

Srinagar
Friday
October 09 | 2026
26 Rabi al-Thani 1448 AH
Issue No: 242
Volume: 16
Pages: 12
Price :Rs: 2/-

16TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION
HEADLINES TODAY
Voice To The Voiceless



P:12
Badminton: PV Sindhu cruises through at Arctic Open

Srinagar Police Holds Pipping Ceremony; SI Tauseef Ahmad Khan Promoted to Inspector

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCT 08 : Srinagar Police on Thursday held a pipping ceremony at the District Police Headquarters here to mark the promotion of Sub-Inspector Tauseef Ahmad Khan to the rank of Inspector, officials said.

The ceremony was presided over by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Dr. G.V. Sundeeep Chakravarthy, IPS, who adorned the newly promoted officer with the rank insignia, they said.

SPSOG Srinagar Tanweer Ahmad, along with other officers, was also present on the occasion, the officials added.

Congratulating Inspector Tauseef Ahmad Khan on his promotion, the SSP Srinagar commended his service and wished him success in his new responsibilities. He expressed confidence that the

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Abe Memorial Corridor in Varanasi a Tribute to Former Japanese PM's Enduring Legacy : PM Modi

Meets Akie Abe, Recalls Shinzo Abe's Contribution to India-Japan Ties



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCT 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday met Mrs. Akie Abe, wife of late former Japanese

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in New Delhi and expressed deep appreciation for her enduring association with India. Recalling Shinzo Abe as a dear friend and visionary leader, Modi said he played a defining

role in elevating India-Japan relations to new heights. The Prime Minister said the inauguration of the Abe Memorial Corridor at the Rudraksh International Cooperation and Convention Centre in Varanasi was a fitting tribute to Abe's lasting contribution to the friendship between India and Japan.

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi met Mrs. Akie Abe, wife of late former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in New Delhi today and expressed deep appreciation for her enduring association with India.

The Prime Minister recalled Shinzo Abe as a dear friend and visionary leader who played a defining role in elevating India-Japan relations to new heights.

Shri Modi said that the inauguration of the Abe Memorial Corridor at the Rudraksh Convention Centre in Varanasi was a fitting tribute to

>>> MORE ON P 02

LG Sinha Hails IAF's Valour and Dedication on Air Force Day

Says Air Warriors continue to rise to every challenge, from defending skies to humanitarian assistance

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 8: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday greeted Indian Air Force personnel and their families on Air Force Day, praising the force for its courage, dedication and exemplary service to the nation. In a post on X, Sinha said the IAF epitomises valour, dedication and excellence, adding that Air Warriors have consistently risen to every challenge, from safeguarding the nation's skies to providing humanitarian assistance. He said the nation remains proud of the glorious legacy of the Indian Air Force, whose establishment in 1932 is commemorated annually on October 8. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday greeted Indian Air Force personnel and their families on Air Force Day, praising the force for its unwavering commitment,

courage and service to the nation. In a post on X, LG Sinha said the IAF epitomises valour, dedication and excellence, and that Air Warriors always rise to every challenge — from



safeguarding the skies to humanitarian assistance. "Nation is proud of their glorious legacy," he said.

Notably, Air Force Day is observed annually on October 8, marking the establishment of the IAF in

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Three J&K Waterways Targeted for Public Use in 2026-27

CS Atal Dulloo directs agencies to expedite works, resolve bottlenecks and unlock tourism potential



HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 8: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Thursday reviewed the readiness of National Waterways across Jammu and Kashmir and directed the concerned agencies and Divisional Commissioners to ensure timely completion of infrastructure and navigation facilities. Three waterways — Jhelum (NW-49), Chenab (NW-26) and Ravi (NW-84) — are targeted for operationalisation during 2026-27, with the Jhelum project featuring a proposed 106-km cruise route from Sangam to Wular Lake, 10 hybrid-electric catamarans, eight passenger and tourist terminals and modern navigation infrastructure. Dulloo emphasised the potential of

waterways to boost river-based tourism, facilitate passenger mobility and reduce pressure on roads while generating new economic opportunities.

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today reviewed the status of readiness for development and operationalisation of National Waterways across Jammu & Kashmir, taking comprehensive appraisal of the onshore infrastructure being developed by the Indian Port Rail & Ropeway Corporation Limited (IPRCL) and the river ecosystem and navigation facilities being prepared by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI).

The meeting besides the ACS, PWD and Chairperson, IWAI was attended by the

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IGP Kashmir Felicitates Srinagar Police for Busting Inter-State Drug Network

Eight accused arrested; narcotics, cash, gold and assets worth crores recovered

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCT 8: Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar Singh, IPS, felicitated the Srinagar Police team for successfully busting an organised inter-state narcotics network operating in Downtown Srinagar. The investigation, led by SSP Srinagar Dr G.V. Sundeeep Chakravarthy and involving officers of Police Station M.R. Ganj, resulted in the arrest of eight accused persons and recovery of substantial quantities of narcotic substances, cash, gold and other valuable assets worth crores of rupees. The probe also exposed inter-state linkages and financial channels associated with the drug-trafficking network, prompting the IGP to commend the team's professionalism and sustained investigative efforts. Inspector General



of Police, Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar Singh, IPS, felicitated the Srinagar Police team, led by SSP Srinagar Dr G.V. Sundeeep Chakravarthy, IPS, for successfully busting an organised inter-state narcotics network operating in Downtown Srinagar.

The felicitated team included Zonal SP Showkat Ahmad, SDPO M.R. Ganj Junaid Wali, along with the SHOs and Investigating Officers of Police Station M.R. Ganj, who played a significant role in unearthing the network during the investigation of FIR No. 135/2026 of Police Station Safakadal.

The investigation led to the arrest of 08 accused persons and the recovery of huge quantities of narcotic substances, cash, gold and other

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J&K Notifies City Gas Distribution Policy 2026

Policy targets PNG and CNG expansion across all 20 districts to boost clean energy and industrial growth

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCT 8: The Jammu and Kashmir government has notified the City Gas Distribution (CGD) Policy, 2026, aimed at expanding Piped Natural Gas (PNG) and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) access across all 20 districts of the Union Territory. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah described the policy as a major step towards cleaner energy access, stronger industrial competitiveness and modernisation of the UT's energy infrastructure. The policy provides for single-window, time-bound clearances, streamlined establishment of CNG stations, standardised Right of Way norms and priority gas connectivity to major industrial estates in Kathua, Samba and Pulwama, with the

government expecting the initiative to reduce fuel costs, attract investment and create employment and skill-development opportunities.

The Jammu and Kashmir government



has notified the City Gas Distribution (CGD) Policy, 2026, with an aim to expand Piped Natural Gas (PNG) and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) access across all 20 districts of the Union Territory.

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Hindu-Muslim Artisans Give Shape to Dussehra Celebrations in Jammu

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, OCT 8: As preparations for Dussehra gather pace, more than 45 Hindu and Muslim artisans from Meerut in Uttar Pradesh have come together at Geeta Bhawan in Jammu to give shape to towering effigies of Ravana, Meghnad and Kumbhakaran, continuing a tradition that has brought craftsmen from different communities together for several years.

Dussehra, celebrated at the culmination of the Navratri period, marks the victory of good over evil and is traditionally associated with the burning of effigies of Ravana, the principal antagonist of the Ramayana, along with his son Meghnad and brother Kumbhakaran.

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Private Participation in Space Sector Helping Curb Brain Drain : Jitendra Singh

India's space economy could reach

\$45-46 billion in 8-10 years, says Union Minister

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCT 8: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh on Thursday said opening India's space sector to private players has created new opportunities for young



scientific and technical talent and helped reduce the need for professionals to seek employment abroad. Addressing students at the NaMo Book Fest in Varanasi, Singh said the emergence of private space startups has widened opportunities for young engineers and strengthened India's growing space ecosystem, with the country's

space economy currently estimated at around \$9 billion and projected to reach \$45-46 billion over the next eight to ten years. He stressed that government institutions, private industry, startups and academia must work together, while highlighting India's progress in space technology, biotechnology, quantum science, artificial intelligence, deep-ocean exploration and nuclear energy.

The opening of India's space sector to private players has created new opportunities for young scientific and technical talent within the country and helped reduce the need to look abroad for employment, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances and

>>> MORE ON P 02

Dr Darakhshan Andrabi Conferred Prestigious Hazrat Sheikh-ul-Aalam Award 2026

Honour recognises her contribution to Rishi-Sufi ethos, shrine restoration and preservation of Kashmir's spiritual heritage

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 8 : Chairperson of the Jammu & Kashmir Waqf Board, Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, has been honoured with the prestigious Hazrat Sheikh-ul-



Aalam Award 2026 by Kashmir Markaz-e-Adab-wa-Saqafat (KMAS), Charar-e-Sharief, in recognition of her contribution to the propagation of the Rishi-Sufi ideology and her efforts towards the development,

restoration and upgradation of spiritual shrines across Jammu & Kashmir. The award was presented in the presence of eminent scholars, members of the J&K Waqf Board and representatives of KMAS. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Andrabi said the Rishi-Sufi tradition represents one of the deepest expressions of Kashmir's spiritual heritage and carries a timeless message of peace, compassion, tolerance, brotherhood and harmony. She described the service of Sufi shrines as a sacred responsibility and said her vision is to develop these spiritual centres while preserving their historical and architectural character, alongside modern amenities, cleanliness and better facilities for devotees

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Mian Altaf Seeks Immediate Electrification of Hill Kaka Village in Poonch

MP urges PDD to expedite grid connectivity for remote border village



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCT 8: Member of Parliament from the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency Mian Altaf Ahmad has urged the Jammu and Kashmir administration to expedite electrification of Hill Kaka village in Surankote, Poonch, where residents have long remained without electricity. Raising the issue

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Srinagar Police

officer would continue to discharge his duties with professionalism, dedication, integrity and a strong sense of responsibility, while upholding the highest standards of policing.

The ceremony concluded with best wishes to the newly promoted officer for a successful and distinguished tenure ahead. (KNS)

Abe Memorial

Shinzo Abe's lasting contribution to India-Japan friendship.

In a post on X, Shri Modi said; "Pleased to meet Mrs. Akie Abe, wife of late former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Deeply value her enduring association with India.

Abe San was a dear friend and a visionary leader who played a defining role in elevating India-Japan relations to new heights. The inauguration of the Abe Memorial Corridor at the Rudraksh Convention Centre in Varanasi yesterday is a fitting tribute to his lasting contribution to India-Japan friendship.

LG Sinha

1932. The occasion honours the bravery, professionalism and sacrifices of those serving in the force. (KNS)

J&K Notifies

The policy, approved by the Council of Ministers, is being seen as a major step towards expanding clean fuel access, accelerating industrial growth and modernising energy infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a post on X as per KNS.

It provides an investor-friendly and time-bound framework to expand the use of PNG and CNG across households, commercial establishments, industries and the transport sector.

According to officials, the key provisions of the policy include coverage across all 20 districts, single-window time-bound clearances, streamlined establishment of CNG stations, standardised Right of Way norms, and priority gas connectivity to major industrial estates, including those in Kathua, Samba and Pulwama.

The policy is expected to ensure safe, affordable and cleaner energy, reduce fuel costs, strengthen industrial competitiveness, attract green investments and create new opportunities for employment, apprenticeships and skill development, the Chief minister office said.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah congratulated Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Satish Sharma and the department concerned on the notification of the policy, calling it a significant step towards cleaner growth and sustainable development in J&K. (KNS)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday termed the notification of the Jammu & Kashmir City Gas Distribution (CGD) Policy, 2026 a major step towards expanding access to clean fuel, strengthening industrial competitiveness and modernising the energy infrastructure of Jammu & Kashmir.

Notified following its approval by the Council of Ministers, the policy establishes a clear, investor-friendly and time-bound framework for expanding the use of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) across households, commercial establishments, industries and the transport sector.

The policy envisages phased expansion of City Gas Distribution networks across all 20 districts of J&K, bringing cleaner and reliable natural gas closer to consumers while supporting the transition away from conventional fuels.

A key focus of the policy is to simplify and accelerate project implementation through single-window, time-bound clearances, streamlined procedures for establishing CNG stations and standardised Right of Way norms. It also provides for priority gas connectivity to major industrial estates, including those in Kathua, Samba and Pulwama, to support industrial growth and improve access to reliable energy.

The expansion of PNG and CNG infrastructure is expected to provide safer, cleaner and more affordable energy options, help reduce fuel costs, improve industrial efficiency and competitiveness, and encourage greater investment in the emerging clean-energy sector.

The policy also provides an impetus to local employment, apprenticeships and skill development, creating new opportunities in the construction, operation and maintenance of gas distribution infrastructure and associated services.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah congratulated Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Satish Sharma and the Department on the notification of the policy, describing it as an important step towards cleaner growth, sustainable development and a modern energy ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir.

"The City Gas Distribution Policy will help expand clean and reliable energy access while creating an enabling environment for industry and investment. It is an important step towards building a cleaner, more efficient and sustainable energy future for J&K," the Chief Minister said. (KNS)

IGP Kashmir

valuable assets worth crores of rupees. The investigation also exposed inter-state linkages and financial channels associated with the organised drug-trafficking network.

IGP Kashmir appreciated the professionalism, dedication and sustained investigative efforts of the Srinagar Police team, and encouraged the officers to continue their determined action against organised crime and narcotics trafficking.

Srinagar Police reiterates its unwavering commitment to dismantling drug-trafficking networks, targeting their financial infrastructure and ensuring stringent action against those involved in the narcotics trade. (KNS)

Three J&K

respective Divisional Commissioners; Secretary, Transport; GGM, IPRL and several other officers from the concerned departments and these agencies.

The Chief Secretary directed the Divisional Commissioners to undertake periodic review of the progress of National Waterway projects in their respective divisions and make occasional on-site visits to facilitate quick resolution of issues and smooth execution of works.

He observed that most of the issues confronting the projects are minor and resolvable and should be addressed promptly by the concerned Divisional Administrations in coordination with the executing agencies.

Dulloo also underscored the tourism and urban mobility potential of the National Waterways, observing that river cruises could emerge as a major attraction for visitors while providing an alternative mode of transport in congested urban areas.

He stressed that development of waterways, should be planned to promote river-based tourism, facilitate passenger movement and help reduce pressure on the road network, while ensuring a safe, attractive and sustainable experience for both tourists and commuters.

He called upon IPRL and IWAI to work strictly against the prescribed timelines and ensure that the necessary infrastructure, navigation facilities and supporting river ecosystem are put in place so that the waterways are ready for public use by next year.

The Chairperson, IWAI, Sushil Kumar Lohani while speaking in the meeting revealed that three major National Waterways including Jhelum (NW-49), Chenab (NW-26) and Ravi (NW-84) are being targeted for operationalisation during FY 2026-27. He added that the Jhelum National Waterway extends 110 km from Sangam Bridge in Anantnag to Wular Lake; the Chenab waterway covers 53 km between Reasi and Akhnoor; while the Ravi waterway extends 44 km from Chamera Dam to Ranjit Sagar Dam at Basohli.

The Chief Secretary was apprised of the substantial progress achieved on NW-49 (Jhelum), where a 106-km river cruise route from Sangam to Wular Lake has been proposed, covering important locations including Pantha Chowk, Zero Bridge, Amira Kadal, Maharajganj, Chattabal, Sumbal and Gund Prang.

Moreover it was given out that a work order has been issued for 10 hybrid electric catamarans with a capacity of 20 passengers each, at a cost of ₹66.11 crore. The vessel designs have been approved and construction is underway, with delivery targeted by March 2027.

It was further informed that all 52 navigational HDPE buoys required for the Jhelum waterway have been delivered, while six of the eight concrete pontoons/jetties have already been cast and are targeted for completion by December 2026.

Additionally the construction of eight passenger/tourist terminal facilities at Sangam, Pantha Chowk, Zero Bridge, Amira Kadal, Byopar Mandal Ghat, Chattabal Weir, Sumbal and Gund Prang has also commenced, with the works targeted for completion by June 2027. The terminals are being designed with a local Kashmiri architectural character while incorporating modern structural and utility features.

On NW-26 (Chenab), it was informed that the cruise route has been identified for initial development between the identified terminal locations, while terminal land at Reasi and Akhnoor has been handed over to IWAI. On NW-84 (Ravi), a cruise route has been identified at Sohar in Jammu, with terminal land at Satwain near Ranjit Sagar Dam being processed for development.

For the same, it was elucidated that the civil works for three concrete pontoons across the Chenab and Ravi waterways are under casting and are targeted for completion by December 2026, while DPRs for the associated onshore facilities have been finalised.

On the land and site-readiness front, it was informed by the GGM, IPRL, Deepak that all the 11 identified land parcels for terminal development have been transferred to the Transport Department and formally handed over to IWAI. In addition to that the sites on the Jhelum, besides Manda in Akhnoor and Talwara in Reasi, have been handed over for their development. The remaining parcel at Domar/Satwain in Kathua is being processed with the concerned authorities.

One Killed

All the injured and the deceased are residents of Chunthan, Senabathi.

Police have taken cognisance of the accident and are verifying the circumstances leading to the mishap. [KNT]

Mian Altaf

with Principal Secretary, Power Development Department, Ashwini Kumar, the MP highlighted the hardships faced by villagers despite government schemes aimed at universal power coverage and sought immediate installation of the required infrastructure. He said the Principal Secretary had assured him that the matter would be reviewed promptly and necessary action taken on priority, while Mian Altaf assured residents that he would continue monitoring the issue until power supply becomes fully operational.

Member of Parliament for Anantnag-Rajouri constituency, Mian Altaf Ahmad, has expressed strong concern over the long-pending non-electrification of Hill Kaka village in Surankote, Poonch district.

He called on the administration to expedite grid connectivity and basic infrastructure for the historical and remote border village.

In a statement issued, Mian Altaf said that the residents of Hill Kaka village are suffering due to non-availability of electricity.

MP Mian Altaf highlighted the severe hardship faced by the residents of Hill Kaka, who remain deprived of electricity despite various government schemes aimed at universal power coverage.

MP Mian Altaf took the matter with the Principal Secretary, PDD, Ashwini Kumar and urged him to take necessary measures to ensure electrification of Hill Kaka without further delay."

The Member of Parliament assured the public that the Principal Secretary, PDD, gave a positive assurance to review the situation promptly and take necessary steps on a priority basis. Mian Altaf emphasized that he will continue to monitor the progress closely until power infrastructure is fully installed and operational on the ground. (KNS)

Dr Darakhshan

and pilgrims. Referring to the teachings of Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani (RA) and other spiritual luminaries, she said their message transcends religious and social boundaries and remains highly relevant in today's world. Dr Andrabi dedicated the honour to all those working for the preservation of Kashmir's spiritual heritage and reaffirmed her commitment to the conservation, beautification and dignified upkeep of Sufi and spiritual shrines across the Union Territory.

Private Participation

Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, said today.

Dr Jitendra Singh was addressing students at the NaMo Book Fest at the Rudraksh International Cooperation and Convention Centre, Varanasi, a two-day festival being held on October 7-8 and commemorating 25 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Head of Government, through books written by different authors on various facets of his life, leadership and public service. The festival was coordinated by senior journalist Ashok Shrivastava.

Later, interacting with students in a question-answer session, Dr Jitendra Singh said that earlier, limited opportunities within the domestic space ecosystem meant that many young professionals looked overseas, whereas the opening up of the sector has enabled more talent to stay back and contribute to India's growing space ecosystem. The emergence of private space startups, including Skyroot, is creating new opportunities for young engineers within the country.

The Minister's introductory address was followed by an hour-long interaction and panel discussion with students. The panel included Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University, Professor Chaturvedi; Dr Sunil Kumar from the ocean sciences; Dr Ekta, Department of Science & Technology; Dr Geeta, Department of Biotechnology; and Dr Jay Jaiswal from the space sector.

Dr Jitendra Singh said the expansion of the space sector represents a fundamental change in India's scientific ecosystem. "The age of silos is over," he said, stressing that government institutions, private industry, startups, academia and research institutions must work together to build capabilities that can compete globally. The opening of the sector has transformed space from a predominantly government-led domain into a wider ecosystem in which young professionals and private enterprises can participate.

The transformation is already visible in the growth of India's space economy, which has reached around USD 9 billion and, if the present momentum continues, could reach USD 45-46 billion over the next 8-10 years, the Minister said. He attributed this expansion to opening the sector and bringing a wider range of stakeholders into India's space

journey.

Dr Jitendra Singh also told students that India's space story is no longer limited to rockets and launch missions. Space technology is increasingly being used to make everyday life easier, including in infrastructure planning, project monitoring and disaster management. Indian satellites are also providing information to neighbouring countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Sri Lanka to help them prepare for floods and other disasters, he said.

Taking the students through India's wider scientific transformation, the Minister said the last 12-13 years have been an "Era of Science" in India, with technology receiving high policy priority and being increasingly used to improve lives. He said India had the scientific talent and human resources for decades, but the enabling policy environment required to convert that potential into national capability has strengthened significantly in recent years.

The Minister cited the Deep Ocean Mission, Quantum Mission, Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security and the Anusandhan National Research Foundation among the initiatives creating capabilities in emerging scientific fields. Referring to the Deep Ocean Mission, he said India is beginning to explore the enormous scientific and economic potential of its oceans, including resources that have remained largely unexplored.

On biotechnology, Dr Jitendra Singh referred to India's dedicated policy framework focused on "Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment", the development of the world's first DNA vaccine against COVID-19, and the Genome India initiative as examples of the country's growing indigenous capabilities and preparation for an era of precision medicine.

Referring to Chandrayaan-3, the Minister said India has demonstrated its ability to undertake sophisticated space missions with remarkable cost efficiency. He said the country has moved beyond the earlier phase in which it largely followed developments elsewhere and is now moving alongside the world, with India already ahead in several areas.

Dr Jitendra Singh also referred to the opening of the nuclear sector to private participation and India's target of 100 GW of nuclear energy capacity by 2047, with nuclear power emerging as an important clean-energy source for future requirements, including AI and data centres. He said the increased priority accorded to research is reflected in the rise in GERD from around 46,000-47,000 crore in 2013-14 to around 2-2.5 lakh crore.

Responding to students on Artificial Intelligence, Dr Jitendra Singh encouraged them to embrace the technology while retaining independent thinking and curiosity. "You have to be intelligent enough to use Artificial Intelligence," he said, stressing that technology should strengthen human capability rather than replace the curiosity that drives scientific discovery. Pasted text

Dr Jitendra Singh said India's scientific progress has created a new self-confidence,

reflected in the country's growing global standing and the opportunities now available to its youth. Recalling PM Sh Modi's message "We can do it," he said India has moved from an era when the world experimented and India followed to one in which scientific developments are taking place in India alongside the rest of the world, with the country moving ahead in several fields.

The next phase, he said, will depend on sustained collaboration, greater opportunities for young talent and the continued conversion of scientific capability into innovation, economic opportunity and solutions for everyday life as India advances towards Viksit Bharat.

Hindu-Muslim

The symbolic burning of the effigies forms a central part of celebrations at numerous places, drawing people together for religious, cultural and community events.

At Geeta Bhawan, the preparations have taken on an added significance as Hindu and Muslim craftsmen work side by side to construct the elaborate effigies that will eventually become part of Dussehra celebrations at different locations across Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The artisans from Meerut have been engaged in preparing the effigies for several years and have developed specialised skills required for their construction. From assembling the framework to shaping and decorating the figures, the work requires coordination and painstaking craftsmanship ahead of the festival.

The joint participation of artisans belonging to Hindu and Muslim communities has also brought attention to the broader social message associated with their work. The craftsmen said their collaboration reflects communal harmony, unity and brotherhood, with the preparations providing an example of people from different backgrounds working together for a common purpose.

The effigies being prepared in Jammu will be supplied to different parts of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, where they will form part of local Dussehra programmes. The work is being completed ahead of the festival as organisers across the region make arrangements for celebrations.

The artisans also used the occasion to convey a message to the younger generation, urging youth to stay away from drugs and other harmful habits and instead focus on education, productive activities and constructive contributions to society.

Their appeal comes alongside their efforts to prepare the traditional symbols of Dussehra, making their work not only part of the festival preparations but also an expression of cooperation and shared social responsibility.

The presence of the artisans in Jammu highlights how traditional craftsmanship associated with religious and cultural festivities can bring communities together, with their collective work continuing to provide the visual centrepiece for Dussehra celebrations in several parts of the region. [KNT]

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Loans worth 14.71 Cr provided to artisans, weavers in Q1 & Q2 of CFY

19.00 Cr interest subvention provided by Handicrafts & Handloom Dept since 2020

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 8: Artisans and weavers across Kashmir are receiving a fresh boost of working capital, with the Handicrafts and Handloom Department extending loans worth 14.71 crore under its flagship Credit Card Scheme in the first two quarters of the current financial year.

Of the 3,885 applications sponsored to banks, 1,332 have been sanctioned and 1,054 disbursed by the end of September 2026.

Sharing details in a press release issued here today, spokesman of the Department stated that the department is working with lead banks and other financial institutions to widen access to this facility. "The funds are meant to help craftspeople set up independent units and buy raw material and tools in a sector that remains heavily labour-intensive," he said.

The spokesman further stated that the beneficiaries also receive interest subvention of 7% on a tapering basis for five years, designed to help new units become self-sustaining. "Since the credit limit was raised from 1



lakh to 2 lakh in 2020, in line with the Wool Processing, Handloom and Handicrafts Policy,

more than 10,000 craftsmen have taken loans totalling 151 crore," he said.

Over the same period, the department has provided interest subvention of 19 crore to support these unit-holders, he added.

The scheme is aimed at reducing dependence on informal credit and giving traditional crafts a more stable financial footing. By easing access to formal loans for tools, raw material and small production units, the department hopes to help artisans and weavers expand output, retain younger craftspeople in the trade and strengthen Kashmir's handloom and handicraft economy.

Artisans and weavers can apply online at singlewindow.jk.gov.in to avail the benefits of the scheme. Common Service Centres set up across districts are available to help with registration.

The spokesman urged the financial institutions and lead banks to treat the craft sector as under priority lending and extend timely, hassle-free credit so that small unit-holders can build a stronger and more self-reliant base.

Charandeep Singh assumes Charge as Deputy Commissioner Shopian

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 08: Charandeep Singh today assumed charge as Deputy Commissioner Shopian.

Speaking after assuming the charge, he outlined his core priorities for the district, emphasizing proactive governance, complete transparency and the time-bound delivery of public services.

The DC underscored the critical need for seamless inter-departmental coordination to accelerate the execution of ongoing development projects, infrastructure initiatives and welfare schemes across Shopian.

"Our primary aim will be to ensure a responsive, transparent and accountable administration at all levels," he added.

The DC emphasized that Public grievance redressal, rural infrastructure strengthening and ensuring basic amenities reach every corner of the district will remain top priorities.

He further called upon district officers and field staff to work with dedication, integrity and a result-oriented approach to meet public expectations effectively.



DLSA Srinagar holds Meeting on Mediation 3.0, Special Lok Adalat

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 08: A meeting regarding the ongoing Mediation 3.0 campaign and the upcoming Special Lok Adalat on NI Act cases, scheduled to be held on 17th October 2026, was convened at the District Court Complex, Srinagar.

The meeting was held under the guidance of Naseer Ahmad Dar Chairman, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar, and under the overall supervision of the Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, with the participation of all Judicial Officers of District Srinagar.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held regarding the objectives of Mediation 3.0, with emphasis on promoting mediation as an effective, expeditious and amicable mechanism for resolution of disputes.

The Judicial Officers were sensitized about the importance of identifying suitable cases for mediation and encouraging litigants to explore alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

The meeting also focused on the preparations for the upcoming Special Lok Adalat for cases under the Negotiable Instruments Act (NI Act), to be held at the District Court Complex, Srinagar. The participants discussed measures for effective case disposal, coordination among stakeholders and ensuring maximum participation of litigants for amicable settlement of eligible cases.

The meeting underscored the commitment of DLSA Srinagar towards strengthening Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms and facilitating speedy, accessible and cost-effective justice for litigants. The meeting underscored the commitment of DLSA Srinagar towards strengthening Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms and facilitating speedy, accessible and cost-effective justice for litigants.

DC Shopian chairs introductory meeting with District Officers

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 08: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, convened an introductory review meeting today with district officers and field staff to assess administrative functioning, the status of ongoing development projects and public delivery systems across the district.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC outlined his core priorities for Shopian, emphasizing proactive governance, complete transparency, patient hearing of public grievances and time-bound delivery of public services. He directed key departments, including RDD, Agriculture and other to coordinate seamlessly, resolve inter-departmental bottlenecks and eliminate procedural delays to accelerate key development projects and



welfare schemes.

To ensure structured oversight, department-wise reviews will be prepared to identify critical needs and track performance metrics directly.

The meeting was attended by SSP, Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmed

Choudhary, ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, ADC, Dr.

Zakir Hussain Faaz, ACR, Shakoor Ahmed Dar, SDM, Zainapora, Bilal Ahmed, GM, DIC, Shurjil Naik, ACD, Muzaffar Ahmed, senior officers/officials and other district officers.

FDA in collaboration with M/S NASVI conducts FoS-TaC Training for Street Food Vendors in Anantnag

HT News Network

ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 08: The Food & Drugs Administration (FDA), J&K in collaboration with M/S National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) today, organised a Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC) programme for 100 street food vendors/Food Business Operators (FBOs) at town Hall Anantnag.

During the training programme, the participating FBOs were sensitised about food safety requirements, personal hygiene, safe food handling practices, prevention of food contamination, repeated use of cooking oil, use of synthetic food colours, use of news paper in food handling and the importance of maintaining hygienic conditions while preparing and serving food to consumers.

On the occasion, Assistant Commissioner Food Safety, Anantnag, Sheikh Zameer, apprised the participants regarding need for maintaining consistency with different regulatory provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. The participants were also apprised of their responsibilities under the food safety regulations and encouraged to adopt safe and hygienic practices as part of their routine food business operations.

Moreover, during the training, hygiene



kits and FoSTaC certificates were distributed among the participating FBOs.

The FDA informed that the training programme will continue on October 9 and 10, 2026 also, during which 200 more Street Food Vendors will be imparted FoSTaC training at Town Hall Anantnag and Kokernag.

The initiative aims to enhance capacity building and skill development among street food vendors to ensure the availability of safe, hygienic, and quality food for the general public.

Shameema visits Khanqah-e-Moula, reviews 4.93 Crore conservation, restoration plan

HT News Network

Srinagar, 08 Oct (KNS) : The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Women's Wing President and MLA Habba Kadal Shameema Firdous Thursday visited the historic Khanqah-e-Moula in Srinagar and reviewed the proposed conservation and restoration works at the revered spiritual and historical centre associated with Hazrat Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (RA).

She said that around 4.93 crore has been earmarked for the preservation, restoration and allied works at the historic Khanqah-e-Moula. "The proposed works include conservation of the historic woodwork, restoration of the traditional roof, repair and restoration of Jafri/Panjrakari and papier-mâché work, restoration of stonework and Devri flooring, besides drainage, roofing, electrical works, lightning protection and fire-safety measures. A dedicated Fire and Emergency Services quarter is also proposed to strengthen preparedness for emergencies."

Shameema Firdous said preserving the historical, spiritual and architectural character of Khanqah-e-Moula is of utmost



importance and every possible measure must be taken to safeguard this great heritage for future generations. She said the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference has always played a proactive role in protecting the religious, cultural and historical heritage of Jammu and Kashmir.

Referring to the initiatives undertaken during the governments of Sher-e-Kashmir

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah for the preservation and development of Khanqahs, shrines, temples and other important historical and cultural sites, she said the present government is equally committed to carrying this legacy forward. She added that efforts are continuing across Jammu and Kashmir to ensure the preservation and restoration of religious and historical heritage, including ancient shrines and temples.

and historical heritage, including ancient shrines and temples.

She further said the ongoing efforts at Khanqah-e-Moula reflect the government's seriousness towards preserving the spiritual sanctity, historic significance and unique architectural heritage of the revered shrine, so that this invaluable legacy can be passed on to future generations in all its glory.

Officials from the Archaeology Department, R&B Department and Khuddam-e-Ziyarat Shah-e-Hamadan, besides local residents, were present on the occasion. Referring to the initiatives undertaken during the governments of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah for the preservation and development of Khanqahs, shrines, temples and other important historical and cultural sites, she said the present government is equally committed to carrying this legacy forward. She added that efforts are continuing across Jammu and Kashmir to ensure the preservation and restoration of religious and historical heritage, including ancient shrines and temples.

Zero Tolerance Towards Terrorism Biggest Takeaway of Modi Sarkar: Pathania

HT News Network

Udhampur, October 8: "Zero tolerance towards terrorism in all its forms has been one of the biggest takeaways of the Modi Government," said MLA Udhampur East Ranbir Singh Pathania, while speaking at a Rangoli Competition organised at Ayesha International School, Udhampur.

Pathania said that under the decisive leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji, a new sense of security and confidence has been created in Jammu & Kashmir. He said that the Government has taken firm and uncompromising measures against terrorism, its financing and its support ecosystem.

"Hawala funding has been curbed, the terror ecosystem has been dismantled and those providing shelter and support to terrorism have also faced decisive action. The message is loud and clear – Bharat Sarkar has zero tolerance towards terrorism," Pathania said.

He said that the demolition and attachment of properties associated with terrorists and their supporters has also sent a strong signal that the Government will not allow the support infrastructure of terrorism to flourish.

"Modi Ji's Journey Is a Story of Leadership During Crises" said Mr Pathania.



Referring to the 25 years of public service of Narendra Modi Ji, Pathania said that his journey has been marked by leadership during some of the most challenging phases faced by the country.

He recalled the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, economic disruptions, demonetisation, geopolitical developments, Central Asian challenges and evolving global circumstances, saying that India emerged from these difficult phases with greater confidence and a stronger global standing.

Pathania said that the Prime Minister's clarion call of "Viksit Bharat" and the vision of making India one of the world's top three economies has provided the nation with a clear developmental direction.

District Level Event on National Launch of JOSH Teams organized in Ganderbal TB Free Panchayats felicitated

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 08: The District Administration Ganderbal today organised a district level programme at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat Ganderbal, in connection with the National Launch of JOSH Teams (Joint Squad for Health Teams) and felicitation of TB Free Panchayats.

The programme was held simultaneously with the national level launch at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, inaugurated by the Minister for Health & Family Welfare, in collaboration with the Ministries of Labour & Employment, Youth Affairs & Sports and Defence.

At the district level event, field functionaries associated with the TB Mukta Bharat Programme and officials of the Health Department participated in the national launch through virtual mode. The programme focused on strengthening community participation and coordinated efforts towards achieving the goal of a TB free



society.

On the occasion, TB Free Panchayats were felicitated in recognition of their achievement and contribution towards TB elimination efforts. The

felicitations acknowledged the collective efforts of Panchayati Raj Institutions, health functionaries and community stakeholders in strengthening TB detection, treatment,

awareness and prevention at the grassroots level.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, highlighted the importance of

collective efforts and active community participation in achieving the goal of a TB free society. He stressed upon all stakeholders to strengthen awareness, early identification, timely treatment and follow-up of TB cases and called for sustained efforts towards making Ganderbal TB free.

As part of the programme, a TB Mukta Bharat pledge was also administered to the participants, who pledged to contribute towards TB elimination and support efforts aimed at creating greater awareness about prevention, early detection and treatment of tuberculosis.

The programme also witnessed participation of volunteers associated with MY Bharat, reflecting the importance of community and youth participation in the TB elimination campaign.

The programme was attended by health officials and field functionaries, MY Bharat volunteers and other concerned stakeholders, besides officials of the District Administration.

Rana e-inaugurates, lays foundation for forest, wildlife projects worth Rs1.31 cr in Rajouri

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 08: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today e-inaugurated and e-laid foundation stones for four projects under the Forest, Ecology & Environment Departments across Budhal, Thanamandi and Rajouri constituencies. The projects, funded under UT Capex and having a combined cost of 131.71 lakh, are aimed at promoting eco-tourism, providing recreational spaces to local communities and strengthening forest and wildlife protection infrastructure.

The projects included two eco-parks in Nanga Thub (Bakori) and Nambal (Budhal), each being developed at an estimated cost of 40 lakh under the Rajouri Forest Division. The foundation stones for both projects were laid in presence of MLA Budhal, Javid Iqbal Choudhary.

The Minister also laid the foundation stone for a Forest Check Post at Darhal, to be constructed under the Rajouri Forest Division at an estimated cost of 11.71 lakh under UT Capex 2026-27, in presence of MLA Thanamandi, Muzaffer Iqbal Khan.

He also e-inaugurated the Range Office Building at Rajouri, constructed by the Department of Wildlife Protection at a cost of 40 lakh, in presence of MLA Rajouri, Iftikhar Ahmed.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said



that the projects reflect the Government's commitment to balance the environmental conservation with development while creating quality recreational and eco-tourism facilities for local communities.

Highlighting the importance of eco-parks in Jammu and Kashmir, Rana said that such initiatives promote harmony between nature, forests, wildlife and local communities while creating opportunities for eco-tourism and ecological restoration. He emphasised the need to develop eco-parks and undertake conservation measures in a manner that safeguards the natural environment while providing quality recreational spaces and sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities. "These eco-parks will provide quality public spaces for the people and promote eco-tourism while the forest check post and Range Office will further strengthen the protection, monitoring and management of our forests and wildlife," he said.

Mandeep Kaur presides over first ever BWG convention; says every generator must own its waste

■ HT News Network

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 08: A convention for Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs) was today organised by district administration Budgam with the objective of sensitising the business establishments, institutions and other bulk waste generators about their responsibilities under Solid Waste Management Rules and promoting scientific and responsible waste management.

Commissioner Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department, Mandeep Kaur who presided over the first of its kind convention said that all business establishments and other Bulk Waste Generators have to take responsibility for processing and managing the waste generated by them.

Addressing the gathering, Mandeep Kaur said that waste generators can adopt appropriate mechanisms such as on-site processing, home or institutional composting,



or engaging authorised waste collectors or agencies for collection and disposal of waste. She said the practice of dumping waste outside commercial establishments after closure of markets has to change, emphasising that every waste generator must take responsibility for its own waste. "Municipalities cannot be expected to take responsibility for the waste generated by every establishment," Commissioner Secretary said, adding that waste generators can engage private or municipal agencies for collection and management of their waste.

The Commissioner Secretary said similar

conventions would be organised in every district to create awareness and strengthen implementation of waste management rules in both urban and rural areas. She said the committees constituted under the directions of the Supreme Court and the responsibilities entrusted to Deputy Commissioners would play an important role in ensuring effective enforcement.

Emphasising that public participation is crucial for achieving a clean environment, Mandeep Kaur said people are willing to contribute but systems need to be strengthened and responsibilities.

Dr Vikas Kundal takes over as Divisional Commissioner Jammu

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, OCTOBER 08: Dr Vikas Kundal today took over as Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, in a formal charge handover and takeover ceremony held at the Divisional Commissioner's Office, Jammu.

The outgoing Divisional Commissioner, Ramesh Kumar, formally handed over the charge to Dr Vikas Kundal in the presence of senior officers and officials of the Divisional Commissioner's Office.

A farewell function was subsequently organised in honour of the outgoing Divisional Commissioner, Ramesh Kumar. Senior officers and officials felicitated him and acknowledged his contributions towards the administration and development of Jammu Division, while conveying their best wishes for his new assignment.

Speaking on the occasion, Ramesh Kumar expressed gratitude to all officers and officials for the cooperation and support extended to him during his tenure. He described his tenure as satisfying and appreciated the team for its dedication, coordination and commitment in discharging its assigned responsibilities.

He also welcomed Dr Vikas Kundal and expressed confidence in his capabilities and professional approach. Recalling his earlier association with Dr Kundal, he described him as a dedicated officer and expressed hope that he would carry forward the ongoing work and developmental initiatives in Jammu Division.

Ramesh Kumar urged the officers and officials to extend the same cooperation and support to Dr Vikas Kundal as they had extended to him and conveyed his best wishes to the entire team.

Rana reviews fund utilisation, physical and financial progress of ongoing works across Jal Shakti, Forest and Tribal Affairs departments

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 08: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a review meeting at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, to assess the status of funds released under various schemes across the three departments.

The meeting also reviewed the district-wise and constituency-wise allocation and utilisation of funds, besides taking stock of the physical and financial progress of ongoing works.

The meeting was attended by Director Tribal Affairs, Director Tribal Research Institute, Directors Finance and Directors Planning & Statistics of the Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs Departments, besides other senior officers.

The Minister reviewed the status of releases, expenditure and progress of works under each scheme, including newly



sanctioned schemes.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister stressed that the funds available with the departments must translate into visible development works on the ground. He directed the officers to expedite the execution of all ongoing schemes, furnish the status of new schemes and take them up for execution without delay.

Maintaining that delays in implementation and shortfalls in fund utilisation must be addressed promptly, the Minister directed the officers to identify the bottlenecks and take necessary corrective measures.

He further directed that no funds should lapse and called

for increasing expenditure under all heads. He also emphasised the need for a swift and time-bound tendering process to ensure that allotment and execution of works are not held up.

The Minister also asked for priority to Maintenance and Repair (M&R) works so that existing infrastructure remains functional, and for the availability of water tankers and the timely supply of materials, especially in areas facing shortages. He further directed that upgradation works be taken up and funds spent judiciously, and that machinery and equipment be made available to field formations for smooth execution of works.

ADDC inspects Legacy Waste Remediation Site in Poonch

■ HT News Network

POONCH, OCTOBER 08: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Poonch

Amarjit Singh today visited the legacy waste remediation site of Municipal Council to review the ongoing scientific disposal of the accumulated waste.

The ADDC was accompanied by ACD Shakeel Ahmed Malik. The CEO Municipal Council Khalil A. Banday informed the visiting officers that approximately 9,825 MT of legacy waste is being processed at the site by M/s Lord Shiva. The ADDC inspected the ongoing

remediation activities and emphasized that source segregation is the foundation of sustainable waste management. He stressed that households, institutions, commercial establishments and other waste generators must segregate waste at source, enabling efficient collection, recycling, processing and scientific disposal. He underlined that while remediation addresses the legacy waste accumulated over the years, preventing the

generation of fresh mixed waste through effective source segregation is equally important.

The ADDC made a strong appeal to the people of Poonch to make waste segregation a daily habit and take responsibility for the waste generated by them. He urged citizens to separate biodegradable, recyclable and other waste at source and hand it over through the prescribed collection system.

District-level JOSH team launched in Kathua to strengthen community participation in TB elimination

MLA Dr. Bharat Bhushan calls for stronger community participation to make Kathua TB-Free

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, OCTOBER 08: District Tuberculosis Centre (DTC) Kathua today organised a programme to launch the District-Level JOSH Team under the TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, with MLA Kathua Dr. Bharat Bhushan as the Chief Guest.

The programme was held in the presence of Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vijay Raina, District Tuberculosis Officer Dr. Radha Krishna and Medical Officer Dr. Suman, besides members of the newly constituted JOSH

Team and other stakeholders. The members of the JOSH Team were sensitised to their role and responsibilities in strengthening community participation, awareness and support towards achieving the goal of a TB-free Kathua.

Addressing the gathering, MLA Dr. Bharat Bhushan appreciated the efforts of the Health Department and all stakeholders engaged in the TB elimination programme. He emphasised the need for greater community participation, awareness and collective responsibility to realise the

vision of a TB-free Kathua.

Appreciation certificates were presented to former Sarpanches of TB-Free Panchayats in recognition of their valuable contribution towards strengthening TB elimination efforts at the grassroots level. Mementos were also presented to Nikshay Mitras and TB Vijetas for their dedication, support and contribution to the TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

JOSH Team members, Sarpanches, Nikshay Mitras, TB Vijetas were present at the event. District Tuberculosis



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HT EDITORIAL

The Price of a Careless Click
India's Digital Future Will Remain
Secure Only When Cyber-Awareness Keeps
Pace With Tchnological Adoption

India's digital transformation has made life faster, easier and more connected. Payments are completed in seconds, banking is conducted from living rooms and smartphones have become gateways to essential services. But convenience has also created a vast new field for cybercriminals. The spread of malicious Android applications disguised as adult-content services is a warning that the country's cyber-security challenge is no longer confined to experts, institutions or technology companies. It concerns every citizen.

The latest scams reveal an uncomfortable truth: criminals do not always need sophisticated tools to steal. They need only a moment of curiosity, a convincing advertisement or a message that appears urgent. A fraudulent website, an attractive social-media promotion or a demand to install an "update" can persuade users to take a step that compromises their devices before they realise what has happened.

The danger intensifies when such applications seek powerful permissions. Android's Accessibility features are designed to assist users and improve usability. In the hands of an untrusted application, however, extensive access can provide criminals with alarming control over a device. Most users are not equipped to assess the technical consequences of such permissions. That lack of understanding has become one of the most valuable assets in the cybercriminal's arsenal.

Public advice to "stay alert" is necessary, but inadequate. Digital safety must become a routine part of digital literacy. Users should know the risks of downloading APK files from unknown sources, installing applications outside official stores and granting sensitive permissions without scrutiny. Any unfamiliar application that asks to activate another service, take control of the device or access more information than its purpose requires should be treated as a serious warning.

Responsibility, however, cannot be shifted entirely to users. Social-media platforms are often the first point of contact between victims and fraudsters. Companies capable of analysing user behaviour and delivering highly targeted advertising must also invest in detecting deceptive campaigns, blocking malicious links and removing fraudulent promotions swiftly. A platform cannot claim neutrality when its systems are being used to deliver cybercrime to millions of people.

Banks and payment companies must strengthen real-time alerts, transaction monitoring and rapid-response systems. Yet financial safeguards have limits when the device itself has been compromised. A smartphone today may hold banking applications, payment credentials, identity documents, photographs, contacts and authentication codes. Securing the phone is no longer a secondary concern; it is a central part of protecting personal finances and identity.

Scams involving adult-themed content carry an additional danger: shame. Victims may fear judgment and avoid reporting the crime. That silence serves only the perpetrators. Being deceived by a cybercriminal is not a moral failing. Victims must report incidents quickly, seek help and secure their accounts and devices without delay. The longer an intrusion remains undetected, the greater the potential damage.

India has embraced digital payments with extraordinary speed. UPI and mobile banking have expanded access and transformed everyday commerce. But adoption has outpaced awareness. Millions know how to make a digital payment, yet many do not know what an APK file is, why Accessibility access is sensitive or how much control an unfamiliar application can gain over a smartphone.

This gap must be addressed as a matter of public policy.

Schools, colleges, banks, government departments and technology companies should make cyber hygiene a regular part of public education. Digital security cannot remain a specialist concern reserved for engineers and information-technology professionals. In a country where smartphones are used for banking, identity verification, education and access to public services, cyber-awareness is a basic life skill.

The current malicious applications may vanish, but the method will survive. Tomorrow's fraud may arrive under a different name, through a different advertisement and with a different excuse. The formula will remain unchanged: attract attention, build trust and persuade the victim to surrender access.

The answer is not panic. It is informed caution.

Can Green Belts Reduce Electromagnetic Radiation?

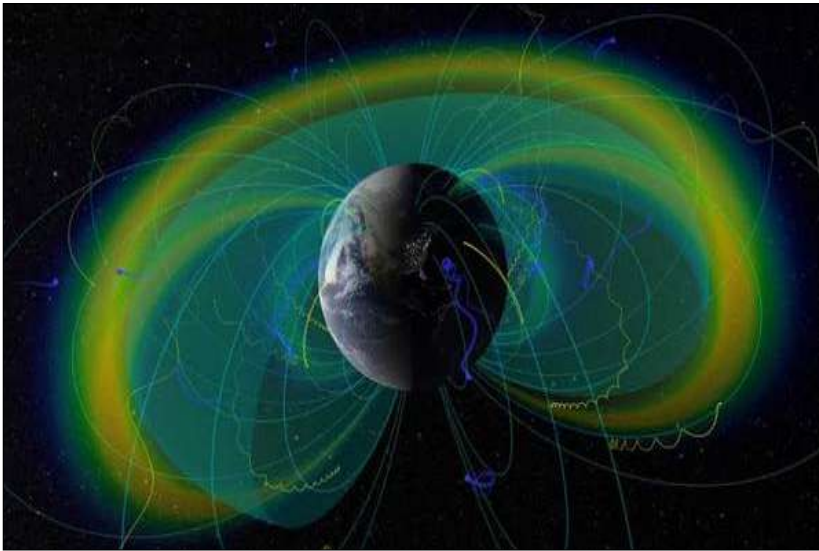


Surinderpal Singh

The modern cities are surrounded by invisible electromagnetic fields. Mobile phones, Wi-Fi networks, broadcasting systems, power lines, communication towers and countless electronic devices have made electromagnetic energy an integral part of contemporary life. As urban populations are continuously expanding and wireless technologies are becoming increasingly ubiquitous, public concern about electromagnetic radiation is also growing. This raises an intriguing environmental question: Can green belts of trees and vegetation help reduce electromagnetic radiation?

The answer is scientifically more nuanced than a simple yes or no. Vegetation does interact with electromagnetic waves. Leaves, branches and trunks contain water and other materials capable of absorbing, scattering or reflecting portions of electromagnetic energy. Consequently, dense vegetation can weaken certain radio-frequency and microwave signals as they pass through it. Anyone who has experienced poor mobile or radio reception inside a dense forest has encountered a practical example of this phenomenon. However, this does not mean that trees function as universal electromagnetic shields.

Electromagnetic radiation represents a vast spectrum of frequencies, ranging from low-frequency fields associated with electrical systems to radio waves, microwaves, infrared radiation, visible light, ultraviolet radiation, X-rays and gamma rays. Different frequencies interact with vegetation in different ways. The degree of attenuation depends on numerous factors, including frequency, wavelength, vegetation density, moisture content, thickness of the green belt, tree species, season and the position of the source and receiver. Therefore,



a green belt may reduce the strength of particular radio-frequency signals under certain conditions, but it cannot be regarded as a dependable barrier against electromagnetic radiation as a whole.

One of the most important distinctions in this debate is between signal attenuation and radiation protection. A forest may weaken a radio signal without eliminating the electromagnetic field. Similarly, planting trees around a communication tower does not automatically guarantee that people living nearby will experience significantly lower exposure. Engineered electromagnetic shielding, where genuinely necessary, relies on materials and structures specifically designed to attenuate electromagnetic fields. Depending on the frequency and application, metals, conductive composites, specialised building materials and other shielding techniques can be used. Distance from the source, transmitter power, antenna configuration and compliance with exposure standards are also important considerations. Thus, vegetation should not be promoted as a substitute for proper engineering or regulatory measures.

Rejecting exaggerated claims about the electromagnetic benefits of trees should not diminish the importance of urban greenery. Quite the opposite: green belts are among the most valuable forms of natural infrastructure available to modern cities. Trees absorb pollutants, trap dust, provide shade, reduce urban heat, support biodiversity, conserve soil and contribute to psychological well-being. Vegetation can also help reduce certain forms of noise and improve the overall quality of urban surroundings. In an era of rising temperatures and increasing environmental stress, these benefits are far more firmly established than any claim that trees can substantially shield populations from electromagnetic radiation. Green belts should therefore be planned because they make cities healthier and more sustainable—not because they are imagined to create an invisible protective wall against electromagnetic waves.

The public debate surrounding electromagnetic radiation requires both scientific honesty and responsible communication. Unnecessary fear can arise when every form of electromagnetic energy

is treated as inherently dangerous. At the other extreme, false reassurance can occur when simple solutions—such as planting trees—are presented as complete protection. The sensible approach lies between these extremes.

Electromagnetic exposure should be evaluated according to the type of radiation, frequency, intensity, duration and established exposure guidelines. Where exposure needs to be controlled, authorities should rely on measurement, appropriate standards, responsible infrastructure planning and proven engineering solutions. Green belts can complement such planning, but they cannot replace it.

The idea of using nature to address technological challenges is appealing, and trees undoubtedly have remarkable environmental value. But good environmental policy must be based on evidence rather than attractive assumptions. Green belts may attenuate certain electromagnetic signals under particular circumstances, especially when vegetation is sufficiently dense and the relevant frequency interacts strongly with the foliage. However, their effect is variable and they should not be considered a universal or reliable shield against electromagnetic radiation.

The future cities should therefore pursue both technological responsibility and ecological wisdom. We need properly regulated communication infrastructure, scientifically informed exposure standards and transparent public information. At the same time, we need more trees, parks, forests and green corridors. Trees may not be the answer to electromagnetic radiation—but they remain one of nature's best answers to many of the other environmental challenges confronting humanity. The lesson is clear: let us plant trees for the right reasons, regulate technology with the right science and protect public health with evidence rather than fear.

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Warmer Seas, Changing Creatures:
The Impact of Climate Change on Body Size



Dr. Vijay Garg

The oceans are warming, and this change is affecting marine life in ways that are sometimes difficult to see. Rising sea temperatures do not merely alter where marine animals live or what they eat; they can also influence their growth, body size, reproduction, metabolism and survival.

From tiny plankton to fish, shellfish and other marine organisms, many creatures respond to warmer water by changing their growth patterns. This raises an important scientific question: Can climate change actually change the size of living organisms in the oceans? Why Does Temperature Matter? Temperature is one of the most important environmental factors affecting living organisms. Every marine animal has a range of temperatures within which its body functions efficiently.

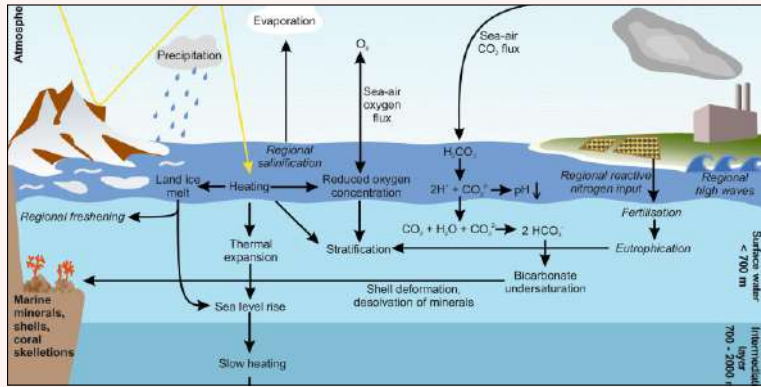
When water becomes warmer, metabolic activity generally increases. Animals may need more oxygen and energy to maintain their bodies. At the same time, warmer water can contain less dissolved oxygen. This creates a difficult situation: an animal may require more oxygen while its environment provides less.

These changes can influence how much energy remains available for growth.

The Possibility of Smaller Bodies

Scientists have observed that warming can sometimes be associated with smaller body sizes in certain marine organisms. Smaller

Fish are particularly sensitive to changes in temperature because their body temperature is largely influenced by their surroundings. Warmer water can affect feeding, growth,



bodies may require less oxygen and energy, potentially offering an advantage under stressful conditions.

This phenomenon is often discussed as part of the temperature-size relationship. However, it is not a simple rule that every marine animal becomes smaller whenever the ocean gets warmer. Different species respond differently, depending on genetics, food availability, habitat, oxygen levels and other environmental conditions.

Some organisms may grow faster when temperatures rise, at least initially. But if temperatures become too high, stress can reduce growth, reproduction and survival.

Fish and Marine Animals Under Pressure

movement and reproduction.

In some species, smaller body size may occur because energy is redirected from growth toward basic survival. Young animals may mature differently, while adults may reach smaller maximum sizes.

Changes in body size can have consequences beyond the individual animal. A smaller fish may produce fewer eggs, alter predator-prey relationships and provide less food for animals higher in the food chain.

Thus, a seemingly small biological change can influence an entire ecosystem.

Oxygen: The Hidden Factor
One of the most important connections between warming and body size involves oxygen.

Warm water generally holds less dissolved oxygen than cold water. At the same time, higher temperatures can increase the metabolic demands of many organisms.

This creates what scientists sometimes describe as an oxygen limitation problem. If an animal cannot obtain enough oxygen to support its increased metabolic needs, its growth and activity may be restricted.

This is one reason why temperature cannot be studied separately from oxygen when scientists examine the future of marine organisms.

Food Availability Also Matters
Temperature is only one part of the story. Food availability is equally important.

Ocean warming can change the abundance and distribution of plankton, algae and other organisms at the base of marine food webs. If a fish lives in warmer water but has less food available, its growth may decline.

Changes in the timing of plankton blooms can also create a mismatch between predators and their food. Young fish may hatch at a time when their preferred food is less abundant.

Therefore, climate change can affect body size indirectly by changing the food chain.

Not Every Species Responds in the Same Way
Nature rarely follows a single pattern.

Some marine species may become smaller under warming conditions, while others may change their growth rate, distribution or behaviour instead. Certain organisms may move toward cooler waters or deeper habitats.

Dr. Vijay Garg: Retired Principal |
Eminent Scientist |
Kaur Chand, MHR Malout, Punjab –
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Maize: The Queen of Cereals



even more productive and beneficial.

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

Types of Maize

Normal yellow
White grain
Sweet corn
Baby corn
Popcorn
Waxy corn
High amylase corn
High oil corn
Taxonomy:
Family: Poaceae (Grass family)

Tribe: Maydace

Botanical name: Zea mays
Chromosome number: 2n = 20
Maize in the Kashmir Valley
In Kashmir, maize is cultivated from large farmlands to small patches, primarily in hilly areas. Kupwara, Baramulla, and Budgam are the leading districts in production. The crop is rain-fed, playing a vital role in local diets and the rural economy.

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

However, maize cultivation is highly dependent on water availability. This year,

prolonged drought and water scarcity have severely affected crop yields. The government should ensure adequate irrigation facilities under centrally sponsored schemes to safeguard farmers' livelihoods.

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

Nutritional Profile:
Vitamins: A, C
Minerals: Iron, zinc, magnesium, phosphorus, selenium

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

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

Sahil Manzoor Bhatti
sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com



Frontliners who demonstrated extraordinary vigilance, quick thinking, and unwavering dedication to protect others



By M S Nazki

The phrase to serve and protect is traditionally associated with law enforcement, but military service similarly embodies themes of duty, defense, and sacrifice found across! Many do not realize it but once they realize the they have gotten old to tell and that they are stories.....I'm not gone that old as yet!

-Here are three inspiring stories of Indian frontliners who demonstrated extraordinary vigilance, quick thinking, and unwavering dedication to protect others.

-Tukaram Ombale: The Vigilant Martyr of 26/11

-During the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, Assistant Sub-Inspector Tukaram Ombale was stationed at a checkpoint when he received alerts about terrorists fleeing in a hijacked car. Armed with only a lathi (wooden baton), he stood his ground as the vehicle approached.

• The Act of Vigilance: Ombale lunged forward and grabbed the barrel of the terrorist Ajmal Kasab's AK-47 rifle.

• The Impact: Despite taking a barrage of bullets at point-blank range, Ombale refused to let go of the weapon. His ultimate sacrifice prevented Kasab from firing at other officers, enabling the team to capture the lone terrorist alive. Kasab's capture provided crucial, undeniable evidence of the international conspiracy behind the attacks.

-Mayur Shelke: The Split-Second Railway Rescue

-In April 2021, Mayur Shelke was working as a railway pointsman at the Vangani railway station

in Maharashtra. His primary job was to monitor tracks and signals, requiring constant visual alertness.

• The Act of Vigilance: While on duty, Shelke spotted a visually impaired mother walking along the platform edge. Her six-year-old child suddenly lost balance and fell directly onto the tracks. At that exact moment, an express train was speeding down the same line.

• The Impact: Without a moment's hesitation, Shelke sprinted toward the child against the direction of the oncoming train. He scooped up the boy and leaped onto the platform just milliseconds before the train roared past, saving the child's life through pure vigilance and athletic bravery.

-Shashank Jaiswal: The Air Traffic Controller Who Headed Off a Disaster!

-In February 2018, Shashank Jaiswal was working as an Air Traffic Controller (ATC) at the Mumbai Airport, one of the busiest single-runway airports in the world.

• The Act of Vigilance: An incoming Indigo flight was cleared to land, while a SpiceJet aircraft was still on the runway preparing for takeoff. Due to a momentary miscommunication, both aircraft were suddenly on a collision course. Jaiswal noticed the overlapping trajectories on his radar screen and visually confirmed the danger through the tower window.

• The Impact: Acting with absolute precision, he immediately issued a "go-around" command to the incoming flight, forcing the pilot to abort the landing and climb back into the sky. His constant monitoring prevented a catastrophic mid-air collision, saving hundreds of lives on both commercial jets.

• The Oath to Defend: Veterans often emphasize raising their right hand to defend freedom and standing by their brothers and sisters in arms.

• Readiness and Duty: Marcus Luttrell highlights in Service: A Navy SEAL at War that training for years without knowing if missions will come defines the heart of true military service.

• Sacrifice and Burden: Authors often reflect on the heavy emotional and physical toll placed



on defenders, who must maintain constant vigilance.

-Classic Military Mottos & Sayings

• "This We'll Defend" — Official motto of the U.S. Army.

• "Semper Fidelis" (Always Faithful) — Official motto of the U.S. Marine Corps.

• "Discipline is the soul of an army." — Indian Army.

-Front line operations GOC White Knight Corps along with GOC Ace Of Spades Division visited forward posts along the Line of Control in Poonch and Krishna Ghati Sectors to review the operational preparedness of the formation.

-The Corps Commander was briefed on the prevailing security environment, counter-infiltration measures, surveillance architecture and ongoing initiatives to further enhance operational effectiveness.

-Commending the troops for their unwavering commitment and operational excellence, the GOC impressed upon all ranks to maintain highest standards of Vigilance, readiness and responsiveness.

We Serve We Protect!

-Front-line operations in an army are direct, high-stakes combat and tactical missions where forward-deployed soldiers actively engage the enemy.

-Key Elements of Front-Line Operations

• Direct Combat: Units engage in close-quarters fighting, direct fire exchanges, and immediate tactical assaults.

• Core Combat Branches: Operations are primarily led by branches like Infantry (close combat), Armor (tanks and mechanized vehicles), and Field Artillery (direct fire support).

• Forward Positioning: Troops operate at or near the Forward Line of Own Troops (FLOT), which marks the furthest forward extent of friendly forces.

• Mission Focus: The fundamental objective is summarized as to "shoot, move, and communicate" to seize territory, repel enemy advances, or defend key positions.

-Types of Front-Line Activities

• Offensive Manoeuvres: Direct attacks, frontal assaults, and pushes into contested areas to break enemy defensive lines.

• Defensive Postures: Holding the Main Line of Resistance (MLR) or Forward Defended Localities (FDL) to block enemy breakthroughs.

• Reconnaissance and Security: Forward scouts and patrols detecting enemy movements and providing real-time intelligence from the edge of the conflict

-The phrase you provided outlines the standard, strategic pillars used by modern military and defense forces (such as the Indian Army along the Line of Control (LoC) or International Border) to maintain territorial integrity and combat cross-border threats.

Here is a breakdown of what each of these core components typically entails in a modern defense context:

-Prevailing Security Environment:

-This refers to the current, real-time assessment of threats in a specific region. It involves analyzing:

• Geopolitical Tensions: State-sponsored proxy threats, ceasefire violations, or political instability in neighboring regions.

• Threat Dynamics: The movement, training, and concentration of terrorists at launch pads across the border.

• Emerging Vectors: The shift from traditional infantry infiltration to technological threats, such as drone-assisted smuggling of weapons, narcotics, and funds.

-Counter-Infiltration Measures

-These are the tactical operations and physical barriers designed to stop adversaries from crossing the border. Key elements include:

• Anti-Infiltration Obstacle System (AIOS): Smart fencing equipped with thermal imagers, night-vision devices, and underground sensors to detect tunneling.

• Tiered Deployment: A multi-layered defense system comprising forward troops at the fence, secondary interception lines in depth, and a rear guard to secure civilian areas.

• Dominance Patrols: Round-the-clock foot patrols, ambushes, and checkpoints in rugged terrain or dense foliage.

A Letter To My Children's Teacher



BY-MOOL RAJ

A person may possess immense knowledge and yet lack wisdom. He may be highly qualified and yet have little compassion. He may speak intelligently and still fail to understand the language of kindness. What good is a prestigious degree if its holder looks down upon the weak, mocks the poor, compromises with truth and bows before power? Can we truly call such a person educated? True education is that which brings knowledge and character together—which is why a teacher is not merely a teacher of subjects, but an architect of character and a builder of the future.

There are moments when a few simple lines speak more profoundly than an entire book. Certain words knock quietly at the doors of the human heart and continue to echo within us long after we have read them. 'A Father's Request to His Son's Teacher' is one such piece of writing.

For decades, this moving letter has circulated widely and has often been attributed to Abraham Lincoln. However, there is no reliable historical evidence confirming that Lincoln actually wrote it. Yet whether or not the attribution is authentic, the wisdom contained in its message remains remarkably relevant to our times.

At its heart lies a simple but profound question: What do we really want to teach our children? Do we want them merely to achieve high marks in examinations? Do we want them only to become doctors, engineers, civil servants or successful professionals? Or do we want them to become good human beings first?

This is perhaps one of the most important questions facing education today.

We speak extensively about academic excellence, competitive examinations and professional success. We measure progress through grades, certificates and achievements. Yet, somewhere along the way, the most essential part of education—the formation of character—can be overlooked.

We place books in the hands of our

children, but sometimes forget to teach them how to understand life beyond books and humanity beyond appearances.

And this is where the true role of a teacher begins.

A teacher does not merely deliver lessons from a textbook. A teacher shapes minds, nurtures values, builds character and leaves an imprint on generations yet to come. Sometimes, a single sentence spoken by a compassionate teacher can remain with a child for an entire lifetime.

The father's message in this celebrated piece is simple yet profound: introduce the child to the realities of the world. Teach him that not everyone he meets will be honest or kind, but also teach him that goodness still exists. Teach him not to fear

encouraged to ask questions, examine evidence, reflect upon what they hear and develop their own understanding. At the same time, they must learn that disagreement does not have to become hostility and that differences of opinion need not destroy mutual respect.

We live in an age of endless voices but very little listening; an age overflowing with information but often short of wisdom; an age of instant communication in which genuine human connection can sometimes feel increasingly distant.

In such a world, the responsibility of a teacher becomes greater than ever.

A child should certainly be taught to love books, but he should also be allowed to read the book of nature. Let him listen

to birdsong, feel the freshness of rain, watch the changing sky and sit beneath the quiet shade of trees. Some of life's most valuable lessons are not found in classrooms; they are discovered in silence, observation and experience.

Children must also learn that the true worth of a person is not measured by clothing, wealth, social position, power or fame. It is measured by character.

What good is a prestigious degree if its holder looks down upon the weak, mocks the poor, compromises with truth and bows before power?

Can we truly call such a person educated?

There is a difference between being educated and being humane.

A person may possess immense knowledge and yet lack wisdom. He may be highly qualified and yet have little compassion. He may speak intelligently and still fail to understand the language of kindness.

True education is that which brings knowledge and character together.

That is why a teacher is not merely a teacher of subjects; a teacher is an architect of character and a builder of the future.

Children should also be taught that there is no shame in showing emotion. Tears do not necessarily signify weakness.

The Author Is A Regular Columnist And Freelance Writer

Wildlife Conservation: Securing the Future with Nature



Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

Wildlife is not just a country's natural wealth; it is also a vital link in its ecosystem. Forests, grasslands, wetlands, rivers, and marine ecosystems can remain balanced only when the diverse species inhabiting them are protected. India is among the world's most important countries in terms of biodiversity. It is home to a diverse range of habitats, from the Himalayas to the Western Ghats, the Thar Desert to the Sundarbans and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Therefore, wildlife conservation is not just an effort to save a few rare species, but also a question of protecting natural resources and human life. The efforts to scientifically reintroduce the captive-bred Great Indian Bustard (Great Indian Bustard) to its natural habitat in Rajasthan are an example of India's emphasis on scientific interventions alongside traditional conservation measures.

The first and most obvious importance of wildlife conservation is protecting biodiversity. Every species plays a role in the ecosystem. The extinction of a species is not simply the loss of a single individual, but can also affect many biological processes associated with it. The conservation of a critically endangered species like the Great Indian Bustard is important because its survival is linked to the protection of its entire grassland habitat. Similarly, the conservation of the tiger has promoted the protection of large forest areas, prey species, and the entire food chain in India. Therefore, the conservation of an 'umbrella species' can provide a protective shield for many other species.

Wildlife also plays a vital role in maintaining ecological balance. Predatory species control herbivore populations, pollinators aid plant reproduction, and many birds and small creatures contribute to seed dispersal. Weakening a crucial link in the food chain can have devastating effects on the entire ecosystem. Healthy forests and grasslands also contribute to water conservation, soil quality, and carbon sequestration. Thus, wildlife conservation is directly linked to climate and environmental security.

Wildlife conservation also ensures numerous ecological services for human society. Conservation of forests and wetlands helps conserve water, recharge groundwater, control floods, and moderate temperatures. Conservation of bees, butterflies, and other pollinators is linked to agricultural productivity. Similarly, natural habitats contribute to carbon storage and help mitigate the effects of climate change. Therefore, protecting nature is not just an environmental responsibility; it is also fundamental to food, water, and livelihood security.

Wildlife conservation is also of no small economic importance. National parks, sanctuaries, and tiger reserves promote nature-based tourism, creating employment and income opportunities for local



communities. If tourism is developed with local participation and within environmental constraints, conservation and livelihoods can complement each other. Furthermore, wildlife is part of India's cultural and natural heritage. It is our generation's responsibility to ensure that future generations see tigers, elephants, great Indian boas, rhinoceroses, lions, and numerous bird species in their natural surroundings.

However, the challenges facing wildlife conservation are serious. The most significant challenge is habitat degradation and fragmentation. Growing populations, agricultural expansion, mining, roads, railways, industries, and other infrastructure projects are shrinking wildlife habitats. Fragmented forests affect animal movement and breeding. Protecting wildlife corridors is essential, especially for large species such as elephants, tigers, and leopards.

Modern infrastructure development has also brought new challenges. Road and rail accidents, collisions with power lines and energy infrastructure can threaten many bird and other wildlife species.

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





DC Samba inaugurates mega plantation drive under Swachhata Hi Seva 2026

■ **HT News Network**

SAMBA, OCTOBER 8: Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today inaugurated a mega plantation drive at Mansar Morh, organised by the Municipal Council (MC) Samba in collaboration with the Jammu & Kashmir Forest Department, as part of Swachhata Hi Seva 2026.

The plantation drive aims to strengthen green cover, promote ecological conservation and enhance the visual and environmental quality of public spaces across the district.

The Deputy Commissioner planted a tree sapling to mark the launch. She appreciated the coordinated efforts of the Municipal Council and Forest Department towards promoting sustainable environmental practices and creating greener public spaces.



Senior officers from the District Administration, Municipal Council and Forest Department along with civic staff, students and volunteers, participated actively in the plantation drive. A variety of native, shade-giving, flowering and fruit-bearing saplings were planted along roadside stretches and available open spaces.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised the importance of collective community participation in environmental conservation and called for sustained efforts to protect and nurture the saplings planted under the campaign. Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today inaugurated a mega plantation drive at Mansar Morh, organised by the Municipal Council (MC) Samba in collaboration with the Jammu & Kashmir Forest Department, as part

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DC reviews progress of water supply schemes, AMRUT 2.0 works, utility shifting in Udhampur

■ **HT News Network**

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 08: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa today convened a meeting with officers of the concerned departments to review the progress of ongoing water supply schemes, works under AMRUT 2.0 and shifting of utilities in the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Uttam Singh and other officers concerned.

The DC undertook a detailed review of various components of the water supply schemes, including filtration units, storage structures, pumping equipment, electrical substations and civil works. He also reviewed the physical and financial progress achieved under AMRUT 2.0 and assessed the status of utility-shifting works.

The concerned departments were asked to complete the shifting of utilities at the earliest to avoid any hindrance to the execution of ongoing projects. The executing agencies were instructed to mobilize adequate manpower and machinery and expedite the pace of work to achieve the stipulated targets within the prescribed timelines.

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department was directed to set monthly targets for the ongoing works and ensure their regular monitoring for timely completion.

CHC Thathri observes World Sight Day Themed "Love Your Eyes"

■ **HT News Network**



THATHRI (DODA), OCTOBER 08: The 27th World Sight Day 2026 was observed at Community Health Centre Thathri under the guidance of Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vinod Sharma and the supervision of Block Medical Officer Dr. Shakeel Ahmed Kichloo.

The programme was organised in line with this year's theme, "Love Your Eyes," with a focus on promoting eye health and creating awareness among the public about the importance of regular eye care.

A series of activities were conducted at CHC Thathri, including awareness sessions on eye care, common eye diseases and preventive measures. Patients and attendants were sensitised to the importance of timely eye check-ups and seeking appropriate medical care for vision-related problems.

Eye screening of beneficiaries was also carried out, facilitating early identification of vision related issues. Spectacles were distributed among eligible beneficiaries as part of the programme.

Training-cum-awareness session on narcotics control held at Udhampur

■ **HT News Network**

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 08: A one-day training-cum-awareness session on Narcotics Control was conducted today by the Narcotics Control Bureau here in collaboration with District Administration Udhampur.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh presided over the training-cum-awareness session.

At the outset, Superintendent NCB Jammu Kapil Sharma delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation covering various aspects of the NDPS Act, investigation techniques, capacity building and inter-departmental coordination, enforcement intelligence and operations, demand and harm reduction, control of precursors and synthetic drugs and rehabilitation strategies for persons affected by drug addiction.

Addressing the participants, the ADC stressed the importance of effective inter-departmental coordination in combating the



drug menace. He directed the concerned departments to intensify awareness activities regarding the harmful effects of drug abuse and ensure effective preventive measures across the district.

He emphasized the need to educate people, particularly the younger generation, about the dangers of addiction and to work collectively towards creating a drug-free environment in the district.

The training session witnessed active participation from officers and officials of various departments, reflecting a coordinated and mission-oriented approach towards preventing drug abuse and strengthening narcotics control measures in the district.

The session was attended by Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr. Umesh Shan, besides senior officers and officials from various departments.

J&K Prosecution Department secures rejection of bail in NDPS cases and murder

■ **HT News Network**

JAMMU, OCTOBER 08: The Prosecution Department, J&K, today commended its Public Prosecutors, whose firm and well-reasoned opposition resulted in the rejection of three bail applications on 6 and 7 October 2026: two under the NDPS Act and one in murder case.

On 6 October 2026, the Special Judge (NDPS Cases), Jammu, Parvaiz Iqbal, rejected two bail applications. First, in UT of J&K vs Vishal Kumar & Ors. (FIR No. 295/2025, PS Bahu Fort), the Special Public Prosecutor Sunil Kumar raised detailed objections, underscored the alleged sale of narcotics to young people. The prosecution placed on record the recovery of 275 grams of heroin from a co-accused and a further 55 grams, cash and a weighing machine from the residence of applicant Reena on her disclosure, besides multiple earlier FIRS. The Court held that she failed to overcome the rigour of Section 37 NDPS Act.

In another matter, Salman Khan v. UT of J&K (FIR No. 172/2022, PS Gandhi Nagar), the Special Public Prosecutor Sunil Kumar, vehemently opposed bail, stressing the commercial quantity involved, the risk of re-offending and the seriousness of the offence. The prosecution relied on a financial trail of 35 transactions totaling Rs 1,32,514 between 17.05.2026 and 10.07.2026, the recovery of 267.92 grams of heroin from a co-accused and two earlier NDPS cases.

The Court rejected the application, holding it barred by Section 37 NDPS Act.

On 7 October 2026, the Principal Sessions Judge, Budgam O.P. Bhagat, dismissed the bail application of Aqib Majeed Rather in FIR No. 143/2023 of Police Station Beerwah, registered under Sections 302 and 506 IPC. Appearing for the UT, Public Prosecutor Suhaib Ashraf filed detailed objections and argued that neither the filing of the charge-sheet nor the examination of nine witnesses entitle an accused to bail, as material witnesses were yet to be examined and the value of testimony must be assessed after appreciation of the entire evidence. He also highlighted the reasonable apprehension of witness interference and the bar under Section 437(1) CrPC. The Court found no reasonable grounds for believing that the accused had not committed the offence and declined to exercise its discretion. The Department said that these outcomes reflect the dedication of its Public Prosecutors, who combine thorough case preparation, command of statutory provisions and binding Supreme Court precedents with a clear sense of public duty. The Prosecution Department reaffirmed its commitment to strong, ethical and professional prosecution in every case. The Department said that these outcomes reflect the dedication of its Public Prosecutors, who combine thorough case preparation, command of statutory provisions and binding Supreme Court.

MLA Thanamandi launches district JOSH Team to strengthen TB detection, prevention in Rajouri

■ **HT News Network**

RAJOURI, OCTOBER 08: The District JOSH Team (Joint Squad for Health), a dedicated multi-departmental team tasked to strengthen efforts for early detection, prevention and control of tuberculosis was formally launched here today by MLA Thanamandi Muzaffar Iqbal Khan in the presence of ADDC Malikzada Sheraz-ul-Haq; ACD Sheraz Chowhan; CMO Dr. Manohar Lal Rana; District Tuberculosis Officer, District AYUSH Officer, District Youth Officer and other senior officers, officials and MY Bharat volunteers.



The launch marked an important step towards taking TB-related services, screening, awareness and preventive interventions closer to the people, particularly those residing in villages, far-flung,

remote and underserved areas of the district.

Addressing the gathering, the MLA appreciated the coordinated efforts of various departments, health functionaries and volunteers

involved in the initiative and encouraged the JOSH Team to work with dedication, commitment and a strong spirit of public service. He emphasised the importance of early identification of TB cases, timely diagnosis and treatment, prevention of transmission and active community participation to reduce the burden of tuberculosis.

The officers present on the occasion also extended their encouragement and support to the team and stressed the need for greater inter-sectoral coordination, community mobilisation and effective outreach to vulnerable populations.

ADC Bhaderwah reviews arrangements for Navratras, Mahanavami and Dussehra

■ **HT News Network**

BHADERWAH: OCTOBER 08: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sunil Kumar Bhutyal chaired a meeting today to review arrangements for the upcoming Navratras, Mahanavami and Dussehra festivals in Bhaderwah. He directed the concerned departments to ensure adequate facilities and smooth conduct of the celebrations.

Arrangements regarding drinking water supply, medical facilities, uninterrupted power supply, security, traffic management, fire and emergency services, cleanliness



and sanitation in both rural and urban areas were discussed in detail.

President of the Sanatan Dharam Sabha, Satish Kotwal briefed the ADC about the details of the upcoming yatras and ongoing religious festivals.

ADC directed the BDA

Department to give wide publicity to the holy festivals to ensure that the public remains informed about the scheduled programmes.

It was decided that market checking would be conducted before the festivals by the Tehsildar, Municipal Committee

and other concerned officers to ensure proper regulation and availability of essential commodities.

The ADC directed all concerned departments to work in close coordination and ensure that all necessary arrangements are completed well in advance for the smooth and peaceful observance of the festivals.

The meeting was attended by BDA, JPDCL, Traffic, TSO and Representatives from the Police, Rural Development Department (RDD), Health, Jal Shakti and Municipal Committee. Tehsildar Bhaderwah, Tehsildar Bhalla and BDO Bhalla attended the meeting virtually.

Doda joins National launch of JOSH initiative to accelerate TB elimination

■ **HT News Network**

DODA, OCTOBER 08: A district-level programme was organized today by the Health Department Doda here at the CMO Office to mark the National level launch of JOSH (Joint Squad for Health) under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP).

The initiative aims to strengthen community participation, awareness and collective action towards the elimination of tuberculosis, while encouraging greater involvement of youth and community volunteers in the fight against TB.

The programme began with the virtual streaming of the national launch of JOSH by the Union Health Minister. Chief Medical

Officer Dr. Vinod Sharma; Dy CMO Dr. Sat Lal Manhas; District Tuberculosis Officer, Dr. Raj Kumar Sharma; Nodal Officer My Bharat, Sandeep Sharma; Block Medical Officers, Divisional ASHA Coordinator, District ASHA Coordinator, Nodal Officer NTEP, ASHAs, health workers; NCC Cadets, My Bharat Volunteers, students and staff of ANMT School, besides other officials and staff of the Health Department attended the live streaming.

Addressing the gathering, the CMO highlighted the significance of the JOSH initiative. He emphasized the need for sustained community participation, early identification of TB symptoms, timely diagnosis, treatment adherence and stigma-free support to TB patients. He appreciated



the dedicated efforts of the NTEP teams, ASHAs, health workers and community volunteers in taking TB-related services to the grassroots level.

DTODr. Raj Kumar Sharma elaborated on the objectives of the NTEP and the importance of active community engagement in achieving the goal of TB elimination. He appreciated the contribution of frontline workers and urged all stakeholders to work collectively towards identifying and supporting TB patients and ensuring completion of treatment.

Nodal Officer My Bharat Sandeep Sharma spoke about the role of youth and My Bharat volunteers in supporting public health initiatives. He emphasized that

the active participation of young volunteers can significantly strengthen awareness and community outreach activities under NTEP.

Later, the CMO and other officers felicitated fully recovered TB patients, Block Medical Officers, TB Health Staff and other frontline workers by presenting certificates of appreciation for their valuable contribution towards the implementation and strengthening of the NTEP at the grassroots level.

The felicitation was aimed at recognizing the commitment and dedication of individuals and health teams who have contributed significantly towards TB detection, treatment, follow-up, awareness and patient support across the





J&K-PSA Delegation Meets Education Minister Sakeena Itoo, Thanks Govt. For Simplifying NOC Norms; Says Reforms Will Help Schools Focus More On Education

HT News Network

Kulgam, 08 Oct, 2026: A delegation of the (Regd.) Jammu & Kashmir Private Schools Association (J&K-PSA), led by Association Secretary and District President Shopian Hilal Ahmad Khan, met today Health & Education Minister Ms. Sakeena Itoo at her residence

in Damhal Hanjipora, Kulgam and conveyed the Association's gratitude for the Government's recent decision to simplify and rationalise several No Objection Certificate (NOC) and compliance requirements for private schools in J&K. The delegation thanked Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Education Minister Sakeena Itoo, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Cabinet Ministers and

administration for addressing a long-pending demand of the private education sector. The Association also conveyed special thanks on behalf of veteran educationist & PSAJK Chief Patron Dr. G.N. Var, President Bilal Ahmad Bhat and the entire State Executive body for the decision, which it described as an important step towards reducing unnecessary procedural burdens on educational institutions.

The J&K Government has recently amended the School Education Rules to ease several permission and certification requirements for private schools, including replacing certain documentary requirements with self-attested certificates, while retaining safeguards relating to areas such as student

safety, structural safety, traffic safety and fire protection.

J&K-PSA Secretary Hilal Ahmad Khan said the Association viewed the reform as a significant development for the private education sector and appreciated the Government for responding to concerns that had been raised repeatedly through representations, meetings and policy discussions.

"On behalf of the entire Jammu & Kashmir Private Schools Association, I sincerely thank Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Education Minister Ms. Sakeena Itoo, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, our Chief Patron Dr. G.N. Var, President Bilal Ahmad Bhat and the entire Government for addressing this long-pending issue. Rationalising unnecessary NOCs.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that my Customer ID in my bank records is registered as ASIM IRSHAD RESHI and my Date of Birth mentioned therein is incorrect and does not match my actual Date of Birth. My correct name as per my school records and other official documents is AAHISH IRSHAD RESHI S/o IRSHAD AHMAD RESHI, Date of Birth 13-05-2006, Resident of Kachwa Muqam, Wagoora, Baramulla. The reason for this mismatch in my bank records is that the same were created on the basis of my old Aadhaar Card, which was not as per my school records. Now I have updated my Aadhaar Card as per my correct school records. I hereby declare that ASIM IRSHAD RESHI and AAHISH IRSHAD RESHI are one and the same person and there is no other person in the village by this name. I am now intending to get my bank records corrected as per my updated documents and school records. If any person has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in writing at J&K Bank, Branch Kalantra within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained. Sd/ AAHISH IRSHAD RESHI"

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for information of the general public that I, Habib Bhatt S/o Ghulam Ahmad Bhatt, R/o Burzawachan, Tehsil Kreeri, District Baramulla, UT of J&K, have applied for correction of my name in my Aadhaar record. My correct and full name is HABIB BHATT, whereas the name has been mentioned as HABIBULLAH BHAT in the Aadhaar record. Any person having any objection regarding the said correction may contact the concerned Aadhaar Authority within the prescribed period. In the absence of any objection, the necessary correction may be carried out as per rules. Applicant HABIB BHATT

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OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR, PAHALGAM PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the general public that Enamul Haq and Faisal Jahangir, Sons of Salim Jahangir Koochay, R/o Latroo, Pahalgam, have applied for the issuance of RBA (Reserved Backward Area) Certificate. Any person having any objection regarding the issuance of the said certificate may submit the same before the Office of the Naib Tehsildar, Pahalgam, within the prescribed period. Date: _____ Place: Pahalgam Naib Tehsildar Pahalgam



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Interested candidates should possess valid GATE Score for the year 2025/2026/2027 in any of the disciplines mentioned above at the time of applying online in NPCIL. Shortlisting of candidates for interview will be done based on the GATE Score. The detailed advertisement will be available on NPCIL website www.npcilcareers.co.in & www.npcil.nic.in tentatively within 10 days from the date of announcement of GATE-2027 results.

Candidates may visit <https://gate2027.iitm.ac.in> or any of the GATE zonal websites of IISc and IITs for detailed information on GATE 2027.

Any further information/corrigendum/addendum would be uploaded only on the NPCIL websites mentioned above.

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CBC48132/11/0002/2627



“स्वच्छ रहो, स्वस्थ रहो”

एनपीसीआईएल, भारत सरकार द्वारा चलाए गए स्वच्छ भारत मिशन को प्रोत्साहित करता है।

न्यूक्लियर विद्युत – एक अपरिहार्य विकल्प



Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the Divisional Forest Officer

Special Forest Division Tangmarg.

e-NIT NO:- 11 OF 2026-27 DATED:- 06-10-2026

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble President of India, e-tenders (In Two cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following work:

S. No.	NAME OF WORK	ADV. COST (Rs. In lacs)	EARNEST MONEY (Rs. In Lacs)	CLASS OF CONTRACTOR	Cost of Tender Document. (Rs)	TIME OF COMPLETION	Receiving/Opening Committee
1	Construction of Double Storey Building for Range Office, Boundary Wall and Tile Path at Palhalan Pattan. Special Forest Division Tangmarg.	77.60	1.55210	"A"	Rs. 1600/=	Two working Season	Tender Opening Committee
2	Construction of Forest Check Post at Hanjiwera Pattan. Special Forest Division Tangmarg.	38.18	0.76360	"A & B"	Rs. 1100/=	Two working Season	Tender Opening Committee

The e-NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bills of quantities, (B.O.Q) set of Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Website: -www.jktenders.gov.in. Name of Scheme: UT CAPEX Position of Funds: Budgeted. Position of AA/TS: Accorded.

Publishing Date: -	06-10-2026
Download Start Date:	08-10-2026 from 09:00 AM
Bid submission Start Date:	08-10-2026 from 09:00 AM
Bid submission End Date:	19-10-2026 upto 06:00 PM
Date of Opening of Technical Bid Online.	21-10-2026 at 11:30 AM in the office of the Conservator of Forests Srinagar Circle at Shiek Bagh Srinagar.
Date of Opening of Financial Bid Online:	To be opened (on Line) after completion of Technical Evaluation and the date will be notified separately.

Important Note: "In pursuance of Finance Department Circular No. FD-Code/290/2026 dated 22.05.2026 and Circular issued by the Office of the Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), J&K vide No. PCCF/Accts./2026-27/435-43 dated 24.06.2026, Bid Security (EMD), Tender Fee and applicable transaction/service charges shall be deposited online in cash through the prescribed online mechanism. Submission of EMD in the form of CDR/FDR/TDR/Bank Guarantee shall not be accepted. Bidders shall comply with the aforesaid instructions while submitting their bids."

- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website: - <https://jktenders.gov.in>
- The Technical bids shall be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
- The financial bids shall be opened online after completion of Technical Evaluation and the date will be notified separately.
- Bids uploaded online shall be accompanied by proof of payment of the Cost of Tender Document (Tender Fee) through the prescribed online mechanism, and proof/receipt of online cash deposit of 2% Bid Security (EMD) through the designated pooling account notified by the Finance Department, as generated by the e-tendering system. Submission of Bid Security (EMD) in the form of CDR/FDR/TDR/Bank Guarantee or any other offline instrument shall not be accepted. The date of payment of the Tender Fee and EMD shall be between the date of downloading the bidding document and the bid submission end date. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.
- The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Divisional Forest Officer Special Forest Division Tangmarg (tender receiving authority). The earnest money/ Bid security @2% shall be released to the successful bidder only on receipt of Performance Security @ 5% of Contract value which shall be released after successful completion of DLP of 18 months.
- All other terms and conditions shall remain same as per PWD form 25 (double leaf) and as per the detailed document.

DIPK-6542/26
Send Dated: 08-10-2026

Sd/
Divisional Forest Officer,
Special Forest Division,
Tangmarg.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified that the applicant namely Aijaz Ahmad Ganie S/o Abdul Rahman Ganie R/o Checki kawoosa Tehsil NARBAL District BUDGAM applied for the issuance of BIRTH certificate of his daughter Raziya D/o Aijaz Ahmad Ganie The applicant intends to register the Date of birth of his daughter as school records 14/05/2010 If any one has objection in this regard, he can approach concerned Births and Death authorities within the period of seven days after the publication of said Notice. No objection will be entertained.

05/10/2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified that the applicant namely Ali Mohmad Rather S/o Gh Ahmad Rather R/o Mati pora Tehsil Pattan District Baramullah applied for the name caste correction in his own addhar card. The applicant name has been inadvertently recorded aadhar card as Ali Mohmad. The applicant intends to register the correct name as Ali Mohmad Rather S/o Gh Ahmad Rather in the aadhar card If any one has objection in this regard, he can approach concerned publication office authorities within a period of seven days and after the publication of said Notice. No objection will be entertained.

05/10/2026



**INDIAN
AIR FORCE DAY**

Salutations to the Warriors of Our Skies on the glorious occasion of Indian Air Force Day.

A legion of real-life bravehearts whose saga of invincible valour, laser-sharp precision and devastating striking capabilities is testified by the Earth and satellites in faraway space. Their patriotism and professionalism will continue to inspire generations long after the daydreams of India's enemies cease to exist. I bow to the martyrs who laid down their lives for the nation.



www.amitshah.co.in





DDC Doda reviews performance of Banks

Calls for enhancing Credit Flow to Priority, employment-Generating Sectors

HT News Network

DODA, OCTOBER 08: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Krishan Lal today chaired the District Level Review Committee (DLRC)/District Consultative Committee (DCC) meeting to take stock of the performance of banks for the quarter ending June 2026.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Manesh Kumar Manhas; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Ashraf Pervaz; Assistant Commissioner Development Din Mohd Afaqi; Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Lead District Manager, besides representatives from various government departments, NABARD, RBI,

banks and other stakeholder institutions.

At the outset, the Committee undertook a detailed review of the performance under the Annual Credit Plan (ACP) 2026-27. The Committee examined the targets set for the financial year and the achievements recorded by banks up to June 2026.

The overall credit plan, bank-wise deposits, advances and Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio of the district were also reviewed in detail. The Committee assessed the performance of banks in extending credit to various sectors and deliberated on measures to further improve credit delivery.

The meeting further reviewed the bank-wise



performance under Agriculture Term Loans (ATL), including targets and achievements up to June 2026. Detailed discussions were held on credit flow to allied agricultural activities, including dairy, poultry,

fisheries and horticulture.

The Committee also reviewed progress under various categories of Kisan Credit Cards (KCC), including agriculture, dairy/animal husbandry, sheep husbandry and fisheries. The progress

under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan and other priority-sector lending initiatives, including credit support to Self Help Groups (SHGs) and distressed persons, was also assessed.

A detailed review was undertaken to assess the credit disbursement under the PM Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and other employment and livelihood generation schemes.

The Committee further reviewed bank-wise progress under the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme and other major Government-sponsored schemes. Progress under social security and financial inclusion initiatives, including implementation of Pradhan

Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), was also discussed.

The status of unbanked rural centres in the district was reviewed, besides assessing the progress and performance of SBI Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI).

The Committee also deliberated on promoting renewable energy initiatives, particularly under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.

The DDC directed the concerned stakeholders to intensify awareness and outreach so that eligible beneficiaries are facilitated in accessing the benefits available under the scheme.

ADDC Poonch examines SDRF Relief Cases

HT News Network



POONCH, OCTOBER 08: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Poonch Amarjeet Singh today chaired a meeting to examine relief cases under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).

The meeting was held in the Conference Hall of the Deputy Commissioner Office and attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik; Assistant Commissioner (Rev) Muhammad Sayeed; District Treasury Officer Mohd Hanief Tantray; Executive Engineer PWD Er. Sajad Khan along with Tehsildars of Poonch, Surankote, Mendhar, Mandi, Mankote and Balakote, besides Rep from the Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry and other concerned officers.

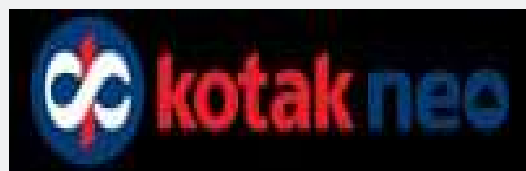
The Committee reviewed the relevant records and supporting documents to ensure that the cases were processed strictly as per the prescribed SDRF norms and guidelines.

The ADDC directed the concerned officers to ensure proper verification of cases, timely disposal, adherence to the prescribed norms and maintenance of complete records, so that eligible beneficiaries receive relief at the earliest.

Kotak Securities Rebrands Retail Business as Kotak Neo

HT News Network

Srinagar: Kotak Securities Limited has rebranded its



customer-facing retail business as Kotak Neo, bringing its investing, trading and wealth solutions under a unified identity.

The company said the new platform combines digital capabilities with research expertise and relationship-led services to offer customers a more integrated investment experience.

Kotak Neo will also expand its wealth management offerings through its Private Client Group and Connect Plus, while providing tools including algorithmic trading, stock baskets, mutual fund analysis and an AI-powered research assistant.

The company clarified that Kotak Securities Limited remains the legal entity and the rebranding will not affect existing customer accounts, products, services or governance. [KNT]

J&K Branch of NIRC of ICAI organises Industrial Visit for CA Students

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 08: The ICAI - Jammu & Kashmir Branch of Northern India Regional Council (NIRC) successfully organized an Industrial Visit for Chartered Accountancy students today, at the JKMPCL Milk Plant, Srinagar.

Chairman, J&K Branch of NIRC of ICAI, Amit Gupta, stated that such industrial visits are an integral part of the Branch's continuous efforts to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical exposure, thereby enabling CA students to better understand real-world business and industrial environments.

The visit witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of CA students from the Kashmir Valley, who were keen to gain practical exposure to industrial operations, supply chain

management, and manufacturing processes in the dairy sector. The visit forms part of the Branch's endeavor to extend its student activities across the Union Territory and to ensure that students in the Valley have equal access to such learning opportunities.

During the visit, Hamid, Plant In-charge, JKMPCL Srinagar, led the students through the plant and gave them an in-depth overview of the functioning of Jammu & Kashmir Milk Producers Cooperative Limited (JKMPCL). The students gained valuable insights into the milk procurement system, supply chain management, quality control procedures, dairy product manufacturing processes, and distribution and marketing operations.

The visit provided students with practical exposure to the end-to-end dairy value chain, including the processing of products such as milk, ghee, paneer, and curd, while also

highlighting the importance of hygiene standards, quality assurance mechanisms, and efficient operational management in the food and dairy industry.

The Managing Committee of the Branch, has been taking continuous efforts to provide CA students with practical learning opportunities, which play a crucial role in shaping competent and industry-ready professionals.

The J&K Branch of NIRC of ICAI reaffirmed its commitment towards capacity building, professional development, and industry interaction for CA students and expressed its intent to organise more such knowledge-enriching visits in the future. The J&K Branch of NIRC of ICAI reaffirmed its commitment towards capacity building, professional development, and industry interaction for CA students and expressed its intent to organise.

NHIDCL organises Road Safety awareness workshop for students

HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 08: National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL) Regional Office Jammu on Thursday organized One day Road Safety workshop here at KC Residency Hotel witnessing participation of Students and staff members from Government Higher Secondary School Jullaka Mohalla, Engineers & Non-Technical Staff of RO NHIDCL Jammu, besides EPC Contractors & Authority Engineer participated.

Transport Commissioner J&K Vishesh Paul Mahajan was the chief guest. Addressing the participants, he stressed the importance of following traffic rules and adopting safe and responsible behaviour on the road. He also encouraged the students to spread the message of road safety among their families and friends and act as ambassadors of the road safety campaign.



Executive Director, NHIDCL, RO Jammu Ashish Shukla along with LA & Coord., NHIDCL Babu Ram also addressed the audience and highlighted the importance of creating road safety awareness among young people, who can play an important role in promoting safe and responsible road behaviour.

The programme also featured informative talks by ARTO Bipin Singh Charak; Ex-Principal, RIHFW Nagrota Dr. Manoj Bhagat; Principal, Government Higher Secondary School Jullaka Mohalla Romesh Lal Sharma and Motor Vehicle

Inspector Surinder Kumar. The speakers shared useful information with the students on traffic rules, safe road practices, accident prevention and responsible road behaviour. Executive Director, NHIDCL, RO Jammu Ashish Shukla along with LA & Coord., NHIDCL Babu Ram also addressed the audience and highlighted the importance of creating road safety awareness among young people, who can play an important role in promoting safe and responsible road behaviour. The programme also featured informative talks by ARTO Bipin Singh Charak; Ex-Principal, RIHFW Nagrota.

Josh Team launched in Jammu District under TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan

HT News Network

JAMMU, OCTOBER 08: Synchronizing with the national level programme, District Administration Jammu too launched the JOSH Team under the TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan here from the Deputy Commissioner's Office today.

After watching the live broadcast of the national level programme, the District Jammu proceeded with its launch in presence of Member Legislative Assembly Rajeev Bhagat; Member Legislative Assembly Charu Ram; Member Legislative Assembly Surinder Bhagat, besides Chief Medical Officer Dr Narinder Bhatia; CPO and DTO Jammu Dr Anu; all the Block Medical Officers; NCC Cadets and My Bharat volunteers.

Certificates of appreciation were presented to the representatives from TB Mukht Panchayats, NCC Cadets and My Bharat volunteers.

Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders

DC Samba felicitates girl toppers with digital learning tools

HT News Network

SAMBA, OCTOBER 08: To champion female education and academic excellence, the District Administration Samba on Thursday organized a special felicitation ceremony for the district's top-performing female students ahead of the International Day of the Girl Child. Led by Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan, the event celebrated these young achievers by presenting them with advanced learning tablets under the flagship Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative.

Curated by the District Social Welfare Office, the celebration was designed to go beyond recognition and offer tangible

empowerment through digital enablement. By equipping these exceptional minds with modern technological tools, the initiative ensures they remain highly competitive and well-prepared for both higher educational pursuits and future competitive examinations. Commending the students for their outstanding dedication, DC Ayushi Sudan reaffirmed the administration's unwavering commitment to bridging the educational digital divide. She emphasized that providing unrestricted access to modern educational resources is paramount to nurturing the district's brightest talents, ensuring that every young woman has the tools required to transform her ambitions into

reality. To champion female education and academic excellence, the District Administration Samba on Thursday organized a special felicitation ceremony for the district's top-performing female students ahead of the International Day of the Girl Child. Led by Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan, the event celebrated these young achievers by presenting them with advanced learning tablets under the flagship Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative. Curated by the District Social Welfare Office, the celebration was designed to go beyond recognition and offer tangible empowerment through digital enablement.

MC Kathua intensifies enforcement against banned polythene, seizes 12 quintals of prohibited material

HT News Network

KATHUA, OCTOBER 8: In a major enforcement drive aimed at curbing the use, sale and distribution of banned polythene and single-use plastic, a team of Municipal Council conducted a series of inspections and raids at major wholesale establishments across Kathua town.

During the enforcement action, the municipal team seized approximately 12 quintal banned polythene material from the premises of wholesalers.

The seized material has been taken into municipal custody for further action under the applicable rules and regulations. The enforcement drive was



carried out to ensure strict compliance with the Plastic Waste Management Rules- 2016 and other applicable provisions governing the manufacture, storage, sale and use of plastic materials.

The Municipal Council has reiterated its commitment to strengthening enforcement against banned plastic and

promoting responsible waste management practices across Kathua town. The public, traders and business establishments have been urged to refrain from the use, sale and storage of prohibited plastic items and extend cooperation to the civic authorities in keeping Kathua clean and environmentally sustainable.

DC Ramban reviews status of priority sector lending, implementation of social security schemes

HT News Network

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 08: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan today chaired a meeting of Bankers to review the progress achieved under priority sector lending, social security and financial inclusion schemes in the district.

Chief Planning Officer Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather; Lead District Manager Davinder Singh; Cluster Heads J&K Bank Niradesh Sharma and heads of various banks attended the meeting.

The meeting held a detailed review of the bank-wise progress under various government-sponsored schemes and initiatives aimed at extending financial assistance and banking services to eligible beneficiaries, particularly youth, farmers, entrepreneurs and people in rural and far-flung areas.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the implementation status of PM Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan

Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), Agriculture Credit, Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), PM Surya Ghar, PMSVANidhi, PM Vishwakarma, PMEGP, PMFME, NRLM and Mission Yuva.

Progress regarding education loans, housing loans and awareness about unclaimed deposits was also reviewed during the meeting.

The Deputy Commissioner sought feedback from the Lead District Manager, Cluster Heads and heads of various banks regarding



achievements, pending cases and issues being faced by applicants,

particularly local youth seeking financial assistance for self-

employment and livelihood activities.

He directed the banks to make concerted efforts to improve their performance under priority sector schemes and ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are facilitated in availing the benefits of government-sponsored schemes. The Deputy Commissioner stressed for intensified awareness campaigns, particularly in rural and far-flung areas, to educate people about available financial assistance, social security schemes and banking facilities. He further directed the

concerned banks to undertake focused outreach to ensure wider coverage of eligible beneficiaries and effective delivery of banking and social security services to achieve the targets. The Deputy Commissioner stressed for intensified awareness campaigns, particularly in rural and far-flung areas, to educate people about available financial assistance, social security schemes and banking facilities. He further directed the concerned banks to undertake focused.



The radical idea that temperature sets when we sleep

Some scientists think that temperature could be just as important as light at training the body's circadian clocks.

Even today, anthropologist Gandhi Yetish remembers the bedtime ritual he had as a child during cold New Jersey winters. He would open his window, letting the frigid air rush in and cool his face. He'd quickly feel drowsier, though he'd wonder what his mother would say about the heating bill.

There's emerging evidence that Yetish was onto something. From how deeply we sleep to how refreshed we feel afterwards, temperature can have a profound impact on our nightly rest. Some scientists are even going one step further, arguing that temperature may be as important as light for shaping when we sleep.

Here's what we do and don't know.

The warmth of the Sun

For years, Yetish thought his preference for cool sleeping quarters was a personal quirk. Then, while researching the sleep of people in non-industrial societies, he spent time with the Tsimane, an indigenous group in Bolivia's Amazon.

Yetish was keenly aware of the long-held scientific consensus that the most important environmental cue for sleep was light exposure. But he found that the Tsimane typically went to sleep hours after sunset and rose before sunrise, despite lacking electricity for artificial lighting and spending most of their days outdoors.

Next, Yetish and a team of colleagues from universities across the US investigated the sleep of two other indigenous groups. These included the Hadza of northern Tanzania and the San in Southern Africa. The researchers found that their sleep timings also didn't correspond with light and dark cycles. Instead, it seemed to be tracking the rise and fall of the ambient temperature.

"We assume that the reason the sunset and sunrise are important is because of the light," says Yetish. "Well, temperature also comes from the Sun."

Cooling down for bed

Decades of evidence shows that our core body temperature begins to drop as we wind down for sleep. For most of us, it continues to decline for much of the night, usually falling by around 1C from its daytime high to nighttime low.

This helps explain why people often experience shortened, more disturbed sleep when their room isn't cool enough, says Sebastian Herberger, a sleep physician and scientist at the Interdisciplinary Center of Sleep Medicine in Berlin. "Everyone who's ever slept in a hotel room that's too hot would potentially know these kinds of effects," he says.

For a 2007 study, researchers changed the temperature of the room participants slept in to investigate its effects. The group experienced two different sleep set-ups. In one experiment, they were provided with a room where the temperature lowered from 27C (81F) to 24C (75F) from



have deeper sleep under the influence of the natural temperature fluctuations at dusk and dawn.

However, the ideal temperature drop required to drift off to sleep is not yet clear – and how much temperature might impact our body clocks and sleep timings is still being debated.

Setting our internal clocks

The question raised by the potential link between temperature and sleep is whether, and how much, it can help to set our internal body clocks. These clocks coordinate our "circadian rhythms", cycles of mental, physical and behavioural changes that occur in any 24-hour period. This includes everything from when we sleep to when we eat. Circadian rhythms are traditionally thought to be dictated mainly by our exposure to light.

The circadian rhythm is the primary driver behind the fall in our body temperature in the lead-up to sleep, says Russell Foster, professor of circadian neuroscience at the University of Oxford and author of the book Life Time.

But Foster explains that temperature may not just be influenced by our body clocks – it may be an extra input that helps shape them, too. "What it's actually doing in terms of as a signal to the sleep systems, we don't know," he says.

Animal experiments have provided some evidence for the idea that temperature may itself be helping to set our body clocks.

Studies have found that you can train the circadian rhythms of a variety of species, from fruit flies to camels, through fluctuating temperature cycles alone. Scientists

cooler while they were sleeping compared to when they were awake. That change lengthened their sleep-wake cycles by around 23 minutes – meaning that, when it comes to controlling human circadian rhythms, "the effect of temperature is very similar to that of light", the study noted.

Meanwhile, a 2007 study found that lowering then increasing the ambient temperature affected the participants' internal body temperature too. The timing of when your body temperature hits its lowest part is an indicator of where you are in your circadian rhythm. The participants exposed to fluctuating temperatures reached that low point about an hour earlier in the night, on average, than when the room temperature stayed constant. This suggests that the temperature of your bedroom can help to set your circadian clocks.

But much more research is needed.

Temperature may help to modulate our circadian rhythms, says Christian Cajochen, a chronobiologist at the University of Basel. But very few experiments have explored the question. As a result, for now, "in my view, temperature is not the 'new light'" in terms of setting our body clocks, he says.

The real-life way temperature affects our sleep

When it comes to temperature's role on sleep, what makes matters more complicated is that sleep is a multi-dimensional physiological process.

Two core systems determine when we get sleepy, and how much. The first, the sleep homeostat, means that the longer we are awake, the sleepier we get. The second, the circadian rhythm, is made up of a series of body clocks that time when we feel drowsy and when we are alert.

But a third system has an impact, too. This is the "arousal-promoting system", which, in the right circumstances, can override the other systems to keep you awake. This is the reason why a fire alarm is likely to get you out of bed, even if it is 03:00.

While all of these systems are linked together, Yetish acknowledges that the sleep patterns he studied in the Tsimane, San and Hadza could have been down to one of these other processes.

More like this:

- The blue light from your phone isn't ruining your sleep
- What hunter gatherers can teach us about sleep
- Here's how to catch up on sleep, the right way

Jerome Siegel, neuroscientist and director of the Center for Sleep Research at the University of California, Los Angeles, led the research on these indigenous groups. "I think temperature is more important than light," he says. In his view, this has wide implications for modern health.

For instance he argues that our tendency to live in homes where the temperature remains the same day and night is likely to contribute to the sleep issues people have in the modern world. This includes the far higher rates of insomnia reported in industrial societies compared to non-industrial ones.

When the researchers investigated the prevalence of insomnia among the Tsimane and San, they found that neither group had a word for the condition.

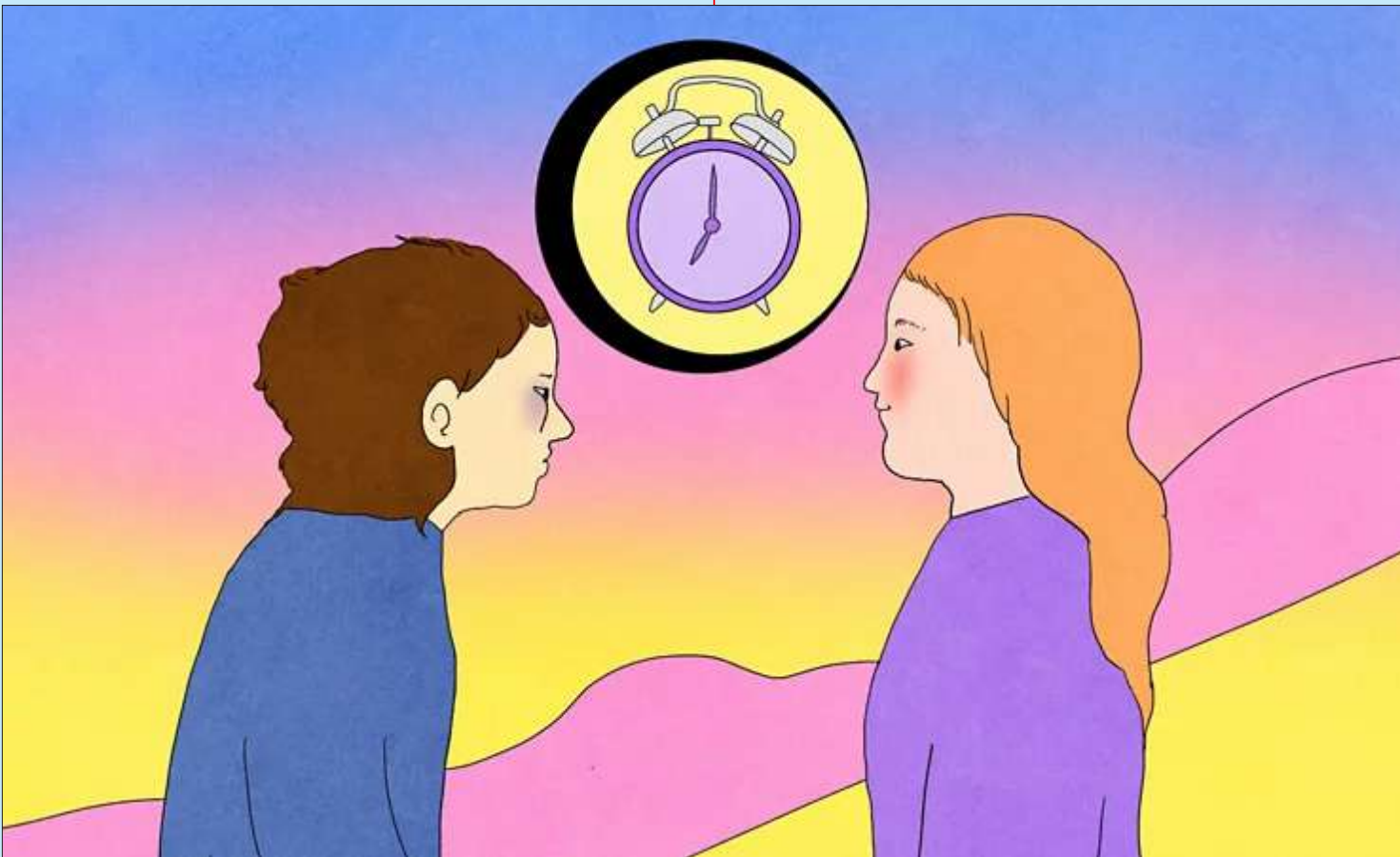
"We just don't live in the environment that we've evolved for," says Siegel.

More research is needed to figure out the best way to use temperature to hack your sleep. But for now, opening a window at night like Yetish used to might be worth a try.

*Amanda Ruggeri is a science, psychology and history journalist. She writes the six-part How to Sleep Better newsletter course, and her forthcoming book, The Sleep Myth, will be published in summer 2027.

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(BBC News)



18:00 to 22:00, slowly rose to 27C between 03:00 and 07:00, and then remained at 27C during the day. This was to mimic the natural rise and fall of the ambient temperature through the night. In the other experiment, they slept in a room at a constant 27C.

When they slept in fluctuating temperatures, the participants had higher levels of a marker of melatonin overnight, compared to those who slept at a steady 27C. This hormone is produced by the body naturally, increasing in the lead-up to sleep time and usually reaching its peak in the middle of the night. It tells your body to wind down and prepare for sleep.

The same group also felt more refreshed when they awoke. The researchers speculated that we evolved to

have also been able to train the internal clocks of human cells by simulating fluctuating body temperatures.

We just don't live in the environment that we've evolved for – Jerome Siegel

Animal and cell studies don't necessarily apply to real-life humans, and discerning whether temperature is really a key clock-setter for our species is remarkably difficult. For example, if someone has more trouble sleeping in warmer temperatures, that might have nothing to do with their circadian rhythm. Instead, it may be down to what their body physiologically needs to relax.

But the findings of some small studies hint that there could be more to it. In one 1974 study, participants adjusted their room temperature so that it was about 6C (11F)

Asian Para Games: Jhajharia backs selection process; keeps door open for changes

United News Of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 8 :Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) president Devendra Jhajharia on Thursday defended the selection process for the upcoming Asian Para Games in Japan, saying all prescribed criteria had been followed while leaving the door open to reconsidering decisions after discussions with protesting athletes and the authorities. Jhajharia said selections across disciplines had been made according to guidelines laid down by the PCI, Sports Ministry and Sports Authority of India (SAI), while stressing that athletes remained the committee's top priority.

"Whether it is athletics, cycling, swimming or shooting, we have ensured that all the selection criteria have been met. We have followed the guidelines laid down by the Ministry. The athlete has always been and will always remain our top priority. We are increasing facilities in sports so that athletes get better support, and transparency has been maintained in every selection," Jhajharia said.

"We have maintained transparency in every selection. Every selection is



"I have already met the protesting athletes and I will meet them again. Our athletes keep meeting us regularly," he said. "The athletes have raised some concerns, and they have been heard. We will now sit together and discuss those issues."

The former Paralympic champion also said past performances or world rankings could not guarantee selection if an athlete failed to meet the prescribed trial criteria.

"There is a trial, and everything is decided on the basis of that trial. The criteria are laid down for the trial, and whoever clears those

criteria is selected, while those who do not clear them are not selected. "Even if I am ranked World No. 1 for a moment, that does not mean I will necessarily remain No. 1 on the day I compete at the Paralympics or the Para Asian Games. Rankings keep going up and down," he said.

Jhajharia reiterated that the PCI, Ministry and SAI had worked together on the selection process and that decisions had been taken according to the prescribed guidelines.

and also discuss the matter with the Ministry," he added.

Jhajharia said he had already met the protesting athletes and would hold further discussions.

made according to the prescribed guidelines. There is a defined line, and the selection has been done according to that line. Someone may have a problem with the criteria, but nobody can move beyond those guidelines."

However, he said concerns raised by protesting athletes would be discussed with the authorities and that changes could not be ruled out.

"The issue is very much in our knowledge and we will look into it. We will have discussions. Whenever

Naresh Gotte wins South Zone Tenpin Bowling Tournament Title

United News Of India

HYDERABAD, OCT 8 :Naresh Gotte of Telangana won the Title at the South Zone Tenpin Bowling Tournament concluded at Game Xtreme, Hitech City, Hyderabad.

In the finals, played on the cumulative pinfall of two games, 8th seed Naresh G (TG) gained a strong 32-pin lead in Game 1 against top seed Naveen Siddam of Telangana (180 - 148).

Naveen mounted a spirited fightback in Game 2, outscoring Naresh 173-158, but the deficit of 32 pins from the opening game proved too substantial to overturn. Naresh held his nerve to secure a 17-pin aggregate victory, 338-321, completing a remarkable run from the eighth qualifying spot to lift the South Zone Tenpin Bowling Tournament Title. Earlier, in the knockout Round played based on cumulative pinfall of two games, in Match 1, 5th seed Anand Babu (TN) (384) won against 3rd seed Parthiban J (320) and 7th seed Shanmugananda (KAR) (324). In Match 2, 8th seed Naresh G (TG) won against 4th seed Aditya Varma (TG) (363) and 6th seed Goutham Abhilash (AP) (368). Winners of Match 1 and Match 2 moved on to next round to play against 2nd seed Mahipal Singh (TN).

Badminton: PV Sindhu cruises into Arctic Open quarter-finals

United News Of India

VANTAA (FINLAND), OCT 8 :Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu cruised into the women's singles quarter-finals of the Arctic Open 2026 badminton tournament after beating Japan's Riko Gunji here on Thursday.

Sindhu, seeded sixth at the BWF Super 500 badminton event, defeated Riko Gunji 21-15, 21-15 in 49 minutes to set up a

quarter-final clash against top seed and former world champion Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand, according to olympics.com. The opening game against the Japanese shuttle was a tight affair, with the two players locked at

15-all before Sindhu reeled off six consecutive points to take the lead.

The second game followed a similar pattern. The scores were level at 13-all before the Indian badminton player provided another late flourish, winning eight of the next 10 points to seal the contest.

Friday's PV Sindhu vs Ratchanok Intanon clash will be the first meeting between the two aces in more than four years. The Thai shuttle leads their head-to-head record 9-4 and has



won their last five meetings. Their most recent clash came in the quarter-finals of the Indonesia Masters 2022, where Ratchanok won 21-12, 21-10. Both players have won BWF World Tour titles this season. Sindhu clinched the Japan Open Super 750 in July, beating reigning world champion Akane Yamaguchi in the final. Ratchanok's most recent title came at the Malaysia Masters Super 500 in May.

Pacer Anrich Nortje returns as South Africa name XI for first Australia Test

United News Of India

CAPE TOWN, OCT 8 :The ICC World Test Championship-holders South Africa have named their playing XI for the first Test of the upcoming series against Australia in Durban.

Pace bowling star Kagiso Rabada misses out from the lineup as he continues to build on his comeback from injury, whereas Anrich Nortje returns to the Test format for the first time since his last appearance against the West Indies in 2023.

Accompanying the duo in the bowling department will be Marco Jansen, Simon Harmer and Keshav Maharaj. Temba Bavuma will lead the side, having captained the hosts to a 2-1 ODI series win in the lead-up to the WTC series. The Durban Test will mark the first time South Africa and Australia play each other in the longest format for the first time since the WTC

Final at Lord's in 2025, according to ICC. While Australia sit atop the WTC Standings, South Africa are second, with both teams primed to make it



to next year's World Test Championship Final at The Oval. South Africa Playing XI: Temba Bavuma (c), Aiden Markram, Ryan Rickelton, David Bedingham, Tristan Stubbs, Wiaan Mulder, Kyle Verreynne, Marco Jansen, Simon Harmer.

New Zealand duo Guptill & Adams join White Ferns coaching setup for Australia

United News Of India

WELLINGTON, OCT 8 :New Zealand have added former greats Martin Guptill and Andre Adams to their women's coaching setup for this month's white-ball tour to Australia.

The pair will join interim coach Dean Brownlie in a new-look coaching group for the three-match T20I series that commences in Sydney on October 18, with the trio taking charge following the recent departure of long-time coach Ben Sawyer.

Sawyer had led the side to their maiden ICC Women's T20 World Cup title in Dubai in 2024, but the Australian-born coach departed his position last month following a comprehensive review process of New Zealand Cricket women's high performance structure.

Brownlie was appointed interim coach for the tour of Australia and Guptill and Adams will join him across the series with regular assistant Craig McMillan still recovering from back surgery.

Guptill played 367 matches for the Black Caps and will step into McMillan's shoes to provide support to the batting and fielding group during the Australia tour and the former hard-hitting pener is looking forward to the opportunity.

"I'm really excited to be joining the White Ferns and looking forward to working with such a talented group of players," Guptill said.

"The White Ferns have achieved a huge amount in recent years and there's a lot of exciting talent coming through.

"If I can help add a few extra tools to the players' games and support their growth, then that's something I'll be really proud of."



Adams, who has previous coaching experience with the White Ferns in 2017 and 2023, is also eagerly awaiting his return to the international setup.

"It's great to be back involved with the White Ferns," Adams said.

"Having worked with the team before I know what a special environment it is and how much pride the players and staff take in representing New Zealand.

"Opportunities like this are exciting because you get to test yourselves against one of the best teams in the world, and we're looking forward to taking that head on together."

The White Ferns have already named their 15-player squad for the tour to Australia, with star spinner Eden Carson included to make her long-awaited return from injury.

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