health screening and generate greater awareness about healthy lifestyle practices. The camp provided comprehensive health screening, including blood pressure and weight measurement.

DLSA Jammu organises Health Check-up Camp at Old Age Home Amphalla 30 Senior Citizens avail healthcare services

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 05: District Legal Services Authority Jammu, under the guidance of Principal District & Sessions Judge / Chairman, DLSA Jammu Tahir Khurshid Raina and under the supervision of Civil Judge (Sr. Division) / Secretary DLSA Maleeka Sharma, today organised a Health Check-up Camp for Senior Citizens at Old Age Home Amphalla in observance of International Day of Older Persons. The Medical camp was hosted in collaboration with the Directorate Health Service Jammu. On the day, Secretary DLSA



Jammu visited the Old Age Home and interacted with senior citizens, listened to their health issues, problems and grievances regarding facilities. She also briefed them about their legal rights and right to maintenance. During the visit, Secretary DLSA Jammu also inspected the newly constructed Recovery Ward in the premises of the Old Age The

medical team, deputed by Directorate Health Services Jammu, consisted of Dr. Vanita Kotwal (Ophthalmologist), Dr. Kapil Gupta (MD Physician) and Dr. Anuj Khajuria (MD ENT). The Doctors, along with the School Health Team, conducted detailed check-ups of senior citizens, including blood pressure screening.

Panchayat Raj system derailed, made defunct - Ravinder, demands early elections to Panchayats

Gram sabhas turned into eye wash, works identified by villagers not taken up - Ravinder

■ HT News Network

Sunderbani, Oct 05:- Former MLC and Chief Spokesperson JKPC Mr Ravinder Sharma has said that government has derailed and turned the entire panchayat Raj system defunct by indulging into gross illegalities and fraud with the common people in villages, as works prioritised by them are not taken up and gram sabhas have been turned into a mere formalities and eye wash.

Reacting to the grievance of the people in a workers meeting at

Sunderbani, Mr Ravinder Sharma took exception to the complaint that gram sabha meetings have been turned into eye wash and most of the works identified by the villagers are dropped on political considerations, which is complete violation of Panchayat Raj Act.

The people expressed great resentment and decided to take to streets to highlight the glaring irregularities and illegalities besides the role of middle men. The entire Panchayat Raj system has been derailed and made defunct in the absence of PRIs.

The meeting demanded early elections to Panchayats and Local bodies to empower the people at grass root levels.

The meeting decided to take to streets for the genuine demands of people as the administration is not responsive to the burning issues of different sections.

Mr Sharma regretted that the urgent repairs and restoration of Ashram to Doba, Lamman road has not been taken up despite approach to the elected representatives and higher authorities and decided to launch agitation for the same till force



the authorities to do the needful at the earliest.

On the issue of Vote Chori, Mr Sharma asked the people to join the ongoing movement for "Vote Bachao, Desh Bachao" under the umbrella of INDIA Block to force the government to remove Gyanesh Kumar and streamline the electoral system.

The meeting discussed measures to strengthen the party by holding panchayat wise meetings and constitution of committees besides nominating Coordinators for different Ashok Kumar nominated for Block

Devak, Keshav Raina for block Siot.

The meeting also expressed concern over the presence of Suspected terrorists in parts of Sunderbani and demanded strengthening of security in the border belt besides VDGs in the area.

Block Presidents NC Sharma, Ajit Singh, DCC Vice President Yog Raj Sharma, Principals retd Deep Kumar, Keshav Sharma, Ashok Sharma, Om parkash, Anwar Chaudhary, Ashwani Kumar, Govind Sudan, Tilak Raj, Madan Lal and several other Block and district functionaries attended.



The Fast Food Culture



SURINDERPAL SINGH

In today's fast-paced world the junk food has become an integral part of everyday life. Burgers, pizzas, chips, fried snacks, sugary beverages and packaged foods are easily available, attractively marketed and often cheaper and more convenient than nutritious alternatives. What originally appears to be a harmless indulgence, however, can become a serious threat to health when consumed regularly.

The major concern is not that a person occasionally enjoys fast food, but that highly processed foods are

increasingly replacing balanced meals. Many junk foods contain excessive amounts of calories, saturated and trans fats, salt and added sugars while providing relatively little fibre, vitamins, minerals and other essential nutrients. Regular consumption can contribute to unhealthy weight gain and increase the risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

The impact is particularly worrying among children and adolescents. Aggressive advertising, colourful packaging, celebrity endorsements and the growing influence of social media have made junk food highly attractive to young consumers. When unhealthy eating habits develop early in life, they may continue into adulthood. Childhood obesity is not merely a matter of appearance; it can affect physical well-being, self-confidence, fitness and long-term health.

Junk food can also influence mental and emotional well-being. Diets



dominated by highly processed foods may contribute to poor nutritional quality and unhealthy eating patterns. Excessive consumption of sugary foods and caffeinated beverages can also disturb energy levels and sleep patterns in some individuals. A healthy mind depends, in part, on a healthy body, and nutrition plays an important role in both.

Another hidden cost is the gradual erosion of traditional eating habits. Fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, pulses, nuts and home-cooked meals are increasingly being replaced by packaged and ready-to-eat alternatives. In a country such as India, where diverse traditional cuisines can provide nutritious and balanced meals, abandoning healthy food traditions for convenience is an unnecessary loss.

The solution does not lie in completely banning junk food. Rather, it requires awareness, moderation and informed choices. Schools and families should teach children how to understand food labels, recognise

excessive sugar, salt and unhealthy fats, and appreciate the value of fresh and minimally processed foods. Governments and public institutions also have a role in promoting responsible food marketing, particularly when children are the target audience.

Ultimately, food is more than a source of pleasure or convenience; it is the foundation of our physical and mental well-being. The choices made at the dining table today can shape the quality of life tomorrow. We must therefore move from a culture of instant gratification towards a culture of informed nutrition. The real measure of a modern society is not how quickly it can produce and consume food, but how wisely it can nourish its people.

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'The spine just wants to move': How to strengthen your neck

The modern world is a challenging place for necks. These five exercises will help you cope. Sometimes it pays to consider the weight of the human head. When you're sat or stood upright, the mechanical load that your head places on the neck is only about 12 pounds (5.4kg), says Anthony Ghosh, a NHS consultant spinal neurosurgeon at Queen's Hospital in London. This is not a problem.

But across the planet, billions of us are spending large portions of our day with our bodies hunched over. And as we stoop over our laptops and smartphones, we're radically changing the distribution of weight on our necks.

In this uncomfortable, downward-looking position, the load the head places on the neck goes up to about 60 pounds (27.2kg), says Ghosh. "So, it's quite a lot of strain that your neck is trying to put up with."

In short, modern life is terrible for our necks. But there are five simple exercises you can try to keep your neck healthy and prevent problems down the line, whatever your age.

A common problem
Some neck problems are a natural consequence of changes which play out across our musculoskeletal system as we age, resulting in diminishing elasticity and increasing stiffness within the neck's supportive tissues.

"Nobody above the age of 40 has a normal MRI scan when it comes to their spine," says Ghosh. "Everybody will have some worn discs, the cushions between vertebrae. The joints at the

back of the neck also thicken up a little bit and get stiff."

Then there's the impact of technology. When we pore over electronic devices, we adopt a characteristic "flexed" posture. The upper back rounds into an exaggerated hunch or hump, and the chin and head push forward instead of aligning directly over the shoulders. This puts a large amount of strain on both the neck muscles and the vertebrae joints in the upper spine.

Anywhere between 60% and 80% of people will suffer from neck pain during their lifetime, with nearly 50% experiencing it as a frequent or recurring issue. These problems might begin with an increasing sense of stiffness and lack of mobility in your upper spine, followed by growing and persistent levels of discomfort.

Alarming, research suggests that neck and upper back-related problems are beginning to arise earlier in life. The prevalence of scoliosis has steadily increased in children and adolescents over the past three decades, for example. This medical condition involves developing an abnormal curvature of the spine, forcing the neck muscles to strain and compensate to keep the head level.

But there is plenty that we can do to mitigate the onset of neck problems. Rather than investing in upper chairs or other ergonomic aids, Ghosh simply recommends moving more and ensuring that you take more breaks from looking at screens. "The spine just wants to move," he says. "It means that the circulation flows through it, and the



muscles get more tone in them."

In particular, the below exercises can help loosen the joints, correct bad posture and make your neck muscles more resilient to the challenges of staring forwards at a screen. Always consult your doctor before attempting a new exercise regime.

1. Head turn

If you are suffering from neck pain, the NHS recommends a simple exercise to help get strength and movement back. While sitting upright or lying on your back, look as far to the right as far as you can and hold for two seconds. You should feel a stretch on the opposite side of your neck. Return to the starting position and then look to the left as far as you can. Repeat this two or three times, and as often throughout the day as feels comfortable.

2. Maintain good posture

Maintaining good neck posture is very important, as poor posture places strain on your neck muscles. Our necks are designed to move in all directions, so one tip is to move it around regularly throughout the day.

However, the 'optimal' position for your neck is in a neutral position in line with your spine. Keep your shoulders and back relaxed and your neck long and upright. Try to avoid poking your chin forwards and rounding your shoulders, and avoid keeping your head twisted or tilted to the side for long periods.

It helps to adopt this posture when sitting for long periods, such as when working at a computer, watching television, or driving.

3. Get rid of your 'poking chin'

Spending years gazing at a computer screen can lead to a 'poking chin' posture,

where your head juts forward instead of being aligned over your shoulders. However, this can be corrected by changing your sitting habits and doing simple exercises.

One thing you can do is gently lengthen your neck upwards as you tuck in your chin. It helps to imagine a soft peach under your chin. You don't want to squash it by tucking in too hard, but equally don't let it drop. Widen your collar bones and gently draw your shoulder blades down and back centrally towards your spine. At the same time, gently pull in your lower 'core' tummy muscles to maintain a natural soft curve in your lower back.

4. Build neck flexor endurance

Because we're now spending many hours of the day staring at screens, Ghosh explains that it helps to build the endurance of your neck flexors. This group of muscles contributes to neck stability and helps to hold up the weight of your head.

To train your neck flexors, lie on your bed with your knees bent and feet flat, and tuck your chin towards your chest.

Place a hand on the back of your head and lift it about an inch off the surface of the bed. Then remove your hand and hold the position for as long as you can. Initially aim for a few seconds, but try and build up to 30 seconds if you can.

5. Work the deep neck flexors

Another way to actively train your neck flexors involves using a chair with a headrest.

(BBC news)

South Africa pacer Anrich Nortje raring to go for Test return against Australia



United News Of India

CAPE TOWN, OCT 5 :Anrich Nortje is eyeing a Test comeback, and the South African quick says the groundwork began long before his recall. Nortje, who last played a Test in 2023 and has 70 wickets from 19 matches, is in South Africa's 18-man preliminary squad for the three-match ICC

World Test Championship series against Australia, which starts at Kingsmead in Durban on 9 October. "My prep from quite some time back has been red-ball," Nortje said, speaking to Cricinfo. "It's been quite a bit of a focus for me to try and execute skills with the red ball, to build loads gradually - and in the right way - and to try and get the overs up."

Much of that work has been self-driven, with input from national bowling coach Piet Botha.

"I had to see where I can improve action-wise and skills-wise, and there's been a good amount of chat with coach Piet," he added.

"The stuff that I've been working on myself as well has been (on) alignments, (and) trying to get the action better, stronger, more sustainable and more reliable. And then I've been sending it through to coach Piet and seeing if it all checks out."

Nortje has been one of South Africa's most potent white-ball bowlers. He is their all-time leading wicket-taker at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup with 38 wickets in 21 matches, and has 56 wickets overall in 47 T20Is at an average of 21.19.

His 4/7 against Sri Lanka at the 2024 edition remains the best return by a South African at the tournament. But he made clear where his heart lies. "You don't think of the tough times in T20 cricket," Nortje noted. "You just think about executing skills there, whereas in Tests, you think about the tough times, the good times, the hard work and think that gets you through some sessions," he said.

"I'll be very excited if I can put my Test cap on again. Growing up, it's the format you want to play. It's the motivation when you train."

The opposition adds to the appeal as Nortje has played Australia in only one Test series - during the 2022-23 tour - which South Africa lost 2-0. He played all three Tests and took seven wickets.

India & West Indies fined for slow over-rates in third Men's ODI

United News Of India

DUBAI, OCT 5 :India have been fined 20 per cent of their match fee and the West Indies have been fined 10 per cent of their match fee for maintaining slow over-rates during the final ODI of their three-match series played in New Chandigarh on Saturday.

Prakash Bhatt of the Emirates ICC International Panel of Match Referees imposed the sanctions after India were ruled to be four overs short and the West Indies were ruled to be two overs short after time allowances were taken into consideration.

In accordance with Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel,

which relates to minimum over-rate offences, players are fined five per cent of their match fee for every over their side fails to bowl in the

allotted time.

Both captains pled guilty and accepted the



proposed sanctions, so there was no need for formal hearings.

On-field umpires Jayaraman Madanagopal and Sam Nogajski, third umpire Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid and fourth umpire Virender Sharma levelled the charges.

Messi event victims to get free tickets for India-Uruguay match from several counters



United News Of India

KOLKATA, OCT 5 :Football fans who had purchased tickets for Lionel Messi's much-hyped Kolkata event last year but were unable to watch the Argentine star will now be given complimentary tickets for the India-Uruguay match at the Vivekananda Yuva Bharati Krirangan on October 6.

Following West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari's announcement after Saturday's India-Brazil match, state Sports Minister Indranil Khan on Sunday said the affected spectators could collect their physical passes by producing any one valid government-issued photo identity document - Voter Card, Aadhaar Card, Driving Licence or Passport - along with the paid ticket of the previous event.

The passes will be available on October 5 between 11 am and 5 pm at designated centres across the city. The collection points are Mohit Maitra Mancha, Milan Manjari Community Hall, Udjapan

Community Hall, Subhanandan Community Hall, Vivekananda Yuva Bharati Krirangan, Bidhannagar Municipality Sports Complex and Rajarhat-Gopalpur Swimming Pool.

"As committed by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Suwendu Adhikari dada, as a goodwill gesture, complimentary passes will be provided for the upcoming India vs Uruguay match scheduled to be held on 6th October 2026 at Vivekananda Yuva Bharati Krirangan to all football lovers who had purchased tickets for Lionel Messi G.O.A.T tour of Kolkata on 13th December last year," Khan said. Messi's visit to Kolkata last December had drawn thousands of football enthusiasts, but the event was marred by allegations of mismanagement, overcrowding and preferential treatment to VIPs. A large number of spectators

claimed they could not get a proper glimpse of the football icon despite having purchased tickets. A year later, the state government has sought to turn the controversy into a lesson in match management.

Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games close amid logistical snags, organizational criticism

United News Of India

NAGOYA (JAPAN), OCT 5 :The Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games came to a close Sunday, wrapping up 16 days of competition marked by record-breaking performances but marred by logistical snags and criticism over its organization.

More than 17,000 athletes and officials from 45 countries and regions took part in the Games while over 50 world records have been broken.

President of the Olympic Council of Asia, Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani announced the closing of the Games.

"Tonight, we close the Games that will shape the next generation of Asian Sport," he said. "From the first competition to the very last,

Asia's finest athletes captivated us with their performances. You created a legacy that reaches far beyond sport and Japan, touching every corner of our great continent." China topped the gold medal table for the 12th consecutive edition, collecting 169 gold, 89 silver and 83 bronze medals for its best haul at an overseas Asian Games. Sailor Bi Kun carried the Chinese delegation's flag at the closing ceremony.

China sets sight on LA after record 169 golds at Asian Games: delegation official

United News Of India

NAGOYA (JAPAN), OCT 5 :China delivered an outstanding performance at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games and accomplished its mission of preparing for the Los Angeles Olympics, Zhang

Xin, secretary-general of the Chinese delegation, said in a statement on Sunday.

China topped both the gold and the overall medal table for the 12th consecutive Asian Games, winning 169 golds, 89 silvers and 83 bronzes for a total of 341 medals, a record gold-medal haul for China at an Asian Games held outside China. Zhang noted the delegation's performance in Nagoya showed four main characteristics. Zhang said China's leading position in Asian sport was further consolidated. The delegation competed in 369 of the Games' events across 38 sports and 59 disciplines, winning gold in 38 of those disciplines and medals in 47, despite fielding fewer athletes and entries than at the

previous Games in Hangzhou and facing a

reduced number of medal events to contest. The quality of China's results was also notable, Zhang said, with Chinese athletes breaking five world records, 11 Asian records and 22 Games



records in sports with recognized records, including shooting, archery, athletics, swimming, weightlifting and track cycling. "Winning performances in the women's javelin and hammer throw matched the gold-medal standards set at the Paris Olympics, while China's men's 200m freestyle, men's 4x100m medley relay and women's 200m individual medley all produced the world's best times so far this year,"

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