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Voice To The Voiceless



P:12 Australia make big call on former No.1 ranked Test batter Marnus Labuschagne

"Self-Discipline Equally Important": DIG Traffic on Srinagar's Growing Congestion

Thousands of challans issued daily; DIG says infrastructure upgrades alone cannot ease traffic without public cooperation

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Deputy Inspector General Traffic Haseeb-Ur-Rehman on Thursday said the rising number of vehicles on Srinagar roads has emerged as a major challenge for traffic management, with congestion persisting throughout the day, including during winter months. Speaking to reporters, he said thousands of challans were being issued daily through technology-based monitoring and manual enforcement, but stressed that penalties alone could not ensure lasting improvement. Calling for greater public cooperation, the DIG said motorists must follow traffic regulations voluntarily and develop responsible driving habits. He also highlighted the need for improved road infrastructure, including road widening and proposed flyovers, and said the department was reviewing

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"We Remain Unwavering in Our Commitment to Eradicate Terror Ecosystem": Manoj Sinha

LG assures all possible assistance to families of martyred J&K Police personnel; security grid, road and communication infrastructure in Kiyar to be strengthened



HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday met a public delegation from Kiyar in Dachhan, Kishtwar, at Lok Bhavan and assured all possible assistance to the families of martyred J&K Police personnel Rashpal Kumar and Babi Chand. Led by MLA Kishtwar Shagun Parihar, the delegation apprised the LG of security-related concerns and infrastructure deficiencies in remote areas of Dachhan. Reaffirming the administration's commitment to dismantling the terror ecosystem through decisive action, Sinha assured compensation, government employment and comprehensive support to the next of kin of the martyred SPOs. He also assured installation of a mobile tower, pursuit of forest clearance for the Kiyar road and consideration of a Special Operations Group picket, adding that security arrangements and basic infrastructure in the area would be strengthened.

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha met a public delegation from Kiyar in Dachhan, Kishtwar, at Lok Bhavan today.

The Lieutenant Governor paid homage to J&K Police brave hearts, Shri Rashpal Kumar and Shri Babi Chand. He assured that the administration will extend all possible support to the families of the martyrs.The delegation was led by Member of Legislative Assembly from Kishtwar Ms. Shagun Parihar. The delegation apprised the Lieutenant Governor of key issues pertaining to the prevailing security situation in Kiyar and other areas of Dachhan, Kishtwar.

>>> MORE ON P 02

"Move Towards Paperless Cabinet, Strengthen Cybersecurity": Omar Abdullah to IT Department

CM Reviews digital governance initiatives; 1,718 government services integrated on digital platforms, J&K ranks first among UTs in NeSDA assessment

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday chaired a review meeting of the Information Technology Department to assess the progress of e-governance initiatives, digital infrastructure projects and cybersecurity measures across Jammu and Kashmir. Stressing the need for faster implementation and citizen-centric digital services, the Chief Minister directed the department to transition from paper-based proceedings to a paperless e-Cabinet mechanism and conduct regular security audits of government websites and applications. The meeting was informed that 1,718 government services are integrated on digital platforms, with 368 new



>>> MORE ON P 02

"Raise Quality Standards, Think Beyond Domestic Market": PM Modi to India Inc

At FICCI convention, PM urges industry to prioritise global competitiveness, increase investments and put 'India First' in long-term business strategies

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called upon Indian industry to raise product quality standards, strengthen its international presence and move beyond the comfort of the domestic market, asserting that Indian consumers deserve the same quality of products as those exported globally. Addressing FICCI's annual convention, Modi cautioned businesses against treating India's 140-crore population as a guaranteed market for products of any standard and urged them to make quality improvement a priority. He also called for greater investment in agriculture and allied sectors, employment generation and better wages, while inviting industry leaders to suggest further reforms. Highlighting India's economic progress, the Prime Minister cited poverty reduction, corporate tax reforms and record



>>> MORE ON P 02

Amit Shah Inaugurates Two-Day National Anti-Terror Conference in New Delhi

NIA-organised event to focus on cross-border terrorism, terror financing, radicalisation and emerging security threats

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday inaugurated a two-day national anti-terrorism conference in New Delhi, bringing together senior police officers, central security agencies and experts to deliberate on emerging security challenges and strengthen India's counter-terrorism response. Organised by the National Investigation Agency, the conference will focus on cross-border terrorism, terror financing, radicalisation, digital forensics, intelligence sharing and the use of evidence from foreign jurisdictions. The deliberations will also include training sessions for police personnel on investigating terror cases, handling digital evidence, witness protection and strengthening prosecution under the new criminal laws.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday inaugurated a two-day national anti-terrorism conference, focusing on cross-border terrorism, emerging security threats and strategies to strengthen the country's counter-terrorism response.

Organised by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the annual conference brings together senior police officers, central security agencies



>>> MORE ON P 02

Sat Sharma Calls for Stronger Mahila Morcha, Greater Grassroots Outreach

BJP J&K chief reviews organisational functioning; urges women leaders to intensify public engagement and counter misinformation

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU: J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma on Thursday called for strengthening the party's Mahila Morcha and expanding its grassroots presence through greater public engagement and active participation of women. Chairing an organisational review meeting at the party headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, Sharma reviewed district-wise activities and sought feedback from office-bearers on organisational programmes and responsibilities. He stressed the need for a disciplined and result-oriented organisation, urging women leaders to strengthen public outreach, connect more women with the party and highlight the achievements of the Modi-led government. He also emphasised the importance of countering misinformation and encouraging greater participation of women in political leadership and organisational activities.

J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma on Thursday called for strengthening the party's Mahila Morcha and expanding its grassroots presence through greater public engagement and active participation of women.



>>> MORE ON P 02

J&K Govt begins reconstitution of child welfare committees

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, NOV 19 : After amending the Juvenile Justice Rules, the Jammu & Kashmir Government has initiated the process for the reconstitution of Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) across the Union Territory.

The government has invited applications from eligible candidates for the posts of Chairperson and Members of the CWCs.

"The Government of Jammu and Kashmir intends to constitute Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) in every district for exercising the powers and discharging the functions assigned to them in relation to children in need of care and protection under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, read with Rule 15(3) of the Jammu and Kashmir Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Rules, 2021, as amended in 2026 vide S.O. 246 dated September 22, 2026," reads a notification issued by the Social Welfare Department, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Each CWC comprises of a chairperson and four members, who are appointed on recommendations of a selection-cum-oversight committee.The Child Welfare Committees

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HT BOTTOM NEWS

Sagar Reviews New High Court Complex, Directs Revised DPR and Faster Execution

Phase-I targeted for November 2027; Minister stresses realistic cost assessment, timely funding and construction quality



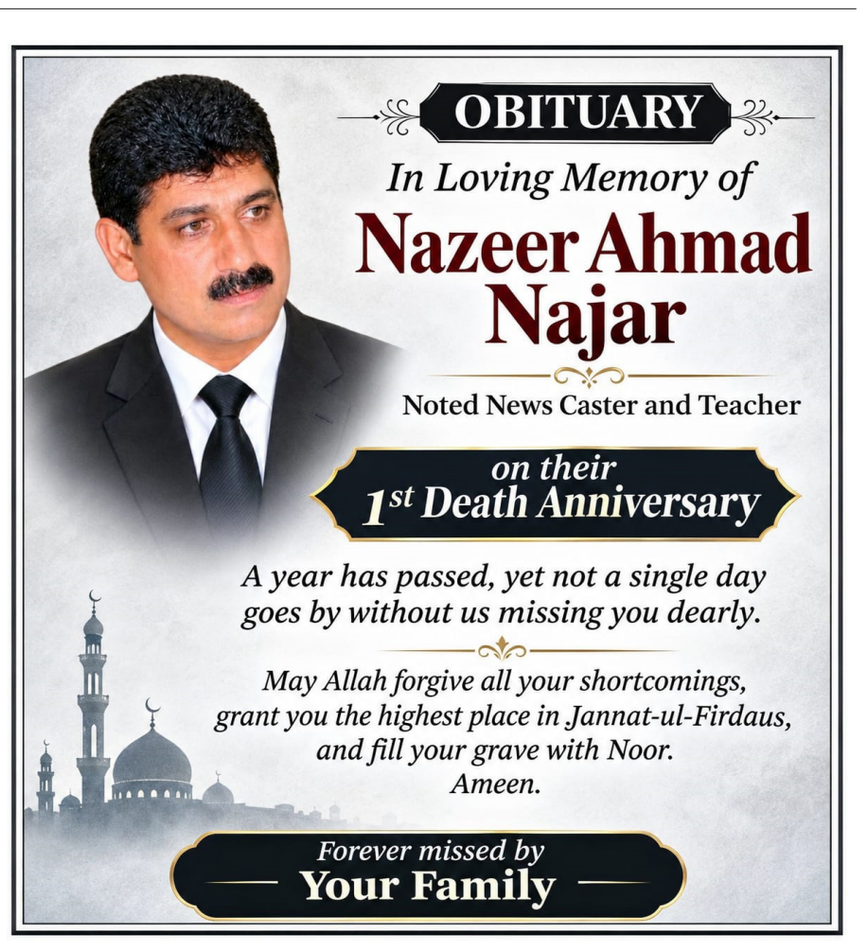
HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Ali Mohammad Sagar on Thursday reviewed the ongoing construction of the new High Court Complex at Rakh-Arth, Bemina, and directed the concerned authorities to accelerate execution through effective planning and close monitoring. During his visit, the Minister was informed that the 908.20-crore project, initiated in April 2022, has achieved approximately 65 per cent physical progress in the main building, with 213.50 crore spent so far. Phase-I is targeted for completion by November 2027, while the first block is expected to be completed within the next six months. Sagar directed the preparation of a revised Detailed Project Report incorporating prevailing market rates, technical requirements, pending works and realistic cost estimates, stressing that timely availability of funds, quality construction and accountability must remain priorities.

Minister for PDD, Revenue, Law and Parliamentary Affairs, DMRRR and Elections, Ali Mohammad Sagar, today undertook an extensive review of the ongoing construction of the new High Court Complex at Rakh-Arth, Bemina Bypass here, and directed the concerned officers to take all necessary measures to ensure its timely completion through effective planning, close monitoring and coordinated execution.

During his visit to the project site, the Minister personally assessed the pace of construction, reviewed the physical and financial progress and took detailed feedback from the executing agencies regarding the status of various components and the requirements for completing the project within the stipulated timeframe.The Minister was accompanied by the Chief Engineer, R&B Central, Director Litigation Kashmir, Executive Engineer concerned and Assistant Executive Engineers.

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Continue from Front Page.....

"Self-Discipline Equally

winter and summer traffic management arrangements, particularly at tourist destinations, to address the growing pressure on roads.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Traffic Haseeb-Ur-Rehman on Thursday said the growing number of vehicles on Srinagar roads has emerged as a major cause of traffic congestion, with traffic pressure remaining high even during winter months when vehicle movement would normally decline.

Speaking to reporters, the DIG said the city was witnessing heavy traffic during morning and evening hours, while congestion was increasingly being reported at night as well.

"Earlier, traffic volume would usually decrease during winter, but that is no longer the case. We are witnessing considerable traffic pressure throughout the day, including during evening hours," he said.

He said the existing road infrastructure needed improvement to accommodate the growing volume of vehicles, adding that the government was taking steps towards road widening and construction of flyovers.

"The road infrastructure needs to be improved. The government is taking several initiatives, including proposed flyovers and road widening. These measures will help address the increasing traffic pressure," the DIG said.

However, he maintained that infrastructure development and enforcement alone would not resolve the problem unless motorists also followed traffic regulations.

The DIG said the Traffic Police had intensified enforcement across the city, with thousands of challans being issued daily against traffic violators through both technology-based monitoring and manual checking.

"The Traffic Department is very strict. Thousands of challans are being issued every day, which was not the case earlier. We are using technology as well as manual enforcement to check violations," he said.

He stressed that issuing challans could not, by itself, bring lasting improvement to traffic management.

"Traffic improvement will not come merely through challans. Self-discipline is equally important. People must understand their responsibility and follow traffic rules voluntarily," he said.

Calling for greater public cooperation, the DIG said motorists needed to develop better driving habits and respect traffic regulations to reduce congestion and improve road safety.

"In cities where traffic management is better, people follow rules on their own. If motorists here also adopt such discipline, the traffic situation can improve considerably," he said.

Responding to a question about possible traffic diversions and alternative arrangements to ease congestion, Haseeb-Ur-Rehman said the department had recently held a winter preparedness meeting to review traffic management, particularly in tourist destinations.

He said the authorities were assessing measures to manage any increase in tourist arrivals during winter, when popular destinations witness additional pressure on roads.

"We recently held a winter preparedness meeting where we discussed how to improve traffic management at tourist destinations if the tourist flow increases," he said.

The DIG said preparations for the summer tourist season had also been discussed, with several measures under consideration to handle increased vehicle movement.

"We have also discussed summer preparedness and various initiatives to manage traffic during the peak tourist season. Details of these measures will be shared subsequently," he said.

On complaints about school buses being parked along public roads and contributing to traffic congestion, the DIG said the matter had come to his notice.

"I have received information about this issue and will discuss it with the SSP Traffic," he said.

The DIG reiterated that improving traffic movement required a combined effort involving infrastructure development, strict enforcement and responsible behaviour by road users.

He said public cooperation remained essential to ensuring smoother traffic movement across Srinagar and other congested areas. (KNS)

"We Remain

She also highlighted the concerns of residents living in remote and vulnerable pockets of Dachhan.

The Lieutenant Governor reaffirmed an unwavering commitment to dismantling the terror ecosystem through decisive action.

He reiterated the commitment to provide compensation, government employment, and comprehensive support to the Next of Kins of the Special Police Officers (SPOs), who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

Addressing local priorities in Kiyar, the Lieutenant Governor assured of installation of a mobile tower in the area and committed to pursuing forest clearance for the Kiyar road with the relevant authorities.

On establishing a Special Operations Group (SOG) picket, he said the issue will be discussed in the review meeting with Deputy Commissioners and Senior Superintendents of Police, scheduled for Friday.

"The security grid, along with road and communication infrastructure in Kiyar and adjoining remote areas, will be strengthened for the safety and well-being of the local residents," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor assured the delegation that all other demands and grievances raised during the meeting would be addressed on priority.

The delegation consisted of residents from Kiyar including Shri Suresh Kumar, Shri Pradeep Kumar, Shri Ram Lal Thakur, Shri Roshan Lal Thakur, Shri Satish Kumar Parihar, Shri Rohit Parihar.

They were accompanied by District President, BJP Kishtwar, Shri Ravi Parihar, from Lopara Dachhan; BJP District Vice President Kishtwar, Shri Ashish Sharma from Berabhata, Shri Lokesh Parihar from Suid, Dachhan and J&K BJP Mahila Morcha General Secretary Ms Urvashi Gupta.

"Move Towards

services added during the past year, while J&K has secured the first position among Union Territories in the National e-Services Delivery Assessment. Omar Abdullah also called for fixed project timelines, stronger accountability in maintaining digital platforms and accelerated implementation of cloud migration, AI initiatives and other technology-driven governance projects.

: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a review meeting of the Information Technology Department to assess the progress of various e-governance initiatives, digital infrastructure projects, cybersecurity measures and delivery of online services across Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister reviewed the department's key achievements and ongoing initiatives aimed at strengthening digital governance and improving citizen access to government services.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Dr Sajjan Singh Yadav, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary Finance Shailendra Kumar Secretary Information Technology Rahul Yadav, DG BISAG-N and other officers attended the meeting.

During the presentation Secretary IT informed the meeting that Jammu and Kashmir currently has 1,718 government services integrated on digital platforms, with 368 new services added during the last one year. The e-UNNAT platform continues to serve as the J&K's flagship unified e-governance platform, providing access to over 1,700 citizen-centric services through a single digital interface. The department also highlighted that J&K has secured the first position among Union Territories in the National e-Services Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) ranking.

The meeting was further informed that 38.68 lakh users from Jammu and Kashmir are registered on DigiLocker, with 240 services available online and over 93 lakh academic records accessible through the platform. The Mobile Dost application is providing 1,548 government services through smartphones, while the Common Service Centre network has served over 62 lakh citizens during the period under review.

Reviewing the progress of digital governance initiatives, the Chief Minister stressed the need to accelerate the transition towards paperless administration and directed the department to move from the existing paper-based system to a paperless e-Cabinet mechanism.

Emphasising cybersecurity as a critical component of digital governance, Omar Abdullah called for regular security audits of all government websites and applications. He directed that a systematic reminder mechanism be instituted, with the first reminder issued two months before the expiry of a security audit and a second reminder one month before its expiry, ensuring timely renewals and compliance.

The Chief Minister also stressed the need for fixing clear timelines for all ongoing and proposed projects, with regular monitoring of implementation to avoid unnecessary delays.

Directing that government websites and applications be made more user-friendly, accessible and convenient for citizens, he emphasised that digital platforms must simplify service delivery and provide a seamless experience to users.

He further underlined the need for greater ownership and accountability on the part of the IT Department and concerned departments in the regular maintenance, updating and smooth functioning of government websites, portals and applications.

The department also briefed the Chief Minister on major initiatives, including the integration of government services with WhatsApp, expansion of the State Data Centre, migration of government applications to the MeghRaj Cloud, strengthening of the J&K Security Operations Centre and implementation of BharatNet and 4G Saturation projects.

The meeting was informed that 54 of the 109 identified applications had been migrated to cloud infrastructure, while migration of other applications was at different stages, including security audits and user acceptance testing.

The department also presented progress on the AI Centre of Excellence inaugurated by the Chief Minister at IIT Jammu, alongside proposed AI applications across sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, education, transport and public governance.

The Chief Minister called for a coordinated and result-oriented approach to ensure that ongoing digital initiatives translate into improved governance, greater administrative efficiency and easier access to public services.

Sat Sharma Calls

He was chairing an organisational review meeting of BJP Mahila Morcha, Jammu and Kashmir, led by its president Advocate Neha Mahajan, at the party headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

The meeting was attended by Mahila Morcha office-bearers, district presidents and general secretaries from across the Union Territory, along with Morcha Prabhari Veenu Khanna, Seh-Prabhari Shailja Gupta and General Secretaries Urvashi Gupta, Geeta Bhagat and Poonam Gupta.

During the meeting, Sat Sharma reviewed district-wise organisational activities and sought feedback on programmes and responsibilities undertaken by the office-bearers.

He stressed the need for a disciplined and result-oriented organisation, urging leaders to intensify public outreach, connect more women with the party and highlight the achievements of the Modi-led government.

He also called for effectively countering misinformation and ensuring greater participation of women in political leadership and organisational activities.

Veenu Khanna urged office-bearers to maintain regular public contact and identify issues concerning women and their families for appropriate follow-up.

Neha Mahajan reviewed the Morcha's organisational performance and called upon district teams to work with renewed commitment, strengthen coordination and ensure wider public participation in upcoming programmes.

Geeta Bhagat conducted the proceedings, while Poonam Gupta presented the vote of thanks.(KINS)

Amit Shah

and experts from legal, forensic and technology fields to discuss coordinated action against terrorism.

The discussions will cover terror financing, radicalisation, digital forensics, intelligence sharing and the use of evidence from foreign jurisdictions.

The conference will also include a training programme for police personnel on investigating terror cases, handling digital evidence, witness protection and improving prosecution under the new criminal laws. (KINS)

"Raise Quality

merchandise exports, expressing confidence in the country's growth prospects and global competitiveness. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called on Indian industry to raise product quality standards, expand its international presence and move beyond the comfort of a large domestic market, stressing that businesses must offer Indian consumers the same quality of products that they export to global markets.

Addressing the annual convention of the industry body FICCI, Modi cautioned India Inc against treating the country's 140-crore population as a guaranteed market for products of any standard.

Pointing to the continued use of the term 'export quality' as a selling pitch in India, he questioned why domestic consumers should have to settle for products that do not meet the highest quality benchmarks. He urged businesses to make quality improvement a priority and compete more aggressively in international markets.

The Prime Minister also invited industry leaders to openly suggest further reforms that could accelerate India's economic growth, assuring them that the government was receptive to feedback.

Taking a swipe at the experience of businesses under previous administrations, PM Modi said, "The industry should not hesitate to communicate its concerns or recommendations to the present government, which he described as a government of friends."

Emphasising the importance of long-term business decisions, Modi urged corporates to place 'India First' at the centre of their investment strategies over the next two decades.

"Such an approach would strengthen the country's self-reliance while creating fresh opportunities for businesses," he said. He also called on industry leaders to increase investments in agriculture and allied sectors, noting that these areas would be important for India's future growth.

Highlighting the country's economic progress over the past 12-13 years, Modi said India had witnessed rapid economic expansion alongside a significant reduction in poverty. Referring to a recent World Bank report, he said nearly 50 crore people had moved out of poverty during this period.

The Prime Minister also highlighted tax reforms undertaken by his government, pointing out that the basic corporate tax rate had been brought down from 30 per cent in 2014 to 22 per cent. He further noted that individuals earning up to Rs 12 lakh annually were now exempt from income tax under the new tax regime.

However, while acknowledging the tax relief extended to businesses, Modi questioned whether companies had translated these benefits into higher employee strength and better wages. He stressed that economic progress must be inclusive and that businesses should contribute to improving employment opportunities and incomes.

He further said a nation's development depended on recognising the contribution of farmers, small entrepreneurs, industries, wealth creators and taxpayers. Respecting these stakeholders, rather than engaging in constant criticism, was essential for building a stronger economy, he added.

On India's external economic performance, Modi said the country continued to be the world's fastest-growing major economy, with growth projected at around 7 per cent. He also highlighted that merchandise exports touched nearly USD 50 billion in October, marking the highest monthly figure on record.

The Prime Minister attributed the improvement in India's growth outlook to its economic performance, noting that international institutions and rating agencies, including Moody's Ratings, S&P Global Ratings, Fitch Ratings, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, had revised their growth projections upwards.

The Prime Minister also invited industry leaders to openly suggest further reforms that could accelerate India's economic growth, assuring them that the government was receptive to feedback.

Emphasising the importance of long-term business decisions, Modi urged corporates to place 'India First' at the centre of their investment strategies over the next two decades.

He said, "Such an approach would strengthen the country's self-reliance while creating fresh opportunities for businesses."

J&K Govt

are mandated under the Juvenile Justice Act to deal with cases involving children in need of care and protection, including orphaned, abandoned, abused and trafficked children.

The law empowers them to ensure the care, rehabilitation, restoration, and overall welfare of such children through appropriate interventions and support mechanisms—(KNO)

Sagar Reviews

During the review, Sagar was informed that the project, which commenced in April 2022, has an approved estimated cost of 908.20 crore, against which an expenditure of 213.50 crore has been incurred so far. The main building has achieved approximately 65 per cent physical progress, with an estimated cost of around 450 crore, while the road component accounts for approximately 90 crore.

The Minister was apprised that Phase-I of the project is targeted for completion by November 2027, with the first block expected to be completed within the next six months. The tender for air-conditioning and heating systems has been allotted, while the electrical works have also been tendered.

Taking a detailed assessment of the financial requirements, Sagar was informed that approximately 290 crore would be required to meet the project expenditure up to November 2027. The budget provision for 2026-27 includes 87 crore under SASCI and 5.30 crore under UT Capex, while an additional requirement of 41 crore has been proposed under Budget Estimates 2027-28.

The Minister laid particular emphasis on reassessing the original Detailed Project Report (DPR), observing the need to factor in the time elapsed since the commencement of the project, prevailing market rates, technical requirements and the financial implications of the balance works.

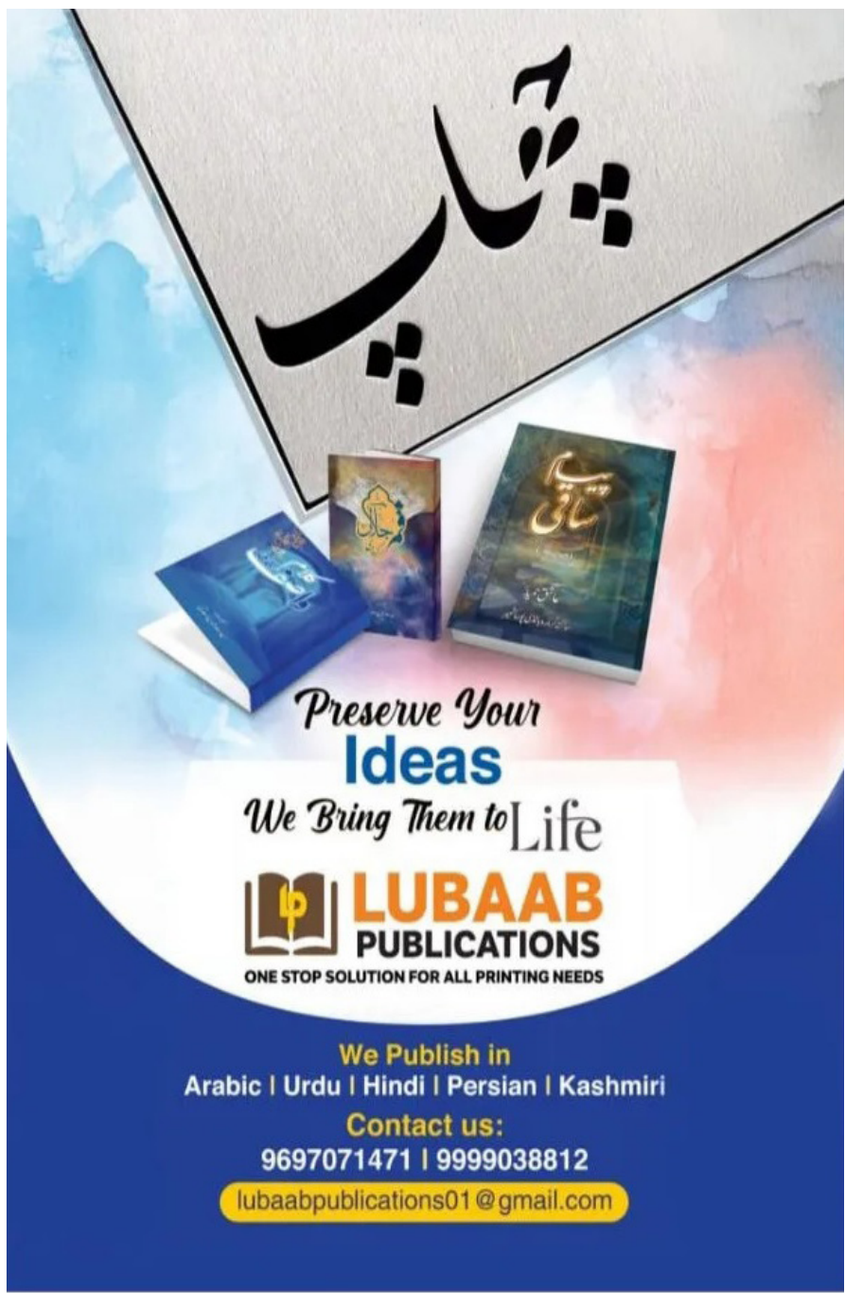
He directed the concerned officers to undertake a comprehensive review of the project, including its scope, technical specifications, pending components and revised cost estimates, and prepare an updated DPR along with a realistic phase-wise execution schedule for consideration and approval of the competent authority.

Sagar stressed that proper financial planning and timely availability of funds would be crucial for maintaining the pace of construction and avoiding any delays. He called upon the executing agencies to ensure effective coordination and closely monitor every component of the project.

The Minister further emphasised that quality of construction, adherence to technical specifications and timely execution must remain the foremost priorities, adding that such a significant judicial infrastructure project requires sustained attention and accountability at every level.

It was also informed that Phase-II of the project would be taken up separately through the prescribed tendering process.

Reiterating the importance of strengthening judicial infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir, Sagar stressed that the new High Court Complex should be developed as a modern, well-equipped and functional facility, with all essential infrastructure in place to meet the long-term requirements of the judicial institution.



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Shamim Firdous inaugurates maiden J&K Women Science Congress

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 19: Government College for Women (GCW), Parade Ground, Jammu, in collaboration with the J&K Science, Technology & Innovation Council (JKSTIC), is organising its maiden three-day J&K Women Science Congress-2026 from November 19 to 21, 2026.The inaugural session of Congress was inaugurated today by Minister for Education and Jal Shakti, Shamim Firdous at Conventional Centre, here.



Being organised for the first time in the Union Territory, the Congress is centred on the theme "Women Leading Scientific Innovation for a Sustainable and Inclusive Future", with a focus on promoting women's leadership in science, technology, research and innovation besides inspiring young women to pursue careers in scientific fields.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister expressed immense pride over the enthusiasm and scientific spirit displayed by young women at the Congress. She said that participation of nearly 500 delegates and presentation of over 250 research papers reflected the talent, curiosity and innovative potential of young researchers in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister said that despite remarkable progress made by women in education, challenges such as societal expectations, family responsibilities, safety concerns and limited opportunities continue to affect their participation in science and research.

She reaffirmed the Government's commitment to strengthen the colleges and universities as centres of research and innovation through improved infrastructure, mentorship, academic collaboration and supportive learning environments, in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Encouraging young women to pursue their aspirations with determination, the Minister said that no subject or profession was beyond the capabilities of women. She also urged the parents and teachers to encourage girls to explore, innovate and excel in their chosen fields.Emphasising the importance of confidence and courage, she called upon women to believe in themselves, overcome societal barriers and extend a helping hand to others as they achieve success. "Be courageous," she exhorted, encouraging young women to make their mark in science, research and innovation and contribute meaningfully towards the progress of society.Dr. Tessy Thomas, eminent aerospace scientist and former Director General (Aeronautical Systems), DRDO, popularly known as the "Missile Woman of India", delivered the keynote address. She shared her perspectives on scientific advancement, innovation and the importance of encouraging women to pursue scientific careers.

MLA, Jammu East, Yudhvir Sethi was also present on the occasion. Ms. Srividya Gokhle, Vice President – Technology GCC & AI Practice Head, Impelsys, delivered the Special Address, sharing insights on emerging technologies and artificial intelligence.

Dr. Twinkle Suri, Director Colleges, J&K, and Shri Mushtaq Ahmed Bhat, Additional Director, JKSTIC, were also present on the occasion.

The inaugural ceremony also witnessed the release of the Abstract Book, marking the commencement of the academic and scientific deliberations of the Congress.

The three-day event will feature plenary lectures, technical sessions, poster presentations, a Scientific Model Exhibition and a Research & Innovation Showcase, providing a platform to highlight the contributions and initiatives of women researchers, scientists, innovators and entrepreneurs. The Congress is being coordinated by Dr. Gurpreet Kour, Coordinator, J&K Women Science Congress-2026. The event aims to promote meaningful academic exchange, interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation, while strengthening the participation and leadership of women in the scientific ecosystem of Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier, Dr. Naveen Anand, Principal, Government College for Women, Parade Ground, highlighted the significance of the Congress in fostering scientific temper, strengthening research culture and promoting innovation and greater participation of women in science and technology.

Several legislators call on CM Omar Abdullah, discuss developmental issues pertaining their constituencies

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, NOVEMBER 19: Several legislators today called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu, and apprised him of various developmental issues and public welfare concerns pertaining to their respective constituencies.The legislators included MLA Hiranagar Vijay Kumar, MLA Bandipora Nizamuddin Bhat, MLA Bishnah Rajeev Kumar and MLA Shopian Shabir Ahmad Kullay.

During the meetings, the legislators raised issues relating to development, public infrastructure, welfare and other matters requiring the Government's attention in their respective Assembly constituencies.

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the visiting public representatives and assured them that all genuine issues raised by them would be addressed on priority. He reiterated the Government's commitment to ensuring equitable development and responsive governance across Jammu and Kashmir.

Newly appointed CS Sajjan Singh Yadav calls on CM Omar Abdullah at Civil Secretariat, Jammu

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, NOVEMBER 19: Newly appointed Chief Secretary Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav today called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu.

The Chief Minister congratulated him on assuming charge as the Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister discussed key developmental priorities with the newly appointed Chief Secretary, emphasising the need to accelerate development, strengthen governance and ensure effective and time-bound delivery of public services across Jammu and Kashmir.

The discussions focused on advancing the Government's developmental agenda and ensuring coordinated efforts towards addressing key priorities and improving public service delivery.

Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav assumed charge as Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir on November 18.

DC Shopian chairs review meeting on Forest Rights Act; Reviews Claims & Complaints

■ HT News Network



SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, today chaired a meeting regarding the implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and examination of claims and complaints received under the Act at the Mini-Secretariat, Shopian.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner held detailed deliberations on various aspects related to the implementation of the Act, with particular focus on the status of claims, complaints and issues raised by the concerned stakeholders. He emphasised the need for a systematic, transparent and time-bound approach while dealing with the claims to ensure that all genuine cases are examined strictly in accordance with the provisions and guidelines of the Forest Rights Act.

The DC stressed upon the concerned officers to ensure proper coordination among the departments and undertake due verification of claims and complaints so that genuine grievances are addressed in a fair and transparent manner.

The DC further underscored the importance of creating awareness among the eligible beneficiaries about the provisions of the Act and ensuring that the process is carried out in a transparent and accountable manner.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, ACD, Muzaffar Ahmed, District Officers, BDO, keller, representatives from tribal

DC Pulwama reviews progress under National Saffron Mission

■ HT News Network



PULWAMA, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, K.K. Sidha, today chaired a review meeting to assess the progress and implementation of various interventions under the National Saffron Mission in District Pulwama.During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner was apprised of the overall objectives of the Mission, its major components and the status of interventions undertaken for the promotion and development of saffron cultivation in the district.

The review covered key components including rejuvenation and replanting of existing saffron areas, soil health improvement, mechanization, post-harvest handling, quality testing and marketing, strengthening of irrigation infrastructure and transfer of technology.

While reviewing the progress, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for a comprehensive and farmer-centric approach to address the challenges faced by saffron growers. He stressed the importance of preparing Soil Health Cards for all saffron farmers, wherever not already covered, and highlighted the need to adopt modern post-harvest handling technologies, improved harvesting practices and mechanization. He also highlighted the importance of identifying issues faced by farmers and addressing them through practical and coordinated interventions by the concerned departments.

Reviewing the irrigation infrastructure, the DC expressed serious concern over the reported high number of non-functional borewells and stressed the need for a comprehensive irrigation audit to assess their operational status and explore possibilities for restoration. He emphasized that proper aquifer mapping and scientific assessment of groundwater potential must precede any fresh borewell drilling to prevent unsuccessful drilling and avoid wastage of public funds.

DC Kulgam reviews implementation of VB-G RAM G

Stresses more effective convergence with agriculture and allied Sectors

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today chaired a meeting at the Mini Secretariat, Kulgam, to review the implementation of VB-G RAM G and explore convergence of activities under various Agriculture and allied sectors.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on the implementation framework of the programme, identification of eligible works and convergence opportunities across various departments.

The meeting discussed various categories of permissible works under the programme, including construction and upgradation of rural roads, culverts, cross-drainage structures, Panchayat Ghars, Anganwadi Centres, rural libraries, public buildings and school infrastructure. Other works discussed included community infrastructure, solid and liquid waste management, solar lighting, village parking facilities, transport sheds, rural



housing and repair and maintenance of water supply infrastructure under Jal Jeevan Mission.

The DC stressed the need to identify works permissible under the scheme for effective convergence.He also emphasised undertaking landscaping of Government buildings, Government schools and Panchayat Ghars wherever such facilities are presently lacking. The concerned departments were asked to identify suitable locations and take necessary steps in this regard.

The DC further stressed the need for the constitution of a supervision committee to monitor the execution of identified works and ensure proper implementation, quality and timely completion. The committee shall oversee the progress of works and ensure that the identified activities are taken up on the ground.

Emphasis was laid on coordinated planning, optimal utilisation of departmental resources and close coordination between line departments and block-level functionaries for effective implementation of the programme.

The meeting was attended by ACD Kulgam, BDOs, CAO, CHO, CAHO, DSHO, AD Fisheries, AD Sericulture and Executive Engineers, Jal Shakti (PHE) Divisions, Kulgam and Qazigund, besides other concerned officers.

ADDC Bandipora reviews progress of works under Constituency Development Fund

■ HT News Network



BANDIPORA, NOVEMBER 19: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Bandipora, Nazir Ahmad Mir, today chaired a review meeting to assess the status and progress of works under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in District Bandipora.

During the meeting, a detailed review of the status of CDF works was undertaken, with particular emphasis on their scrutiny, feasibility, progress and timely implementation through the e-Nigrani Portal.

The ADDC directed all Block Development Officers to monitor the e-Nigrani Portal on a daily basis and submit regular updates and progress reports to the ACD as well as the ADDC Office. He further directed that all works found to be non-feasible shall be reverted through the portal to the concerned MLAs for necessary reconsideration.

Emphasising the need for expeditious processing, the ADDC instructed all concerned officers to expedite the scrutiny and processing of pending works and ensure that no unnecessary delays occur at any stage. He further directed that the progress of all CDF-related works shall be monitored on a daily basis, with clear accountability at the field level.

The ADDC stressed upon the officers to maintain close coordination, ensure prompt follow-up on pending issues and accord due priority to the timely processing and execution of CDF works.

Among others, the meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Maqbool Lone; Assistant Commissioner Development, Suhaib Ahmad Wani; Block Development Officers and other concerned officers.

Javid Dar calls for sweeping reforms in mining sector; directs transparent, accountable functioning

Stresses scientific assessment of mineral resources, stringent action against illegal mining

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, NOVEMBER 19: Minister for Agriculture Production, Finance, Mining and Cooperative Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Department of Geology and Mining, Jammu and Kashmir, to assess its overall functioning, operational efficiency, developmental initiatives and the progress of key reforms aimed at strengthening the mining sector.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Vikramjit Singh; Director, Geology and Mining, J&K, Pawan Kumar Sharma; Joint Directors of Geology and Mining for Jammu and Kashmir divisions; District Mineral Officers (DMOs) from across the Union Territory and other senior officers.

During the meeting, the Minister undertook an extensive review of the department's regulatory framework, revenue performance, auction processes, enforcement mechanisms and measures for ensuring the sustainable and scientific utilisation of mineral resources.

Emphasising the need for a fundamental shift towards a transparent, facilitative and technology-driven administrative framework, Javid Dar observed that cumbersome procedures and excessive administrative requirements had, in several cases, created unnecessary impediments for legitimate operators while leaving scope for illegal mining activities.

Reviewing the status of mining blocks, the Minister directed the department to expedite the identification, assessment and auctioning process, ensuring that all eligible blocks are made auction-ready within a stipulated timeframe. He stressed that avoidable procedural delays must be eliminated and all requisite preliminary assessments, site demarcation and interdepartmental consultations completed before initiating the auction process.

The Minister further directed that Environmental Clearance (EC) and Consent to Operate (CTO), wherever applicable, from the Pollution Control Committee or other competent authority, should be facilitated during the pre-auction process through the District Committee itself, rather than placing the entire responsibility on successful bidders after the issuance of the Letter of Intent (LOI).

Stressing the importance of evidence-based planning and scientific resource management, Javid Dar directed the department to prepare a comprehensive district-wise inventory of mineral resources, supported by systematic geological surveys, scientific mapping and reliable estimates of mineral reserves, quality and extraction potential. He said that scientific identification and assessment of mineral resources would facilitate informed decision-making, ensure realistic valuation of mining blocks, attract genuine investors and strengthen the government's revenue base.

Taking a serious view of revenue management, the Minister called for establishing a robust and integrated mechanism to reconcile actual mineral extraction, authorised dispatch, transportation, processing and sale with the royalty realised by the government. He observed that digitisation of challans alone could not ensure complete financial transparency and directed the department to develop an end-to-end digital monitoring mechanism capable of tracking the entire mineral supply chain and detecting discrepancies, under-reporting and potential revenue leakages. He stressed that every unit of mineral extracted and transported must be properly accounted for to ensure that the government receives its legitimate revenue.

Income Tax Department Organises Tax Awareness Outreach Programme at Sopore

■ HT News Network



Sopore:-The Income Tax Department organised a tax outreach programme at Dak Bungalow, Sopore, Baramulla district, today to raise awareness about tax compliance, the new Income Tax Act and the FAST DS Scheme. The programme was conducted by the Principal Commissioner of Income Tax (PCIT), Jammu and Kashmir, under the guidance of Chief Commissioner of Income Tax (CCIT), Amritsar, Shri G. S. Phani Kishore.

The outreach programme focused on the border areas of Baramulla district and the Sopore sub-division and witnessed participation from more than 100 people, primarily taxpayers, trade union leaders and representatives, small business owners, horticulture stakeholders, apple growers, Chartered Accountants and tax advocates.

A detailed presentation was delivered by Shri Avinash Kumar, Income Tax Officer, Srinagar, covering tax awareness, provisions of the new Income Tax Act, advance tax, the concept of tax year and features of the FAST DS Scheme. The session was interactive, with participants showing keen interest and raising queries on various provisions and features discussed during the presentation.

PCIT Jammu and Kashmir, Ms. Monika Dhami, presided over the programme and held interactive discussions with office-bearers and stakeholders from different sectors. The Additional Deputy Commissioner, Sopore, also attended the event and expressed satisfaction with the organisation of the outreach programme.

Div Com Kashmir reviews Action Plan for NCAP 2026–27, Stresses timely completion of Projects

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 19: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, today chaired a meeting to review the physical and financial progress of projects being implemented under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) and discuss the proposed Action Plan for 2026–27. The meeting was attended by the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC); SSP Traffic; Regional Director, Pollution Control Board; Executive Engineers of various departments and agencies; representatives of the University of Kashmir and the Floriculture Department, among others.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner reviewed the progress of NCAP projects since 2020, financial allocations for 2026–27, and the approved Action Plan for the upcoming financial year.

The proposed Action Plan for 2026–27 includes the installation of 10 Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) junctions equipped with automatic e-Challan facilities across Srinagar city to ease traffic congestion and mitigate air pollution. Other key initiatives include the development of pedestrian pathways and green spaces along the Tattoo Ground Junction–Bemina Bypass Road for dust suppression; procurement of electric mechanical road sweepers for mechanised road cleaning and dust mitigation across Srinagar city; and procurement of electric hoppers. The plan also envisages the upgradation and macadamisation of city roads under NCAP to reduce road-dust emissions and improve ambient air quality. Additionally, the establishment and development of green campuses, including colleges and universities, have been proposed to strengthen urban green infrastructure, promote dust suppression and facilitate in-situ mitigation of air pollution across Srinagar

District Level Empanelment Committee Meeting held in Ganderbal to finalize Mission YUVA Motivator

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, NOVEMBER 19: A meeting of the District Level Empanelment Committee was held today in the VC Room of the Mini Secretariat, Ganderbal, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Ganderbal, Shreya Singhal to deliberate upon and finalize the selection and empanelment of a Motivator under Mission YUVA for the district.

During the session, the committee thoroughly reviewed the proposals and selection criteria for the empanelment of the Motivator.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Manzoor Ahmad Bhat, AD Employment Ganderbal, LDM Ganderbal and other concerned officials.

PD&SJ Shopian Inaugurates Legal Aid Clinic at GGHS Chotipora

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 19: The Principal District and Sessions Judge (PD&SJ), who also serves as Chairman of the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Shopian, today inaugurated a Legal Aid Clinic at Government Girls High School Chotipora (GGHS), Shopian.

The clinic aims, as part of the ongoing efforts by the DLSA, Shopian, to expand grassroots legal assistance and awareness.

The initiative aims to bring legal guidance and support closer to students and the local community in Chotipora, reinforcing access to justice at the school and village level.

Secretary, DLSA, Shopian, Mudasir Ahmed, Lawyers, students, people in large numbers and other concerned were present during the inauguration. The clinic aims, as part of the ongoing efforts by the DLSA, Shopian, to expand grassroots legal assistance and awareness.

The initiative aims to bring legal guidance and support closer to students and the local community in Chotipora, reinforcing access to justice at the school and village level.

DC Kulgam reviews progress under AgriStack, SVAMITVA Schemes

Directs speedy completion of revenue assignments

■ Farooq Rather



KULGAM, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today chaired a meeting to review the progress of key revenue-related initiatives, including Farmer ID generation under AgriStack, clearance of backlog mutations and implementation of the SVAMITVA Scheme.

The DC stressed the need for effective coordination, regular monitoring and timely execution of all tasks. Regarding Farmer ID generation under AgriStack, the DC directed that all identified landowners be covered on the basis of Jamabandi 2026. The concerned Tehsildars, Naib Tehsildars and Patwaris were asked to complete the requisite formalities and expedite the generation of Farmer IDs.

On backlog mutations, the DC directed the concerned officers to ensure attestation of all pending mutations on priority to facilitate timely updation of revenue records.

Reviewing the implementation of the SVAMITVA Scheme, he instructed the field functionaries to complete ground-truthing and verification of Map 1.0 and Map 2.0 data and ensure generation of Property Cards for all eligible landowners within the stipulated timeline.

The DC emphasized that these initiatives are crucial for strengthening revenue administration, ensuring transparency in land records and facilitating efficient delivery of citizen-centric services.

He directed all Tehsildars, Naib Tehsildars to maintain close coordination, ensure regular field-level monitoring and accord top priority to the assignments for their time-bound completion.

CHO Pulwama to organise Awareness cum Machinery Mela on 21 November

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, NOVEMBER 19: In order to reach out to farming community with the latest farming techniques and the incentive base intervention available with the department, Office of the Chief Horticulture Officer (CHO), Pulwama, is organising a Awareness cum Machinery Mela on 21 November 2026 (Saturday) at its office premises in Pulwama to facilitate identified and authorized beneficiary growers in procuring farm machinery of their choice from registered dealers under the Farm Mechanization Scheme.

All registered farm machinery dealers have been invited to participate in the event along with the requisite dealership/brand authorization certificates, registration particulars and other relevant documents, ensuring the availability of machinery for the authorized beneficiaries. During the event, the authorized farmers will procure and purchase the farm machinery of their wish and choice. Physical verification and embossing/marking of the purchased machinery shall be carried out on the spot under the supervision of the District.

Branch MSME DFO Srinagar concludes Six-Week ESDP Programme on Business Management and Artificial Intelligence

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, NOVEMBER 19: Branch MSME Development and Facilitation Office (DFO), Srinagar, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, successfully concluded a six-week Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP) on Business Management and Artificial Intelligence (AI) at CIED IUST.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, aspiring entrepreneurs, and existing Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), providing them with an opportunity to enhance their entrepreneurial and managerial capabilities while exploring the growing role of Artificial Intelligence in business development.

The programme was organised with the support of CIED Foundation and Government Polytechnic, Pulwama, and featured a blend of technical sessions, practical learning and interactive discussions. Besides the regular technical faculty, several experts from industry and allied government departments were roped in to share their professional experiences and provide practical insights into entrepreneurship, business management and emerging technologies. During his session, Saheel Alaqband, Assistant Director, Br MSME DFO Srinagar, interacted with the participants and delivered a detailed presentation on various schemes and initiatives of the Ministry of MSME, explaining the opportunities available to aspiring entrepreneurs and existing MSEs for setting up, expanding and strengthening their businesses. He also assessed the presentations made by participants and provided guidance on improving their business ideas and entrepreneurial proposals.

The six-week programme provided participants with valuable exposure to contemporary business practices, particularly the practical application.

PIB, JKPCC organise press briefing on implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026

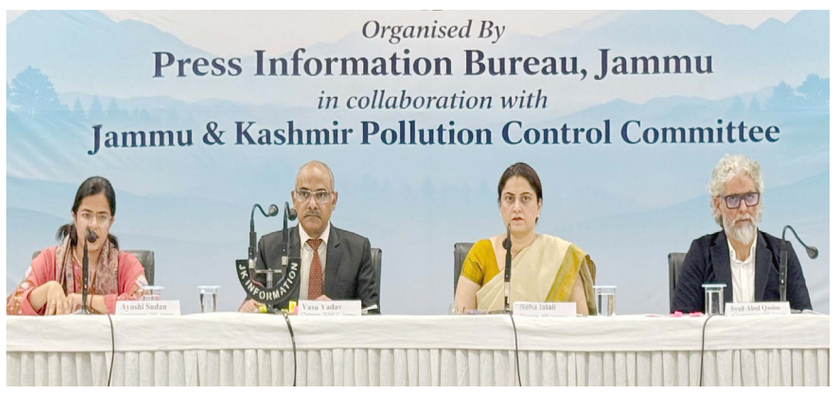
Speakers stress source segregation, scientific waste processing and public participation for effective implementation

■ HT News Network

Jammu, November 19: The Press Information Bureau (PIB), Jammu, in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee (JKPCC), today organised a press briefing on the implementation of the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026, to highlight their key provisions and sensitise the media and public about the responsibilities of various stakeholders. The speakers emphasised that source segregation, scientific processing, recycling and active public participation are essential for effective waste management and achieving the objectives of Swachh Bharat.

Chairman, JKPCC, Shri Vasu Yadav, highlighted the major provisions of the new Rules, which place greater emphasis on segregation of waste at source into four categories—wet, dry, sanitary and special care waste. He said the framework seeks to strengthen scientific waste processing, recycling, resource recovery and remediation of legacy dumpsites while ensuring greater accountability among waste generators. Shri Yadav said the Rules provide for measures such as user fees, spot fines and environmental compensation to ensure compliance. Stressing the need for coordinated action, he called for greater involvement of government agencies, institutions, commercial establishments and citizens in adopting responsible waste management practices.

In her opening remarks, Director, PIB Jammu, Ms. Neha Jalali, said the press briefing was organised to familiarise media organisations and the public with the provisions of the Rules and promote awareness about responsible waste disposal. She emphasised that effective implementation would require behavioural change and active participation of citizens, institutions and local authorities. Ms Jalali also highlighted the important role of the media in disseminating information, encouraging source segregation and taking the message of cleanliness and sustainable waste management



to the grassroots to achieve Swachh Bharat. Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), Ms. Ayushi Sudan, highlighted the Corporation's initiatives to strengthen waste management and improve accountability among bulk waste generators. She said bulk waste generators have to mandatorily register through a dedicated online portal, adding that this facilitates monitoring and ensures compliance with prescribed norms. She stressed the need to promote recycling, reuse and scientific processing, adding that waste should be viewed as a resource rather than merely a disposal burden.

Ms. Sudan said violations of prescribed norms by bulk waste generators, including dumping waste in public places, attract a penalty of 10,000 per violation, besides user charges of 5,000. She also highlighted the use of GPS-enabled vehicles for monitoring waste collection and improving operational efficiency. Encouraging public participation, she urged citizens to use the 'My Jammu' mobile application to register sanitation-related grievances and contribute towards maintaining clean surroundings. Joint Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Shri Syed Abul Qasim, outlined the measures being undertaken to strengthen the city's solid waste management infrastructure, particularly at the Achan dumpsite near Anchar Lake. He said around 91,789 tonnes of waste have already been processed as part of efforts to reclaim the site, recover useful materials and reduce environmental risks. The Joint Commissioner further highlighted the proposed 800-tonne-per-day integrated solid waste management facility at Achan. Estimated to cost 361 crore, he said, it will include material recovery, compressed biogas generation, composting and refuse-derived fuel processing. He also informed that a leachate treatment plant is proposed to address environmental concerns, while a 125-tonne-per-day construction and demolition waste processing plant is projected to be completed by December 2026.

World Heritage Week celebration commences with inauguration of Exhibition at Archives Repository, Kala Kendra

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 19: The Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums, J&K, commenced its week-long celebrations of World Heritage Week (19th -25th November 2026) with the inauguration of an exhibition of rare archival documents, manuscripts and royal albums at the Archives Repository, Kala Kendra, Jammu.

Secretary, Culture, Ramesh Kumar inaugurated the exhibition, thereby formally kick-starting the week-long celebrations aimed at promoting awareness, appreciation and preservation of the rich cultural and historical heritage of Jammu and Kashmir.

The exhibition witnessed the participation of students, historians, research scholars, heritage enthusiasts and members of the public, who showed keen interest in exploring the rare archival treasures preserved by the Department. The display of historical documents, valuable manuscripts and royal albums provided visitors with an opportunity to gain insights into the rich historical, administrative, cultural and artistic legacy



of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

A major attraction of the exhibition was the demonstration of curatorial conservation techniques and the workshop on the preservation and conservation of archival materials. The initiative offered visitors an insight into the scientific methods and specialised processes involved in protecting and preserving valuable historical records and manuscripts for future generations.

Speaking on the occasion, Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, J&K, Dr. Pranjal J. Hazarika apprised the gathering of the series of activities planned by the Department during the week-long celebrations. These include a Heritage Walk for students, a cleanliness drive at Bahu Fort, special lectures on the tangible cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir, a visit for children with special needs to promote inclusive heritage awareness, heritage visits and interactive programmes, along with cultural activities.

The Department reiterated its commitment to preserve the archival records, manuscripts, monuments and museum collections while encouraging greater public participation in heritage conservation. The week-long programme seeks to strengthen the connection between people, particularly the younger generation, and the rich historical and cultural legacy of Jammu and Kashmir.

The celebrations will continue until November 25, 2026, with a series of educational, cultural and public outreach activities across different heritage locations. Speaking on the occasion, Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, J&K, Dr. Pranjal J. Hazarika apprised the gathering of the series of activities planned by the Department during the week-long celebrations. These include a Heritage Walk for students, a cleanliness drive at Bahu Fort, special lectures on the tangible cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir, a visit for children with special needs to promote inclusive heritage awareness, heritage visits and interactive programmes, along with cultural activities.

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JKBOSE conducts One-Day Orientation Programme on JKSQAAF Implementation on Pilot Basis in Pulwama

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, NOVEMBER 19: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE), functioning as the School Standard Setting Authority (JKSSSA), in collaboration with PARAKH, NCERT, New Delhi, organised a One-Day Orientation Programme on the implementation of the Jammu and Kashmir School Quality Assessment and Assurance Framework (JKSQAAF) on a pilot basis for schools of District Pulwama.

The programme was held today at Government Degree College, Pulwama, and witnessed the enthusiastic participation of approximately 200 Heads of Schools from the district The programme was organised to familiarise Heads of Institutions of Government and Private Schools with the framework, its domains and indicators, the online self-assessment process, documentation of evidence, and the preparation of School Quality Improvement Plans (SQIPs).

The initiative is aimed at institutionalising a culture of self-evaluation, accountability, continuous improvement and quality assurance in school education, in consonance with the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Ghulam Hassan Sheikh, Chairman, JKBOSE, reiterated that the introduction of JKSQAAF on a pilot basis reflects the Board's commitment to strengthening institutional standards and fostering a structured, outcome-oriented approach to school quality assurance across Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasised that the framework would provide schools with a systematic mechanism to assess their performance across various domains, identify areas requiring improvement, and translate the findings into actionable School Quality Improvement Plans (SQIPs) to ensure continuous institutional development and enhancement of learning outcomes.

Prof. Indrani Bhaduri, CEO and Head, PARAKH, NCERT, New Delhi, highlighted the significance of school quality assessment and assurance in building a holistic, learner-centric and quality-oriented educational ecosystem. She emphasised that frameworks such as JKSQAAF should encourage schools to undertake honest self-assessment,

GMC Handwara organises Sports and Cultural Week under "My Youth My Pride" Banner

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, NOVEMBER 19: Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara organised its Sports and Cultural Week under the theme "SNAPSE 3.0" under the banner "My Youth My Pride" at Environmental Hall, Handwara, with the objective of promoting sportsmanship, cultural expression, creativity and the holistic development of students.



Army Brigadier Rohit Sharma of Nowgam Sector, attended the programme as the Chief Guest, while Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi, and Principal, GMC Handwara, Prof. Khurshid Ahmad Wani, attended as Guests of Honour. Medical Superintendent, Handwara, Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, along with faculty members, officers, staff and students, were also present on the occasion.

The event provided an engaging platform for students to showcase their sporting abilities, cultural talents and creative potential. The programme highlighted the importance of extracurricular activities in complementing academic learning and nurturing essential qualities such as teamwork, discipline, leadership, confidence and a spirit of healthy competition.

The theme "SNAPSE 3.0" under the banner "My Youth My Pride" underscored the vital role of young people in shaping a progressive society and contributing to nation-building. It also highlighted the importance of providing students with opportunities to explore their interests, develop their abilities and maintain a balanced approach towards academics, sports and cultural pursuits.

The initiative reflected GMC Handwara's commitment to fostering an inclusive and encouraging campus environment where students can develop their talents.

DLSA Ganderbal organises Awareness Programmes under "Surakshit Bachpan Abhiyan"

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, NOVEMBER 19: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal, today organised awareness programmes in educational institutions across District Ganderbal under the "Surakshit Bachpan Abhiyan", a Pan-India School Awareness Campaign aimed at protecting children from sexual offences and promoting awareness regarding child rights and child protection.

The campaign is being conducted under the guidance of Abdul Nasir, Chairman, DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge), Ganderbal

and under the supervision of Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary, DLSA, Ganderbal, with the objective of sensitising school children about their legal rights, child protection laws, preventive measures and available legal remedies and support mechanisms.

As part of the scheduled activities, awareness programmes were conducted at Boys Higher Secondary School, Ganderbal, by the Resource Person, Advocate Irfan Rashid Mir.

Similarly, awareness programme was conducted at New Tiny Hearts School, Duderhama, by the Resource Person, Advocate Younis Saleem Wani.

The programmes were conducted under the theme "Mera Bachpan, Mera Adhikar (My Childhood, My Rights)", covering important aspects of child rights, child protection, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, available legal remedies and the role of Legal Services Authorities in safeguarding the rights and interests of children. During the sessions, students were also sensitised about the NALSA (Child Friendly Legal Services Scheme for Children) Scheme, 2024, the NALSA toll-free helpline number 15100, and the NCPCR POCSO e-Box facility, through which children can seek assistance and report instances of sexual abuse.

Awareness Programme on Women's Legal Rights held at GDC Sogam

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, NOVEMBER 19: SANKALP–Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW), Mission Shakti, Department of Social Welfare, Kupwara, today organised an Awareness-cum-Training Programme on Women's Legal Rights at Government Degree College (GDC), Sogam, with a focus on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) and the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.



The programme was attended by Dr. Mudasir Ahmad, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Lolab, as the Chief Guest. Resource persons, including Dr. Jehangir Ahmad from Mission Poshan, Advocates Ishfaq Ahmad and Baabar from the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), and Mushtaq Ahmad from the Zonal Education Office, Sogam, delivered detailed presentations on the subject.

Director Agriculture reviews departmental preparations for Jhiri Mela 2026

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 19: Director Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Jammu, Anil Gupta today chaired a comprehensive review meeting here in Conference Hall, Directorate of Agriculture, Krishi Bhawan, to assess the departmental preparations for the Jhiri Mela 2026, scheduled to be held from November 23 to December 3 at Jhiri. The department's participation shall primarily focus on farmers' welfare, awareness and dissemination of modern agricultural technologies, keeping in view the legacy of Baba Jitto, a symbol of farmers' rights and dignity. The Director directed the sectoral heads to put up attractive, innovative and informative stalls with uniform presentation, proper labelling and high standards of cleanliness. He also stressed that the department, which has secured top positions in previous exhibitions, should make



every effort to retain the distinction this year. The departmental exhibition will showcase improved varieties of seeds, cereals, vegetables, niche crops, medicinal and aromatic plants, agricultural machinery and implements, along with live demonstrations of mushroom cultivation, apiculture, soil testing and other farmer-oriented technologies.

Special displays will include button and Dhingri mushrooms, Cordyceps and Shiitake cultivation blocks, hybrid vegetable seedlings, diverse honey varieties, millet restaurant, plant health services and Kisan Khidmat Ghar (KKG) activities. The stalls will also highlight achievements under HADP, JKCIP, Centrally Sponsored Schemes and other departmental initiatives through informative literature, digital displays, photographs and videos. The Director assigned specific responsibilities to the officers and constituted committees for stall preparation, registration, reception, transport, refreshments, stage management, media and other arrangements to ensure smooth conduct of departmental activities.

Joint Director (Extension) will coordinate the departmental arrangements as the nodal officer, while Joint Director (Inputs), Chief Agriculture Officer Jammu.

DEO Udhampur organises district-level quiz and essay writing competitions to promote electoral literacy

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, NOVEMBER 19: In compliance with the directions of the Election Commission of India and the Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, District Election Office (DEO) Udhampur today organised District-level quiz and essay writing competitions, as part of its ongoing voter awareness and electoral literacy initiative.

The theme of the essay writing competition was "Importance of Pure Electoral Rolls and Importance of Voting." The Quiz Competition covered the topics of Electoral Roll Preparation, EVMs and VVPATs, the Polling Process and the Counting Process.

The competitions were conducted by Deputy District Election Officer Babu Pardeep Kumar, under the guidance and overall supervision of District Election Officer Ananth Dwivedi.



The competitions were organised through a three-tier selection process comprising Institution Level, ERO Level and District Level.

A total of 80 students, with 10 students selected from each Assembly Constituency for each competition, participated in the District-Level events, showcasing their knowledge, creativity and understanding of the electoral process.

The top 10 performers in each competition were declared winners at the District Level and awarded Certificates of merit in recognition of their outstanding performance.

The initiative aimed at instilling democratic values, enhancing electoral awareness and encouraging the active participation of young citizens in the democratic process.

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DC Srinagar Flags Off Culture Department's Heritage Walk from Old SPS Museum to mark "World Heritage Week-2026"

Initiative aimed to promote awareness about rich historical, architectural & cultural heritage, while encouraging collective responsibility towards heritage conservation

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR NOVEMBER 19: To mark "World Heritage Week-2026", Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today flagged off a "Heritage Walk" from the Old SPS Museum, Lal Mandi, aimed at creating mass awareness about Kashmir's rich historical, architectural and cultural heritage and encouraging greater public participation in its preservation and conservation of heritage monuments and sites.

The "Heritage Walk" organised by the Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums witnessed participation from various stakeholders, students and members of the community, highlighting the importance of collective efforts in safeguarding Srinagar's invaluable historical legacy.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised the importance of preserving the rich heritage and cultural legacy, stating that historical monuments and heritage sites are not merely remnants of the past but valuable repositories of our history, traditions, architectural excellence and



cultural identity.

The DC stressed the need for sustained awareness campaigns and active community involvement to ensure the protection and conservation of these invaluable assets for future generations while fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility towards protecting heritage monuments, structures and sites.

The DC also underscored that heritage conservation requires collective responsibility and active participation from all sections of society, including local communities, educational institutions, civil society organisations and other stakeholders. He expressed hope that the initiative would help connect people, particularly the younger generation with Kashmir's rich historical and cultural roots while fostering a deeper appreciation of its heritage.

Following the flag-off from the Old SPS Museum, Lal Mandi, participants carrying placards and banners and raising awareness slogans as part of the Heritage Walk, proceeded towards the Old Assembly Complex, where the walk culminated.

The programme was also attended by Assistant Directors of Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums, including Shaheena Yassen and Dr Sarfaraz, Tehsildar South, Sajad Rasool Shah, Deputy SP Traffic, Suhail Ahmad, besides other Officers of the Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums. The programme was also attended by Assistant Directors of Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums, including Shaheena Yassen and Dr Sarfaraz.

HT EDITORIAL

Srinagar's Traffic Crisis : Roads Alone Cannot Clear the Chaos

Discipline, civic responsibility and better infrastructure must go hand in hand to reclaim the city's roads

Srinagar's worsening traffic congestion is no longer merely a transportation challenge; it has become a daily test of civic discipline, administrative efficiency and collective responsibility. From the city centre to its peripheral roads, traffic snarls have become an increasingly familiar sight, consuming valuable time, increasing public frustration and exposing the growing gap between the city's expanding vehicular population and its existing road infrastructure.

The observations made by Deputy Inspector General Traffic Haseeb-Ur-Rehman underline an important reality: while thousands of traffic challans are being issued every day through technology-based surveillance and manual enforcement, punitive measures alone cannot bring about a lasting change. Enforcement is necessary, but it cannot substitute for a culture of responsible driving. A traffic system cannot function efficiently if motorists continue to violate basic regulations, disregard lane discipline, park indiscriminately and treat public roads as their personal convenience.

The growing number of vehicles on Srinagar's roads has undoubtedly placed enormous pressure on an already overstretched infrastructure. Narrow roads, inadequate parking facilities, frequent roadside encroachments, unregulated stopping of vehicles and bottlenecks at important junctions have collectively aggravated the situation. The problem becomes particularly acute during peak hours, tourist seasons and winter months, when even routine movement through several parts of the city becomes an exhausting exercise.

However, it would be equally unfair to place the entire responsibility on motorists. The administration must acknowledge that traffic management cannot improve without sustained investment in road infrastructure, scientific urban planning and efficient public transport. Road widening, construction of proposed flyovers, development of organised parking facilities and removal of bottlenecks must move beyond official announcements and translate into visible progress on the ground. Srinagar needs a comprehensive, long-term mobility plan rather than temporary interventions designed merely to manage daily congestion.

Equally important is the need to strengthen public transport and discourage unnecessary dependence on private vehicles. Unless convenient, affordable and reliable alternatives are made available, the number of private vehicles will continue to rise, further burdening the city's limited road network. Traffic management must therefore be approached as an integrated urban development issue, involving the Traffic Police, municipal authorities, public transport agencies and other concerned departments.

At the same time, citizens must recognise that traffic regulations are not designed to inconvenience them but to ensure the safety and convenience of everyone. Jumping signals, wrong-side driving, unnecessary honking, illegal parking and disregard for pedestrian crossings are not minor violations; they contribute directly to congestion, accidents and public disorder. The habit of blaming authorities while ignoring personal responsibility must end.

The Traffic Police, too, must ensure that enforcement remains transparent, consistent and impartial. Technology-based monitoring should be complemented by public awareness campaigns, effective traffic planning and courteous engagement with commuters. Challans may generate deterrence, but lasting behavioural change requires education, awareness and a sense of civic ownership.

Srinagar is a growing urban centre and an important tourist destination. Its roads must reflect the standards of a modern, well-managed city. The seasonal traffic arrangements being reviewed by the department should be backed by effective coordination, adequate deployment of personnel and special attention to tourist destinations and vulnerable road stretches.

The message from the DIG is therefore both timely and significant: infrastructure development and strict enforcement are essential, but neither can succeed without public cooperation. The city cannot build its way out of congestion alone, nor can it challan its way towards traffic discipline. What Srinagar urgently needs is a partnership between the administration and its citizens.

Ultimately, a traffic-friendly Srinagar will not be created by wider roads and more challans alone. It will require disciplined motorists, accountable authorities, better planning and a collective commitment to respect the road. The responsibility for clearing Srinagar's traffic chaos begins with every citizen who gets behind the wheel.

When the Match Ends, What Comes Next?



Mohammad Arfat Wani

People in Kashmir like cricket. When a match happens many people come to see it. Streets, playgrounds and open areas get busy. Some people go far to watch their teams. Cricket makes people feel good. It also helps them stop thinking about their problems for a while.. When I watch people spending a lot of time and money on cricket I think about other important things in life.

I am not against cricket. Sports are good for people. They keep us moving. Teach us to work as a team. They also give players a chance to do well. Many young people in Kashmir like cricket. There is nothing with that. We should not ignore our studies and future because of a game. A match lasts a few hours but our future is very important.

Many students in Jammu and Kashmir finish their education. Look for work. Finding a job is not easy. Some students study for government jobs for years. Others look for work to help their families. Many young people are worried about what will happen in their lives. Not getting a job is not always their problem. Still they should try to use their time



We should also think about the money we spend on watching matches. A young person might spend five hundred on fuel to ride a bike. A longer trip by car could cost a thousand or more. Some people can pay for this. Others cannot. Many families have to save money for food, books and other needs. We can enjoy cricket. We should also learn to save money. Even a little bit can help us buy a book or learn a skill.

Sometimes people also argue during cricket matches. They get angry when their team loses. Some people argue about the umpires decision. Small disagreements can become fights. Cricket is just a game. One team. The other loses. This is normal in sports. We should enjoy the game without hurting anyone.

Another issue is how time some people spend on cricket. They watch videos check scores and talk about matches for hours. During this time they may forget about their books, exams and other tasks. It is good to take a break and have fun. We should not forget our responsibilities. We need to learn how to use our time

Young people need support and advice. Schools and colleges should tell students about jobs. Training centers should help them gain skills. Local groups can organize sports and other useful activities. The government should also work to create jobs in Jammu and Kashmir. Parents and teachers should guide people and help them make good decisions.

We do not have to choose between cricket and our future. We can watch a match on Sunday. Study on Monday. We can support our team and still learn new things. We can enjoy sports. Help our families too. The key is to stay balanced. Cricket should make us happy. It should not stop us from working towards our goals.

Kashmir has young people with great talent. They have dreams. Want to do something meaningful in life. They need places to play and enjoy themselves. They also need jobs, good advice and opportunities to build a future. We should support their love for cricket. Also help them think about their lives.

A team may win a trophy today. Another team may win it year. After the game people will go home. The field will be quiet again. Our young peoples future is still waiting for them. We should enjoy cricket. We should also care about our studies, work and dreams. A match ends in a hours but our future stays with us for many years.

Mohammad Arfat Wani is a writer, social activist and nursing student, from Kuchmulla, Tral.
Email: wania6817@gmail.com

Maize: The Queen of Cereals



Sahil Manzoor

Maize is cultivated on a large scale in the Kashmir Valley and holds immense value in both food and non-food industries. Globally, maize is widely grown as a cereal grain, especially in regions like Central America. Interestingly, maize is known as the queen of cereals due to its remarkable genetic yield potential. It is cultivated on more than 160 million hectares across over 160 countries. The United States is the largest producer, contributing about 35% of global output, followed by China with around 20%.

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

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



Types of Maize
White grain
Normal yellow
Sweet corn
Baby corn
Popcorn
Waxy corn
High amylase corn
High oil corn
Taxonomy:
Family: Poaceae (Grass family)
Tribe: Maydeae
Botanical name: Zea mays
Chromosome number: 2n = 20
Maize in the Kashmir Valley

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

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

However, maize cultivation is highly dependent on water availability. This year, prolonged drought and water scarcity have severely affected crop yields. The government should ensure 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 can be reached at sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

The Necessity Of Organic Farming



Surinderpal Singh

Agriculture is the backbone of human civilisation. It provides food, employment and economic support to millions of people across the world. However, modern farming practices have created several challenges for human health, soil quality, water resources and the environment. The excessive use of chemical fertilisers, pesticides and other harmful substances has raised serious concerns about the quality of food we eat and the future of agriculture. In this situation, organic farming has emerged as an important and sustainable alternative. Organic farming is a method of growing crops without using synthetic chemical fertilisers, harmful pesticides or genetically modified seeds. Instead, it depends on natural resources and traditional farming techniques. Farmers use compost, animal manure, green manure, crop rotation, biological pest control and other natural methods to maintain soil fertility and protect crops from diseases and insects. Its main aim is to produce healthy food while maintaining a balance between agriculture and nature.

One of the biggest reasons for promoting organic farming is the protection of human health. Food is essential for survival, but the quality of food is equally important. Excessive and improper use of agricultural chemicals can leave harmful residues in food and may create health risks. Organic farming reduces dependence on such chemicals and encourages the production of safer food. It also promotes a healthier relationship between people, food and the environment. Another important benefit is the protection of soil. Soil is not simply a surface on which crops grow; it is a living system containing millions of microorganisms that support plant growth. Continuous use of chemical fertilisers and poor farming practices can damage soil structure and disturb its natural biological balance. Organic farming improves soil fertility by adding natural nutrients and increasing organic matter. It supports earthworms, useful bacteria and other organisms that keep the soil healthy and



productive.

Water conservation is another major reason why organic farming is necessary. Excessive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides can pollute rivers, ponds, groundwater and other water sources through agricultural runoff. Organic farming helps reduce this pollution by limiting the use of synthetic agricultural chemicals. Healthy soil with more organic matter can also hold water for a longer time, which may help crops survive during periods of low rainfall. Organic farming also plays an important role in protecting biodiversity. Birds, butterflies, honeybees, earthworms and other beneficial organisms are essential parts of the natural ecosystem. Excessive use of pesticides can harm these organisms and disturb the food chain. Organic farming encourages natural pest management and creates a safer environment for beneficial insects and wildlife. It also supports the conservation of traditional crop varieties and local plant species.

Climate change has become a serious global challenge. Rising temperatures, irregular rainfall, floods, droughts and extreme weather events are affecting agricultural production. Organic farming can contribute to climate-friendly agriculture by improving soil health and increasing the amount of organic matter stored in the soil. It can also reduce dependence on energy-intensive synthetic fertilisers. Although organic farming alone cannot solve climate change, it can become an important part of a wider strategy for environmental protection and sustainable development.

Organic farming can also provide new economic opportunities for farmers. The demand for organic food is increasing as people become more aware of health and environmental issues. Organic products may receive better prices in certain markets, creating opportunities for farmers to improve their income. However, the transition from conventional to organic farming requires proper planning, training and financial support. During the initial years, farmers may face lower yields, higher labour requirements and difficulties in finding suitable markets. Therefore, government support, affordable certification and direct links between farmers and consumers are essential.

Organic farming does not mean rejecting modern science and technology. In fact, scientific research can make it more effective and productive. Modern techniques such as soil testing, drip irrigation, weather forecasting, biological pest control, composting technology and precision agriculture can help farmers adopt better organic practices.

Governments should encourage organic farming through training programmes, financial assistance, research facilities, easy certification procedures and better marketing opportunities. Schools, colleges, agricultural universities and farmer organisations should also spread awareness about the benefits of sustainable agriculture. Consumers can contribute by purchasing genuine organic products and supporting farmers who follow environmentally responsible practices.

In states like Punjab, where agriculture has played a major role in economic development, the need for sustainable farming deserves special attention. The intensive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, along with excessive groundwater extraction, has raised concerns about long-term agricultural sustainability. Promoting crop diversification, organic manure, integrated farming and water-saving techniques can help protect the natural resources of the region. It is important to understand that organic farming is not merely an agricultural technique; it is a responsibility towards future generations. Farmers, scientists, policymakers and consumers must work together to create a food system that protects both human health and the environment. A gradual and scientific shift towards organic and other sustainable farming methods can make agriculture more resilient and environmentally friendly.

SURINDERPAL SINGH
FACULTY IN SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
SRI AMRITSAR SAHIB PUNJAB.

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Email:
dailyheadlinestoday@gmail.com
headlinestoday2024@gmail.com

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PART 2

The Profession of an Imam and the Role of Masjid Committees and Other Authorities

Preserving the Dignity of Religious Leadership, Upholding Accountability, and Ending Unnecessary Interference



By Muhammad Elyass

These challenges may include educational backwardness, unemployment, drug addiction, corruption, domestic disputes, social discrimination, and the growing distance between young people and religious institutions.

An Imam should engage constructively with the community, especially its younger members, and explain how Islamic principles can guide people through contemporary difficulties. Where a matter requires specialised expertise, he should be willing to consult qualified professionals and scholars.

He must also practise the values he preaches. Someone who speaks about honesty should strive to be honest; someone who condemns injustice should avoid participating in injustice.

Furthermore, an Imam must possess the courage to express legitimate religious concerns without becoming dependent on the personal approval of committee members.

The Holy Qur'an states:

"And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know it."

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:42)

This verse emphasises the importance of truthfulness and integrity. An Imam should not conceal legitimate concerns merely to protect his employment or please influential individuals.

Nevertheless, independence must not become arrogance, and courage must not become an excuse to disregard consultation. An Imam should listen to genuine concerns, acknowledge his mistakes, and distinguish between religious principles and personal preferences.

True religious leadership combines knowledge with character, independence with consultation, and courage with wisdom.

6. The Relationship Between an Imam and the Community

Respect is a reciprocal responsibility.

Although an Imam deserves dignity because of the responsibilities entrusted to him, he must also treat worshippers with fairness, patience, and compassion. His position does not place him beyond criticism or make every personal opinion religiously authoritative.

He should acknowledge mistakes, address genuine concerns constructively, and resolve disagreements through dialogue rather than hostility.

Similarly, worshippers should not judge an Imam merely because his opinions differ from their own. Genuine religious disagreements should be approached through knowledge, evidence, and mutual respect.

A healthy relationship between an Imam and his congregation is built on trust rather than fear, cooperation rather than domination, and sincere advice rather than personal hostility.

The purpose of religious leadership is not simply to command respect, but to help the community grow in faith, understanding, and moral responsibility.

7. The Role of the Waqf Board and Other Authorities

Waqf institutions and other relevant authorities may have legitimate responsibilities concerning mosque property, finances, appointments, service conditions, and institutional management, subject to applicable laws and rules.

However, administrative oversight should



not become unnecessary interference in the legitimate religious responsibilities of an Imam.

There is a difference between ensuring the proper management of a mosque and attempting to control every sermon, religious opinion, or discussion of local social concerns.

Standardised sermons or centrally issued religious guidance may sometimes serve legitimate purposes. Nevertheless, rigid uniformity can become problematic when it disregards local circumstances, suppresses legitimate scholarly differences, or prevents Imams from addressing the genuine concerns of their congregations.

Such policies should therefore be developed through appropriate consultation with qualified scholars, religious institutions, and community representatives.

Authorities responsible for appointing or supervising Imams should also establish transparent eligibility criteria, clearly defined service conditions, and impartial procedures for resolving disputes.

The purpose of administration should be to protect institutional integrity and facilitate religious service, not to make religious leadership dependent on administrative pressure or personal approval.

Equal Opportunities for Qualified Imams from Different Schools of Thought

Appointments in Waqf-controlled mosques should be governed by fairness, competence, and legitimate religious requirements.

Qualified Imams belonging to any of the existing sects should receive fair consideration, provided they satisfy the established qualifications and the religious requirements of the mosque concerned.

Excluding otherwise qualified candidates solely because of their affiliation with a particular religious tradition raises legitimate concerns about fairness.

In particular, appointment procedures should not unfairly favour one group, including the Barelvi tradition, while excluding candidates who otherwise meet the necessary requirements.

Selection should be based on religious knowledge, character, recognised qualifications, competence, and the ability to fulfil the responsibilities of an Imam and not merely on sectarian preference or personal influence.

The objective should be to provide equal opportunities to qualified candidates while respecting the religious character and legitimate arrangements of individual mosques.

Mosques should promote unity among Muslims rather than institutionalise unnecessary divisions.

8. Financial Independence and the Principle of Tawakul

Imams have families to support, children to educate, and household expenses to meet. They deserve fair compensation, timely payment, reasonable working conditions, and professional dignity.

Religious service should never be used as an excuse to deny them financial security or expect them to tolerate mistreatment indefinitely.

At the same time, financial dependence should not compel an Imam to compromise his principles, conceal legitimate concerns, or support injustice to protect his livelihood.

Islam teaches Tawakul: placing one's trust in Allah while making responsible efforts and taking appropriate practical measures. Belief in Allah as Al-Razzaq, the Provider, should encourage an Imam to remain principled when faced with unreasonable pressure.

However, Tawakul does not mean acting recklessly, neglecting family responsibilities, or treating every disagreement as a reason to resign.

Imams should pursue constructive dialogue, seek appropriate advice, and use legitimate grievance mechanisms where necessary. Committees, in turn, must not exploit an Imam's financial vulnerability to control his speech or conduct.

A salary should support an Imam's service, not purchase his silence.

Fair compensation and professional independence are complementary responsibilities that strengthen religious institutions.

9. Religious Leadership: Rights, Duties, and Accountability

Although an Imam's role extends beyond an ordinary employment arrangement, his appointment should still involve clearly defined duties, rights, and responsibilities.

Committees should assess his performance fairly, considering his conduct, punctuality, fulfilment of agreed duties, and contribution to the community.

Likewise, an Imam should fulfil his obligations conscientiously, respect legitimate administrative arrangements, and communicate concerns through appropriate channels.

If an Imam is negligent, abusive, or persistently fails to perform his duties, the committee should be able to address the matter through a fair process. If a committee engages in intimidation, arbitrary treatment, or unjust interference, the Imam should have an effective means of seeking redress.

In either case, decisions should be based on evidence, established procedures, and impartial judgement rather than personal grudges, factional interests, or individual preferences. Neither religious authority nor administrative authority should be used to escape accountability.

10. Practical Recommendations for Reform

Meaningful reform requires cooperation between Imams, Masjid Committees, Waqf institutions, and the wider community.

Responsibilities of Masjid Committees, Waqf institutions, and Other Institutions

- Treat Imams with dignity and professional respect.
- Ensure fair compensation and timely payment.

Courage in every step, fortitude in every heart : leadership stands with its troops



By M S Nazki

Courage in every step, fortitude in every heart : leadership stands with its troops! Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage

-It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends

-Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts..

-It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.

-I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what

-Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently…

-Lt Gen Pratik Sharma Army Cdr NC visited troops deployed at the icy heights of the Siachen Glacier on the eve of Diwali.

-Interacting with the brave hearts in the world's highest battlefield, he conveyed warm festive greetings and lauded their indomitable spirit.

-Amidst unforgiving terrain, the resolve of the Indian Army shines brighter than a thousand lights.

-This was the story which we had and now the elaboration!

-General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C) of the Army's Northern Command, Lieutenant -General Pratik Sharma, visited troops deployed at the icy heights of the Siachen Glacier on the eve of Diwali and extended festive greetings to them.

-During his visit to the world's highest battlefield, the Army Commander interacted with soldiers deployed in the challenging terrain and commended their courage, resilience and unwavering commitment to duty.

The Army's Northern Command shared details of the visit in a post on X, stating that Lt Gen Sharma

-Two battles come to mind:

-The Battle of Stalingrad was fought from July 17, 1942, to February 2, 1943, and stands as the bloodiest and largest urban battle in World War II. It resulted in a decisive Soviet victory over Nazi Germany and its Axis allies, marking the major turning point of the war on the Eastern Front.-Background and Strategy

• Axis Objectives: In the summer of 1942, Adolf Hitler launched Operation Case Blue to seize the oil fields of the Caucasus and capture Stalingrad (now Volgograd), a vital industrial and transport hub on the Volga River.

• Forces Involved: The assault was spearheaded by the German Sixth Army and Fourth Panzer Army, supported by Italian, Hungarian, Romanian, and Croatian forces.

• Soviet Defense: General Vasily Chuikov commanded the 62nd Army tasked with defending the city street by street. Joseph Stalin issued orders forbidding retreat, turning the city into an armed fortress.

-The Urban Combat



• Close Quarters: German air raids by the Luftwaffe flattened over 90% of the city's housing, creating a maze of ruins that negated German mobile and artillery advantages.

• Attrition: Fighting raged inside factories, sewers, and burnt-out buildings with severe hand-to-hand combat. Average life expectancy for a newly arrived Soviet soldier dropped to mere hours.

-Soviet Counteroffensive and Surrender

• Operation Uranus: On November 19, 1942, the Red Army launched a massive winter counteroffensive under General Georgy Zhukov, bypassing the city and encircling the German Sixth Army under General Friedrich Paulus.

• Collapse: Despite pleas to retreat, Hitler ordered the trapped 300,000 Axis troops to hold fast. Cut off from supplies and freezing in harsh winter conditions, General Paulus surrendered on February 2, 1943.

-Casualties and Impact

• Human Toll: The battle caused an estimated 1.1 million to 1.5 million Soviet casualties (including military and about 40,000 civilians) and roughly 800,000 Axis casualties.

• Prisoners: Around 91,000 German and Axis soldiers were taken captive, of whom only a few thousand ever returned home after the war.

• Turning Point: The destruction of the German Sixth Army permanently broke the strategic initiative of the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front.

-The Battle of Leningrad (commonly known as the Siege of Leningrad) was a prolonged military blockade and battle on the Eastern Front of World War II.

• Dates: September 8, 1941 – January 27, 1944 (lasting 872 days).

• Combatants: Nazi Germany, Finland, and Spain (Axis powers) against the Soviet Red Army and the civilian population of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg).

• Axis Objective: Hitler sought to completely obliterate the politically and industrially vital city of Leningrad and starve out its entire population rather than accept a surrender.

-Key Events and Conditions

• The Encirclement: German forces cut off all land routes into the city by September 8, 1941, while Finnish forces engaged from the north.

• The "Road of Life": With all rail and roads severed, the Soviets relied on a dangerous ice road and transport network across the frozen Lake Ladoga—known as the Road of Life—to bring in minimal food and ammunition while evacuating hundreds of thousands of children, the sick, and the elderly.

• Breakthrough and Relief: The Soviet army partially pierced the ring during Operation Iskra in January 1943, and finally lifted the blockade completely during the Leningrad-Novgorod offensive on January 27, 1944.

-Human Cost and Impact

• Casualties: An estimated 1 million to 1.5 million civilians died, primarily from systematic starvation, freezing cold, disease, and relentless German artillery and air bombardment.

• Historical Classification: Many historians classify the deliberate-starvation strategy and destruction inflicted on Leningrad as an act of genocide.

• Hero City: In recognition of its extreme endurance and resistance, Leningrad was honored as a Hero City of the Soviet Union.

-Battle of Kiev (1941)-Operation Barbarossa:The First Battle of Kiev or Kiev operation, known as the Battle of Kiev on the German side (German: Schlacht bei Kiew), was a major battle that resulted in an encirclement of Soviet troops in the vicinity of Kiev during World War II, the capital and most populous city of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

- This encirclement is the largest in the history of warfare by number of troops. The battle lasted from 7 July to 26 September 1941 as part of Operation Barbarossa, the Axis invasion of the Soviet Union. Although it is known as the "Battle of Kiev", the city played only a peripheral role in the overall battle; for the Soviets, a strategic defensive operation. The battle took place over a large area in eastern Ukraine, with Kiev being the focal point of Soviet defenses and of the German encirclement.

- Much of the Southwestern Front of the Red Army, commanded by Mikhail Kirponos, was encircled, but small groups of Red Army troops managed to escape the pocket in the days after the German panzers attacked east of the city, including the forces of Marshal Semyon Budyonny, Marshal Semyon Timoshenko and Commissar Nikita Khrushchev. Kirponos was trapped behind German lines and was killed while trying to break out.

-The battle was an unprecedented defeat for the Red Army, and was more damaging than the Battle of Białystok–Minsk of June–July 1941. The encirclement trapped 452,700 Soviet soldiers, 2,642 guns and mortars, and 64 tanks of which only 15,000 soldiers escaped from the encirclement by 2 October. The Southwestern Front suffered 700,544 casualties, including 616,304 killed, captured, or missing during the battle. The 5th, 37th, 26th, 21st, and 38th armies, consisting of 43 divisions, were almost annihilated and the 40th Army suffered many losses. Like the Western Front before it, the Southwestern Front had to be recreated almost from scratch.

-Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Third Reich, described the Battle of Kiev as "the biggest battle in the history of the world", and Joseph Goebbels, the German minister of propaganda, called it "the greatest battle of annihilation of all time". The historian Evan Mawdsley described the battle as the Ostheer's "greatest triumph of the war in the East and the Red Army's greatest single disaster", and the historian Michael Jones dubbed the battle to be "the Wehrmacht's greatest victory of the war".]

-Indian troops continue to guard the high-altitude forward posts of the Siachen Glacier—known as the world's highest battlefield—where Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma recently visited personnel on the eve of Diwali in November 2026.

-Key Details on Siachen Deployment

• Recent Leadership Visit: Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma (GOC-in-C, Northern Command) flew to the glacier's forward heights to interact with jawans, share festive greetings, and commend their resilience. More details can be found via the Northern Command GOC Visits Siachen Troops report.

Do Trees Have Muscles Too? An Amazing Mystery of Nature



Dr. Vijay Garg

Trees are generally considered stationary and inactive organisms, but in reality, they also perform various activities. Their branches grow towards sunlight, leaves change their positions according to day and night, and some plants respond immediately when touched. This raises an interesting question: Do trees also have muscles like humans and animals?

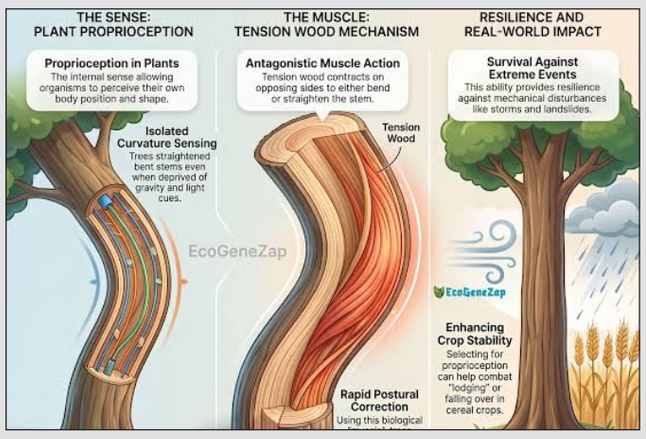
Scientifically, trees do not possess muscles like humans. They lack muscle tissue and a nervous system that controls muscular movements. However, trees and plants can perform several activities through water pressure within their cells, chemical signals and growth processes.

Water pressure, known as turgor pressure, plays an important role in plant cells. Changes in the amount of water inside cells affect their shape and internal pressure. This process enables certain plant parts, particularly leaves, to change their positions.

For example, the leaves of the sensitive plant (Mimosa pudica) fold immediately when touched. This response occurs because of a sudden change in water pressure within specialised cells. Similarly, the Venus flytrap, a carnivorous plant, rapidly closes its specialised leaf-like structures to capture insects.

Some plants display other fascinating movements, such as flowers opening and closing, leaves turning towards sunlight and climbing plants wrapping themselves around supporting structures. Cell growth, plant hormones and environmental signals play important roles in these processes.

The branches and trunks of trees also possess mechanical strength and flexibility. When strong winds blow, branches bend and attempt to return to their original positions when the wind subsides. Trees also



animals?

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The branches and trunks of trees also possess mechanical strength and flexibility. When strong winds blow, branches bend and attempt to return to their original positions when the wind subsides. Trees also produce wood and supporting tissues to strengthen their structures. Thus, although trees do not have muscles, they can still move, respond to stimuli and adapt to their surroundings. This remarkable arrangement of nature demonstrates that muscles are not essential for every form of movement in living organisms.

Trees are not merely oxygen-producing organisms; they are highly responsive and complex biological systems. Understanding the processes taking place within them continues to be an interesting subject of scientific research.

Every living organism has its own mechanisms for survival and movement. The world of trees teaches us that life can remain dynamic even without muscles.

Dr. Vijay Garg
Retired Principal | Eminent Educationist
Street Kaur Chand, MHR, Malout, Punjab – 152107

DC Shopian chairs comprehensive Sector-Wise review Meeting at Mini-Secretariat

■ HT News Network



SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, today chaired a comprehensive sector-wise review meeting at the Conference Hall, Mini-Secretariat, Shopian to assess departmental performance, physical and financial progress, and the implementation of various government schemes across the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner conducted a detailed sector-by-sector evaluation of achievements against set targets and examined pending issues across developmental and welfare departments.

Emphasizing transparency, accountability and timely service delivery, he directed the officers to accelerate the execution of ongoing projects and ensure that the benefits of government welfare schemes reach the grassroots level without delay.

Deputy Commissioner stressed upon all sectoral offiers to work with renewed dedication and ensure achievement of assigned targets within the stipulated timelines. He directed the concerned departments to intensify efforts towards the effective implementation of various government schemes, particularly social security schemes and ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are covered. He also laid emphasis on increasing public awareness regarding the benefits of welfare schemes and ensuring saturation and achieving targets Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

The DC further directed every department to review the progress regularly, identify gaps, strengthen inter- departmental coordination and demonstrate tangible improvements in their respective sectors. He instructed officers to take their responsibilities seriously and ensure measurable outcomes on the ground.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed all concerned departments to maintain regular monitoring, resolve inter-departmental bottlenecks promptly and ensure 100% achievement of targets within the stipulated timelines.

The meeting was attended by senior district and sectoral officers, including, ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, CPO, Mudasir Ahmad Dar, DPO, (ICDS/Mission Poshan), GM, DIC, The DC further directed every department to review the progress regularly, identify gaps, strengthen inter-departmental coordination and demonstrate tangible improvements in their respective sectors. He instructed officers to take their responsibilities seriously and ensure measurable outcomes on the ground.

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DC Samba reviews functioning of Forest Department

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner Dr. Rupesh Kumar today chaired a review meeting of the Forest Department Samba, to assess its functioning and review the departmental activities.The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the overall working of the department and discussed matters pertaining to forest management, conservation and implementation of departmental initiatives.He emphasised the importance of protecting forest resources, strengthening conservation efforts and ensuring effective implementation of government policies and schemes related to the forestry sector.The Deputy Commissioner stressed coordinated efforts among the concerned officials for addressing departmental issues and ensuring efficient delivery of services. He called upon the officers to discharge their responsibilities with dedication and maintain close coordination for the effective management and protection of forest resources in the district.The mock exercise provided an opportunity to assess the readiness of the district's disaster response mechanism and familiarise participating teams with their respective roles and responsibilities during emergency situations.Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma stated that similar mock exercises will be conducted in other parts of the district to ensure that all stakeholders remain operationally prepared.

ADC discusses measures to prevent misuse of courier services for drug trafficking

■ HT News Network



UDHAMPUR, NOVEMBER 19: Additional Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Prem Singh today chaired a meeting with courier operators functioning in the district to review measures for preventing the misuse of courier services for illegal activities.The ADC directed the courier operators to remain extra vigilant while receiving, handling and delivering consignments, particularly those containing medicines, supplements and other suspicious items.

He further instructed the operators to immediately report any suspicious parcel, medicine, supplement or doubtful consignment to the Task Force and concerned authorities without any delay.

The ADC stressed the need for strict verification and effective monitoring of consignments to prevent the misuse of courier services for unlawful activities.

ADDC Samba reviews progress of Vibrant Villages Programme-II

Stresses timely execution of developmental works

■ HT News Network



SAMBA, NOVEMBER 19: Additional District Development Commissioner Samba Champa Devi today chaired a meeting to review the progress and implementation of the Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II) in the district, with a focus on accelerating developmental activities and ensuring holistic development of the identified border villages.

The ADDC undertook a detailed review of the status of the developmental initiatives being implemented under the programme. She assessed the progress achieved so far and sought detailed feedback from the officers of the concerned departments regarding ongoing works, proposed projects and the implementation status of various components of VVP-II.

The meeting also discussed the need to identify gaps in infrastructure and ensure that the benefits of the programme reach the intended beneficiaries. Emphasis was laid on effective planning, proper coordination among implementing departments and removal of procedural bottlenecks that could hamper the timely completion of developmental projects.

Stressing the importance of coordinated efforts, Champa Devi directed the officers to work in close coordination and ensure that all approved works are executed within stipulated timelines. She called for regular monitoring of developmental activities and instructed the concerned departments to promptly address any issues or bottlenecks arising during implementation.The Additional District Development Commissioner further emphasised the need for optimum and judicious utilisation of available resources to ensure that the programme delivers meaningful and visible outcomes at the grassroots level. Stressing the importance of coordinated efforts, Champa Devi directed the officers to work in close coordination and ensure that all approved works are executed within stipulated timelines. She called for regular monitoring of developmental activities.

DDC Doda reviews progress of development works under Tribal Sector schemes

Directs Officers to ensure timely completion

■ HT News Network



DODA, NOVEMBER 19: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Doda, Krishan Lal today chaired a review meeting to assess the physical and financial progress of developmental works being implemented under the UT Capex Tribal Sector and initiatives undertaken in connection with Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas 2026.

The review focused on physical and financial progress of ongoing, pending and completed works being executed by the Rural Development Department (RDD) and Public Works Department (PWD), Roads and Buildings (R&B).

The DDC also reviewed the progress of the infrastructure works including construction and up-gradation of schools and hostels, installation of solar lights, renovation and repair works under the Tribal Sector. He also took stock of the works being undertaken by the Forest Department and JAKEDA, reviewing their progress and implementation status.

Reviewing the works being executed by PWD (R&B), the DDC directed the Warden Gujjar and Bakarwal Boys Hostel to coordinate closely with the Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B) and extend the necessary cooperation to facilitate the timely completion of hostel-related works.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Anil Kumar Thakur; Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Ashraf Pervaz; District Programme Officer, ICDS/POSHAN, Akhter Qazi; Chief Planning Officer (CPO), Manesh Kumar Manhas; Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Din Mohammad Afaqi; Divisional Forest Officer (DFO); Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B) and other concerned officials. The DDC also reviewed the progress of the infrastructure works including construction and up-gradation of schools and hostels, installation of solar lights, renovation and repair works under the Tribal Sector. He also took stock of the works being undertaken by the Forest Department and JAKEDA, reviewing their progress and implementation status.

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DC unveils T-shirt, medal for Kathua Cyclothon- 2026

Event scheduled on Nov 22 under Nasha Mukt Abhiyan; BIB Expo on Nov 21

■ HT News Network



KATHUA, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today unveiled the official T-shirt and medal for the upcoming Kathua Cyclothon 2026 here at a press conference held in the DC Office Complex.

The Cyclothon, scheduled on November 22, 2026, is being organised under the banner of Nasha Mukt Abhiyan to promote physical fitness, healthy living, environmental awareness and spreading the message of a drug-free society.

Addressing the media, the Deputy Commissioner shared the details regarding the upcoming event and highlighted its significance in encouraging people, particularly the youth, to adopt cycling as a healthy lifestyle choice. He informed that a BIB Expo would also be organised on Saturday, November 21, as part of the pre-event activities, providing an additional platform for public participation and engagement.

The DC called upon the people of the district, especially youth, cycling enthusiasts, educational institutions and social organisations, to participate enthusiastically in the Cyclothon and contribute towards building a healthier, fitter and drug-free society. He also emphasised the importance of collective public participation in making the event a success.

The press conference was attended by SSP Kathua Mohita Sharma, ADC Kathua Sachin Jamwal, CPO Kathua Ranjeet Thakur, DIO Kathua Gurpreet Singh and other stakehold The Cyclothon, scheduled on November 22, 2026, is being organised under the banner of Nasha Mukt Abhiyan to promote physical fitness, healthy living, environmental awareness and spreading the message of a drug-free society.

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2-day state-level master trainers' training on Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi Round-II concludes at Ramban

■ HT News Network



RAMBAN, NOVEMBER 19: A two-day State-Level Master Trainers (SLMT) Training Programme on Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi (PBPB) Round-II concluded today at Community Hall, Maitra here. The programme was organised by the Savitribai Phule National Institute of Women and Child Development (SPNIWCD), Regional Centre-Mohali, as part of the Round-II training schedule for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The training programme witnessed the participation of 40 ICDS functionaries, including Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs), Supervisors and Champion Anganwadi Workers, with one Champion AWW representing each ICDS Project.

The programme aimed at strengthening the capacities of ICDS functionaries to improve the quality of early childhood education at Anganwadi Centres, alongside ensuring greater attention to nutrition. The offline training sessions included programme orientation, interactive discussions and practical demonstrations to familiarise participants with the PBPB framework and its implementation at the grassroots level.

A special session on disability inclusion was conducted by District AYUSH Officer Dr. Shaheen, Resource Person from the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) Team. The session focused on "Inclusion at AWCs: Screening, Referral and Follow-up by AWWs; Anganwadi Protocol for Divyang Children and Disability Screening Schedule (DSS) Demonstration through Role-Play."

Delegation Led by MLA Shagun Parihar Meets Lieutenant Governor, Seeks Measures to Strengthen Security and Development in Dachhan

■ HT News Network



Jammu, NOVEMBER 19: A delegation from Dachhan led by Hon'ble MLA Kishtwar Shagun Parihar, accompanied by BJP District President Kishtwar Ravi Parihar, District Vice-President Ashish Sharma, Block President Dachhan Lokesh Parihar and other party leaders and local representatives, met the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir Manoj Sinha and submitted a detailed representation seeking urgent intervention to strengthen security arrangements and address long-pending developmental demands of Dachan, particularly Kiyar village, in the aftermath of the tragic killing of two Special Police Officers (SPOs).

During the interaction, the delegation expressed deep concern over the repeated incidents of terrorism in Kiyar village, which has witnessed 12 killings at the hands of terrorists over the years. Recalling the horrific incident of 2000, when eight SPOs were killed in a single attack, the delegation highlighted that two more killings took place in subsequent incidents, followed by the recent killing of two SPOs. It emphasised that these repeated incidents underline the urgent need for strengthening the security infrastructure and addressing the vulnerabilities of this geographically isolated and militancy-affected region.

The delegation strongly advocated for immediate forest clearance for the Kiyar road, which has remained incomplete due to the non-availability of the requisite clearance from the Forest Department. The construction work has progressed only up to Chicha, while Kiyar village is approximately 16 kilometres further ahead and continues to remain without road connectivity. The delegation urged the Government to expedite the requisite NOC and forest clearances so that construction can be extended up to Kiyar without further delay.Highlighting the complete absence of mobile network connectivity in Kiyar, the delegation demanded the installation of high-frequency mobile towers to ensure reliable communication facilities. It pointed out that the absence of mobile connectivity in a militancy-affected area poses serious challenges for public safety, emergency communication and coordination with security agencies.The delegation also demanded that SPOs belonging to different villages be considered for deployment in their native villages instead of being posted at distant locations. Furthermore, the delegation sought the recruitment of eligible local youth from Kiyar village as SPOs, to strengthen the local security mechanism while providing employment opportunities to the youth of this remote region.

Considering the security sensitivity of the surrounding areas and concerns regarding militant movement, the delegation also pressed for the immediate establishment of an SOG picket at Gujjar Kothan, which falls enroute to Kiyar village. Another major concern highlighted by the delegation was the shortage of security personnel at Kiyar Police Post. The delegation demanded that the existing manpower shortage be addressed immediately and the sanctioned strength restored to ensure effective policing and adequate security arrangements in the area.

J&K Prosecution Department secures dismissal of Bail pleas in two major Narcotics and terror-linked cases

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 19: The Ld. Prosecutor of the Jammu & Kashmir Prosecution Department have successfully opposed two bail applications before the Principal District & Sessions Judge, Kupwara, both dismissed on 17 November 2026.

The Hon'ble Court of the Principal Sessions Judge, Kupwara (I/c Designated NIA/FTC Court, Kupwara), presided over by Sh. Manjit Singh Manhas, dismissed the bail application of accused Mohd Iqbal Ganie in FIR No. 256/2022 of Police Station Kupwara, registered under Sections 8/20/29 of the NDPS Act. The Addl. Public Prosecutor Mohsin Hassan Khan opposed the accused's second bail plea. He demonstrated that there had been no change in circumstances since the earlier rejection on 28.04.2026, that the disclosure requirements laid down in Zeba Khan v. State of U.P. had not been met, and that the twin conditions of Section 37 of the NDPS Act were not satisfied. The Court accepted these submissions and dismissed the bail application.

In another matter, the Hon'ble Court of the Principal Sessions Judge, Kupwara, presided over by Sh. Manjit Singh Manhas, dismissed the bail application of accused Sajid Ahmad Khan and Majid Ahmad Khan in FIR No. 08/2023 of Police Station Karnah, registered under Sections 7/25 of the Arms Act, Sections 8/21/29 of the NDPS Act, and Sections 13, 18, 23 and 39 of the UA(P) Act. The Addl. Public Prosecutor filed written objections and argued the statutory embargoes under Section 43-D (5) of the UA(P) Act and Section 37 of the NDPS Act. The Court found the accusation prima facie true and held that prolonged custody was not a ground for bail, noting that no delay was attributable to the prosecution.

The Department said that these outcomes reflect the commitment of its Learned Prosecutors, who study case diaries, master the law and assist courts with precision. Their dedication protects society from the drug menace and terror-linked crime.

SWD Srinagar organizes Awareness Programmes on various Welfare Initiatives

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 19: Social Welfare Department (SWD), Srinagar, through SANKALP-HEW Srinagar, organized two community awareness programmes aimed at sensitizing beneficiaries about various welfare initiatives, financial assistance and social security schemes being implemented by the Government.

The first Community Awareness Programme was organized at Ashai Bagh, wherein participants were sensitized about various scholarship schemes, sponsorship initiatives, skill development courses and other social security schemes. The programme focused on educating beneficiaries about the available opportunities for educational support, financial assistance, skill enhancement and empowerment, particularly for women, children and other vulnerable sections of society.

The second awareness programme was organized in collaboration with Mission POSHAN at Anganwadi Centre Hassanabad, wherein participants were informed about various social security schemes, marriage assistance, prosthetic aid and other welfare initiatives. The programme aimed to disseminate information regarding eligibility criteria, application procedures and the benefits available under different schemes, thereby facilitating access to government assistance.

During the programmes, participants were encouraged to avail themselves of the benefits of various welfare schemes and share the information within their communities to ensure wider outreach and awareness.

The Department reiterated its commitment towards community outreach, awareness generation and ensuring that eligible beneficiaries are connected with various welfare schemes and initiatives for their social and economic empowerment. The Department reiterated its commitment towards community outreach, awareness generation and ensuring that eligible beneficiaries are connected with various welfare schemes and initiatives for their social and economic empowerment.

DC Pulwama inaugurates Inter-Departmental Cricket Tournament at Sports Stadium Pulwama

Initiative aims to promote Physical Fitness, Team Spirit and Healthy Work Culture among Employees

■ HT News Network



PULWAMA, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha today inaugurated an Inter-Departmental Cricket Tournament at Sports Stadium Pulwama, featuring 10 teams comprising government employees from various departments of the district.

The tournament is being organised by District Administration Pulwama, in collaboration with the Department of Youth Services and Sports, Pulwama.

During the inaugural ceremony, the DC was accompanied by Chief Planning Officer Pulwama, Aashiq Khanday, District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Pulwama and other senior officers.

The participating teams include District Administration Pulwama, PMGSY Pulwama, District Treasury Office Pulwama, Planning Department Pulwama, Education Department Pulwama, Roads & Buildings (R&B) Department Pulwama, Labour and Employment and RDD among others.

The inaugural match was played between the District Administration Pulwama team and the Planning Department team, in which the District Administration Pulwama emerged victorious.

Prior to the commencement of the tournament, a pledge under the Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan was administered to the participating players and officials present on the occasion, as a mark of their support towards combating substance abuse and promoting a drug-free society.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Asif Mohd Badoo, resident of Kreeri, District Baramulla, hereby notify the general public that my name has been incorrectly recorded in my Aadhaar Card as ASIF MOHD BUDOO, whereas my correct name is ASIF MOHD BADOO.
That my Aadhaar Number is 4686 6861 9860.
Now, I intend to correct my name in the Aadhaar records from ASIF MOHD BUDOO to ASIF MOHD BADOO.
Any person having any objection regarding the above-mentioned correction may contact the concerned Aadhaar Authority within the prescribed period.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, hereby notify the general public that my name and date of birth have been incorrectly recorded in my Aadhaar Card No.853285365617 as AHSAN AHMAD MIR and 01-02-2015, respectively, whereas my correct name and date of birth are AHSAN NISSAR and 08-06-2015, respectively.
Therefore, I intend tot rectify the aforesaid discrepancies in my Aadhaar records.
If anybody has any objection regarding the above-mentioned corrections, they may contact the concerned Aadhaar Authority. AHSAN NISSAR R/O,BANGDARA RESHIPORA BARAMULLA, PH.7005213128

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as MOHAMMAD SALEEM AHANGER S /O ABDUL AHMAD AHANGER on my Adhaar card bearing Adhaar No ..5676 7462 4546 while my correct name is MOHAMAD SALEEM AHANGER S/O ABDUL AHAD AHANGER which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of concerned Adhaar authority of India within seven days from the publicationofthis notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name....MOHAMAD SALEEM AHANGER
S/O....ABDUL AHAD AHANGER
R/O..KREERI BARAMULLA
BLOCK... WAGOORA

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KALANTRA / KREER

Subject: Application of SUMAIRA HASSAN ,SAIMA HASSAN D/O GH HASSAN MOCHI for the issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujjar and Bakerwal)in favour of self
PUBLIC NOTICE
Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village KALANTARA PAYEEN and belongs to the ST caste and MUCHI community, having annual income is 48000 the details of the family of the applicant are as follows
1..GH HASSAN MOCHI Father 52 years Labour
2.... RAJA BEGUM Mother 48 years H/W
3....SAIMA BANO applicant 24 years student
4....SUMAIRA HASSAN applicant 20 years student
5....MUZAMIL HASSAN Brother 13 years student

.The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar & Bakerwal) certificate in favour of Self
if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

IN THE COURT OF JUDICIAL MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS, KULGAM

Present: Rabyia Sanober Gulzar
In the Case of:

Mohammad Ashraf Bhat S/o Gull Mohammad Bhat, R/o Khaloora, Tehsil Pahloo, District Kulgam.
Applicant

V/S
B.D.O. Pahloo
Non-Applicant

Whereas, the applicant, namely Mohammad Ashraf Bhat, has sought a direction against the non-applicant for registration of the birth particulars of his daughter, namely Iqra Bint-e-Ashraf, who was born on 05-09-2011. Through the medium of this notice, the general public is hereby informed that if any person has any objection regarding the registration of the birth particulars of the applicant's daughter, as mentioned above, he/she/they shall do so on or before 05-12-2026, when the matter is listed for further proceedings.
Given under my hand and seal of this Court today on 14-11-2026.
Announced.

Sd/
Judicial Magistrate 1st Class Kulgam

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Shameema Bano D/o Ab. Karim Hajam R/o Batapora Kanihama, Tehsil Magam, District Budgam do hereby declare that I have applied for correction of my Name and Father's Name in my School Records at Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education, Branch Office Magam.My particulars have been wrongly recorded as:FROM
Name: SHMEEMA BANO
Father's Name: MOHD KARIM HAJAMTO (Correct)
Name: SHAMEEMA BANO
Father's Name: AB. KARIM HAJAMIf any person has any objection in this regard, he/she may file objection in the office of the J&K BOSE, Branch Office Magam and in the office of Tehsildar Magam within 7 days from the publication of this notice. After expiry of said period, no objection shall be entertained.The same person with different spellings is one and the same person.Applicant:

Shameema Bano
D/o Ab. Karim Hajam
R/o Batapora Kanihama

PUBLIC NOTICE

Loss of motorcycle number plate bearing Registered No. JK05F2230 in between kalntra payeen to wagoora on dated 08-11-2026 Namely Shakeel Ahmad Najar son of Fayaz Ahmad Najar R/o kalantra bala ,Now I want apply for duplicate number plate if anybody has any objection they contact ARTO Sopore with in seven days after that no objection will be entertained.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to general public that I am applying for DEE Class Contractor Card at OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT Commissioner Development Baramulla (ACD if anybody is having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of ACD Baramullla within the period of 7days from the date of publication of this notice . After that no objection shall be entertained.

Name....AASIF RASHID WANI
S/O...ABDUL RASHID WANI
R/O .....KACHWA MUQAM BLOCK WAGOORA
CONTACT NO....6006631611

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AHSAN NISSAR
R/O,BANGDARA RESHIPORA
BARAMULLA, PH.7005213128

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.The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar & Bakerwal) certificate in favour of Self
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NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

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Name....MOHAMAD SALEEM AHANGER
S/O....ABDUL AHAD AHANGER
R/O..KREERI BARAMULLA
BLOCK... WAGOORA

Office Address: Langate, Near Boys Higher Secondary, 193302

Government of (UT) Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION LANGATE

M/s. M.I Brothers and Co,
Prop: Mumtaz Ahad Malla,
R/o Maratgam Handwara.

FINAL NOTICE

Subject: **Construction of Ayush Health and Wellness Centre at Chontipora Qalamabad.**
Reference: **1) Allotment No. EE/RnB/L/3172-74 dated 18.10.2025.**
2) AEE, R&B SD Qalamabad's Final Notice No. AEE/SDQ/481-82 dated 17.11.2026

****

- Whereas, the above subjected work stands allotted to you vide above referred allotment no, with a stipulated period of completion of (365) days from the date of allotment.
- Whereas, despite expiry of the stipulated completion period and repeated directions from this office as well as the concerned Sub Division, the progress of work has remained highly unsatisfactory. It has been reported by the concerned AEE that the construction activities have remained extremely slow and highly unsatisfactory, further, the shuttering and centering work required for laying of DPC has not been yet completed.
- Whereas, you were repeatedly directed through Notice vide AEE/SDQ/460-61 dated 10.11.2026, to resume the work immediately and ensure its completion within the stipulated period. However, despite the repeated notices and sufficient opportunity afforded to you, you have failed to resume the work and comply with the directions issued by the Department.
- Your continued failure and neglect in execution of the work has caused undue delay and public inconvenience and amounts to a clear violation of the terms and conditions of the contract agreement.

Now therefore, you are hereby given a final opportunity through this final notice to mobilize men and resources and commence execution of the said work within two (02) days positively. Failing compliance, the contract shall be foreclosed, your performance security as well as the additional performance security shall be forfeited, and you shall further be debarred from participating in the future tendering process of this Division for a period of one (01) year.

DIPK-7825/26
Send Dated: 19.11.2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Langate.

SKUAST-K, KVK Baramulla ICAR-CITH Promote Scientific Cultivation of Kashmiri Pran

Quality Shallot Planting Material Distributed Among Farmers Under HADP PROJECT -2

■ DR.AB QAYOOM

Baramulla, Nov,19: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir), in collaboration with ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Baramulla, organised a special Interaction-cum-Input Distribution Programme on Shallot (Kashmiri Pran) under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP Project-02), with a focus on promoting scientific cultivation and enhancing the income of farmers.The programme witnessed the participation of a large number of progressive farmers, agricultural scientists, project staff and other stakeholders, reflecting the growing interest in the commercial cultivation of Kashmiri Pran as a high-value agricultural crop.Prof.Bashir Ahmad Alie, Head, Division of Agronomy and Principal Investigator, HADP Project-02, attended the programme as Chief Guest, while Dr. Raiees Ahmad Bhat, Head,



ICAR-KVK Baramulla, was also present along with scientists and project personnel.In his welcome address, Dr. Raiees Ahmad Bhat highlighted the role of KVK Baramulla in connecting agricultural research with farming communities through scientific awareness, technical guidance and field-level interventions. He emphasised that HADP was playing an important role in strengthening grassroots agriculture and introducing improved farming practices across the district.Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest Dr. Bashir Ahmad Alie delivered a detailed technical lecture on Shallot Production Technology and Cultivation Practices. He described Kashmiri Pran as an important component of Kashmir's culinary and cultural heritage, while highlighting its potential as a commercially viable cash crop capable of generating additional income for farming households.He sensitised farmers about scientific cultivation techniques, improved agronomic practices, quality planting material, disease management and appropriate post-harvest storage methods. He stressed that adopting recommended agricultural practices could significantly improve crop productivity, enhance shelf life and increase the economic returns of farmers.An interactive session was also organised, during which farmers raised several queries related to seed quality, fertiliser management, pest and disease control and post-harvest storage. The participating scientists responded to their queries and provided practical solutions and technical guidance.A major highlight of the programme was the free distribution of quality shallot planting material among beneficiary farmers by Chief Guest Dr. Bashir Ahmad Alie and Dr. Raiees Ahmad Bhat. The initiative aims to encourage farmers to adopt scientific and commercial cultivation of Kashmiri Pran and explore its potential as an additional source of agricultural income. The programme was also attended by the scientific and non-scientific staff of ICAR-CITH Baramulla, including Dr. Shoaib Kirmani, Dr. Sajad and Dr. Vishal. HADP project staff, including Dr. Davood, Dr. Sadaf, Dr. Sufiya and Dr. Isaq, were also present on the occasion. The programme concluded with a formal vote of thanks by the KVK scientific team, which expressed gratitude to the chief guest,

KV Bhadarwah felicitates National Sports Meet Medal Winner team

■ HT News Network



BHADARWAH, NOVEMBER 19: A meeting of the Vidyalaya Management Committee (VMC) was held today here at Kendriya Vidyalaya under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sunil K Bhutyal.

The meeting focused on various important aspects of the school's functioning, including academic quality, CBSE Board examination results, achieving 100% results, co-curricular activities and other academic and non-academic matters. Detailed discussions were held on measures to further strengthen the overall academic environment and improve the functioning of the Vidyalaya.

The remarkable achievement of the Under-14 Girls' Team of Kendriya Vidyalaya Bhadarwah at the National Sports Meet 2026 was specially appreciated. The team brought laurels to the Vidyalaya and the region by securing a Silver Medal at the national-level competition. ADC Sunil K Bhutyal honoured the winning students by presenting them with trophies and medals and extended his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for their bright future.

The meeting also witnessed meaningful deliberations on providing quality education, a better learning environment and essential infrastructural facilities to students. Emphasis was laid on the overall development of the Vidyalaya, the holistic growth of students and the effective implementation of academic and co-curricular activities.The Chairman appreciated the points raised during the meeting and assured the committee of the timely resolution and implementation of the issues and requirements discussed.

Dir Agri Kashmir inaugurates workshop on Winter Management Strategies of Bee Colonies

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 19: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, today inaugurated a training programme cum workshop on "Winter Management Strategies of Bee Colonies" at the Directorate of Agriculture, Lal Mandi, Srinagar.

The programme was organised for Apiculture Development Officers (ADOs), Apiculture Development Assistants (ADAs) and other officials associated with the Apiculture sector. A practical demonstration for safeguarding bee colonies during winter was also given for the participants.

The programme aimed to enhance the technical knowledge and professional skills of the field functionaries regarding scientific and effective management of bee colonies during the winter season, ensuring their survival, health and productivity. Furthermore, this year the department has abandoned the unfruitful practice of migration of bee colonies outside Kashmir under public sector.

Addressing the participants, Director Agriculture Kashmir emphasised the importance of adopting scientific management practices to safeguard bee colonies during harsh winter conditions. He stressed that proper winter management is crucial for maintaining the strength of bee colonies, minimising colony losses and ensuring better productivity during the forthcoming beekeeping season.

He underscored the significant role of field functionaries in providing timely technical guidance and handholding support to beekeepers at the grassroots level. He also called for strengthening awareness among beekeepers about scientific apiculture practices and the importance of adopting appropriate seasonal management measures.

The training programme also provided an opportunity for the participating officers and officials to update their technical knowledge, share field-level experiences and gain insights into various aspects of winter care and management of honeybee colonies.

DC Srinagar conducts tour of Khonmoh Industrial Estate Reviews Industrial activities, ease of doing business measures & Industry-related issues in the district

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR NOVEMBER 19:- Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today conducted an extensive tour of Khonmoh Industrial Estate and reviewed the industrial activities in the area and industry related issues.

He also took on the site stock of the overall functioning of the estate and interacted with representatives of the industrial fraternity.Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Additional Deputy Commissioner Aadil Fareed, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, SDM West, Seerat Baji, GM DIC, Aabid Iqbal, SDM East, Zubair Ahmad, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, ALC, Adnan Tariq, MD SIDCO, Executive Engineer KPDCL, Syed Abrar and other Officers accompanied the DC during the visit.During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner visited various Industries and other industrial units within the estate to gain first-hand insight into their operations, production activities and infrastructural requirements. While interacting with the representatives of the unit holders, the DC took note of the concerns raised and emphasised the importance of effective interdepartmental coordination and timely resolution of genuine issues.

The DC underscored the District Administration's commitment to strengthening the industrial ecosystem, facilitating existing and prospective investors, addressing industry-related challenges and promoting a conducive environment for industrial growth and investment in Srinagar District.

The DC assured the industrialists of full support and cooperation from the District Administration, stating that all possible assistance would be extended to facilitate the smooth functioning and overall development of Khonmoh Industrial Estate.

Earlier, General Manager, District Industries Centre (DIC) Srinagar, briefed the Deputy Commissioner through a detailed presentation on the present status of the industrial estate, highlighting its infrastructure, functional industrial units, investment, employment generation, ongoing initiatives and future.

DC Ganderbal Chairs Regional Transport Authority Meeting

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shreya Singal, who is also Chairperson of the Regional Transport Authority (RTA), today chaired a meeting of the RTA at the VC Room of the Mini Secretariat Complex, Ganderbal.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on various transport-related matters, including the issuance and renewal of commercial transport permits, defining and regulating routes for e-rickshaws to ensure smooth last-mile connectivity, and reviewing cases under the Road Accident Victim Fund (RAVF) for timely relief disbursement to accident victims' families.

DC Shopian visits Municipal Council Shopian

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh today visited Municipal Council Shopian and presided the felicitation ceremony organised to celebrate the town's achievement of being recognised among one of the Top Cleanest Himalayan Cities under the National Swachh Survekshan Awards 2025–2026.On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the tireless efforts and dedication of the sanitation workers, acknowledging their invaluable contribution towards maintaining cleanliness and improving the urban environment of Shopian.Felicitating the real contributors behind this achievement, the DC also lauded the cooperation of the general public, traders, street vendors, civil society and other stakeholders, observing that such achievements are possible only through collective responsibility and active community participation.

AHD organises ATMA demonstration camp at Shaie Arnora- Ghat

Farmers sensitised to modern Livestock Rearing techniques, Govt Schemes, animal healthcare

■ HT News Network

DODA, NOVEMBER 19: The Animal Husbandry Department (AHD) Doda today organised a demonstration camp here at Village Shaie Arnora- Block Ghat under the ATMA Programme to generate awareness among farmers about modern animal husbandry techniques.

Chief Animal Husbandry Officer (CAHO Dr. Irfan Ali Wani interacted with the participating farmers and explained scientific techniques of dairy farming, balanced animal nutrition, breed improvement, livestock management and preventive healthcare measures. He also sensitised the farmers about rabies prevention, precautions against dog bites, timely vaccination of dogs and the need for immediate medical attention in case of a dog bite.

Dr. Wani also briefed the participants about the flagship schemes of the department, including the Integrated Dairy Development Scheme (IDDS), Integrated Poultry Development Programme (IPDP), Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Integrated Feed and Fodder Development Scheme (IFFD) and National Livestock Mission (NLM). He explained the objectives, benefits and eligibility criteria for availing the benefits.



He also addressed queries raised by the participants and provided guidance on different livestock-related issues.

Speaking on the reproductive health in dairy animals, Dr. Wani delivered a detailed awareness session on repeat breeding in cattle. He explained its common causes, including nutritional deficiencies, reproductive health complications and improper breeding management. He stressed the importance of timely identification of reproductive problems, proper heat detection, balanced nutrition and seeking timely veterinary assistance to improve conception rates and reproductive efficiency.

Veterinary Assistant Surgeon (VAS) Dr. Naveed Anjum also delivered a technical session and sensitised the farmers about scientific livestock rearing, appropriate feeding practices, fodder development, disease prevention, timely vaccination and deworming.

As part of the demonstration activity, 1 kg mineral mixture was distributed among each participating dairy farmer to promote balanced animal nutrition, improve livestock health and enhance overall productivity.

The camp witnessed active participation from local farmers and provided a valuable platform for interaction, technical guidance and awareness about improved livestock management practices. Veterinary Assistant Surgeon (VAS) Dr. Naveed Anjum also delivered a technical session and sensitised the farmers about scientific livestock rearing, appropriate feeding practices, fodder development, disease prevention, timely vaccination and deworming.

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India targets €20 Billion trade with Italy by 2029, manufacturing in focus

■ HT News Network/UNI

New Delhi, Nov 19 (UNI) India and Italy have set their sights on taking bilateral trade to €20 billion by 2029, with both countries looking to deepen economic engagement through greater investments, manufacturing partnerships and technology collaboration. The renewed push comes amid the successful conclusion of negotiations on the India-European union Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which is expected to create fresh opportunities for businesses on both sides.

The trade target was reaffirmed during the 23rd Session of the India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC), co-chaired by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Italy's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani in Rome.

The two sides reviewed the progress of bilateral commercial ties and discussed ways to expand market access, diversify trade and encourage greater investment flows, as per the information shared by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The discussions covered cooperation in automotive and aerospace, Industry 4.0, agriculture and agri-technology, connectivity and energy, critical minerals, science and innovation, culture and tourism, skills development and entrepreneurship. Both sides highlighted the complementarities between India's growing manufacturing capabilities and skilled workforce and Italy's strengths in advanced manufacturing, engineering, machinery and technology.

They encouraged greater industry participation, joint ventures, technology partnerships and integration into global value chains.



Piyush Goyal also held one-to-one meetings with CEOs and senior leaders of leading Italian companies with the discussions focused on investment, manufacturing and technology partnership opportunities in India.

The Minister also addressed the India-Italy Business and Innovation Forum in Rome, which brought together senior government leaders, industry associations and Italian companies, along with around 80 Indian business delegates, including 12 startups.

Ahead of the Forum, Minister Goyal interacted with the Indian business delegation on opportunities for Indian businesses in Italy and the wider European market, including those arising from the India-EU Free Trade Agreement.

During the bilateral meeting, both the leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral economic and commercial relations and discussed ways to further strengthen trade, investment and industrial cooperation. Piyush Goyal also held one-to-one meetings with CEOs and senior leaders of leading Italian companies with the discussions focused on investment, manufacturing and technology partnership opportunities in India.

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'The pinnacle of human health': What it takes to be a super pooper

Poo transplants are on the rise, but less than 3% of us produce a product that is worthy of donation. Even fewer are super poopers. This is the search for the fairest stool of all.In 2013, Adam Faye found himself wondering what kind of dinner would make for the highest quality poo.

At the time, Faye was a fourth-year medical student learning how to treat Clostridioides difficile, a bacterial infection that causes severe gastrointestinal issues and is naturally resistant to many antibiotics. One elderly patient was suffering from serious, recurring infections. She needed a faecal transplant.

This pioneering procedure would add another person's poo directly into her colon, introducing a healthier community of microorganisms into her gut. These would then hopefully out-compete the C. difficile and restore balance. But where to get the poo from? There weren't many stool banks around at the time, and the patient's family and friends weren't able or willing to donate.

The night before the big day, Faye settled on a burrito for dinner. The next morning, in his student housing, he defecated into a pink medical-grade basin. Then, he filtered the results through cotton gauze with a salt solution, draining it into a bottle. "I remember I put it in a paper bag, because I was walking around with this bottle of murky water," he says.

A couple of hours later, Faye's poo was sprayed inside the patient's guts during a colonoscopy. Faye, now a gastroenterologist at NYU Langone Health in New York, later found out that the procedure had worked. The patient never had a C. difficile infection again.

In the years since, research on the gut microbiome's role in health has skyrocketed. With that, there is increasing interest in poo transplants, or faecal microbota transplants (FMTs). The transplants are already approved to treat C. difficile, and they're being trialled worldwide for conditions including irritable bowel syndrome, diabetes, autism and osteoporosis. There is even interest in using them to treat cognitive decline and mental illnesses.

Faecal transplants can be delivered directly into someone's gut or given orally, with poo that has been encapsulated into a pill. But finding people whose poo is worthy of being used for these purposes is no easy task. The screening process is fastidious, and only the healthiest candidates are deemed suitable donors. The very best poo – from donors colloquially dubbed 'super poopers' – is even harder to come by.

We'd be looking for an individual that's the pinnacle of human health, and screening them the way we would an organ donor – Carl Crawford

For this story, I asked six stool banks and laboratories to interview their donors. They all said that it's so hard to find reliable donors that they can't risk invading their privacy and having them back out. So, who are these elite defecators, and how can science find the perfect poo?



The poopers

The screening process for a stool donor is never universal. It varies depending on what condition the poo is being used to treat. But it is extremely thorough.

"We'd be looking for an individual that's the pinnacle of human health, and screening them the way we would an organ donor," says Carl Crawford, a gastroenterologist at Weill Cornell Medicine in New York. They put the donor through the wringer, just as they would with someone donating a kidney or blood, he says.

To become a stool donor, one must first complete several health surveys and interviews, along with detailed blood and stool tests to screen for infectious diseases. The list can include more than 30 pathogens, parasites, and multidrug-resistant organisms. Some clinics even require testing for Covid-19 and the flu.

That's because many infectious diseases can be passed through poo. In some cases, FMT has accidentally caused transmission of E.coli. Some respiratory infections including Covid-19 can even be transmitted via poo particles that become airborne when you flush the toilet.

Donors are also screened for their history of certain health conditions, such as some autoimmune disorders or mental health problems.

Some laboratories scrutinise medications and supplements taken by potential donors, including multivitamins and iron. "We really question that and see if it's possible for them to stop taking it," says Susan Poutanen, a medical microbiologist at the University of Toronto. Donors there also record whether they've eaten common allergens in the prior week. "Sometimes we need nut-free poo."

Donors usually fit within the age range of 18 to 48. But anybody can receive the transplant. "We have treated 17-year-olds, and we've treated 96-year-olds," says Susy Hota, an infectious disease expert at the University of Toronto, who performs faecal transplants.

While most stool programs do not explicitly assess the diets of their donors, ideally they would eat a relatively healthily, with lots of fibre. Fruits, vegetables and whole grains tend to give the gut microbiome the right ingredients to flourish. "One would think that donors should be vegetarian, but those that have an omnivorous diet seem to have a greater biodiversity in their gastrointestinal tract," says Crawford.

When possible, donors should also be lean, say Hota and Poutanen. In one case, a 32-year-old woman who was previously slim became obese after receiving a stool donation from a healthy but overweight donor. Many other factors, from alcohol consumption to exercise and sleep, are also considered. There can even be strict travel restrictions, in case donors inadvertently pick up drug-resistant gut bacteria.

Though Crawford no longer sources faeces for transplants himself, he says that in his experience around 3% of people pass the initial screening. About half of those are then considered to have the right balance of bacteria for regular donation.

For Hota in Toronto, only around 1.6% of potential donors make it through the initial screening. Around 0.6% are retained as regular donors.

But the scientists who run stool banks or research programs note that the logistical and practical requirements of being a stool donor are absolutely not to be underestimated. Faye's case, a one-time donation for a patient he knew, is not common.

If you are one of the rare stool donors who passes screening, you're likely to be invited to join a program for regular pooping. The routine entails going into the laboratory almost every day to poo in a designated donor toilet.

Many stool banks pay donors. In the US, for example, rewards can range from $25 (£19) per donation to around $100 (£76). Each stool bank has donors they use repeatedly, as it's more efficient than finding new ones each time.

"The relationship with the donors is something I find fascinating," says Hota. She explains that you have to build trust while respecting their autonomy. For example, patients are often asked to disclose any minor lifestyle changes.

The super poopers

These initial screens and tests can still only predict so much.

The poo of any qualifying donor has an equal chance of successfully treating recurrent C. difficile infections. However, when it comes to certain conditions, research suggests that the faeces of some special donors leads to significantly higher rates of remission compared to others.

For instance, in one 2015 study testing faecal transplants for ulcerative colitis, a type of bowel disease, only nine people out of 38 went into remission. Seven of those had poo from the same donor.

Another study from 2017 involved mixing together faeces from up to seven donors for transplantation. Those who received a mix containing some from one special donor were around twice as likely to feel better than those who received a mix without it. But it's not clear what made this crème de la crème of stool so effective.

Full microbiome tests during stool donation are not routine. But research has revealed that super poopers tend to have an abundance of gut bacteria and a wide variety of them. Their faeces also tend to include species known to be beneficial, such as Faecalibacterium prausnitzii. This species produces the fatty acid butyrate, which has a number of useful functions such as reducing inflammation and protecting the lining of the intestines.

Even then, no one's poo is a silver bullet. The ideal donor for C. difficile might have no impact on someone with, say, IBS or depression, says Faye. "We're still trying to figure out what is the secret sauce," he says.

"Oh, I'm sure that a 'super pooper' exists," says Hohmann. Scientists just don't have any reliable tests that can find them yet, in part because there's no reliable definition of what a super poo is, she says.

Beyond looking for the perfect poop, a growing body of research suggests that matching patients with compatible stool donors may be a more promising approach. Scientists could classify donors and patients into categories, based on factors such as the variety of their gut microbes.

From poo to pills

Even with the finest product from the most effective super-poopers, faecal transplants are far from an exact science.

"My biggest reservation is probably the unpredictability of FMT," says Sara Benterkia, from Queen Mary University of London. "You're transferring a whole microbial community, so there are many variables to consider." Different donors, preparations and recipients can produce very different microbial changes.

Crawford, meanwhile, says that the transplants could be a stepping stone to more standardised treatments. For example, the company Ferring Pharmaceuticals produces REBYOTA, an enema product from the poo of donors with an abundance of beneficial bacteria. Seres Therapeutics produces VOWST pills containing certain bacterial spores, also manufactured from human poo. Both are FDA approved for the treatment of recurrent C. difficile infection.

More like this:

• How often should you poo?

• What your fingernails can reveal about your health

• What your earwax can reveal about your health

In fact, Crawford says the future of treating C. difficile infection is likely to involve pills of microbes that have been handpicked from good donors and then grown at scale in a lab. "I think that microbiome-based therapies have the potential to be the future of medicine," he says.

Bumrah was swinging it both ways: Nicholls praises Bumrah's skill after New Zealand fightback

United News Of India



NEW DELHI, NOV 19 :Henry Nicholls may have finished the opening day of the first Test with an unbeaten century, but the New Zealand batter was left in no doubt about the threat posed by Jasprit Bumrah. The right-armer's ability to move the ball both ways made him a constant handful, forcing the hosts to work hard during a testing first day in Wellington on Thursday.

Bumrah led India's attack with three wickets, helping reduce New Zealand to 70 for five before Nicholls and Glenn Phillips rescued the innings with an unbroken 173-run partnership. Nicholls, who was 113 not out at stumps, acknowledged that Bumrah's movement and control had made batting particularly difficult.

"Bumrah was swinging it both ways and putting guys under some serious pressure. It's a great challenge," Nicholls said.

Having faced the Indian pacer on several occasions in the past, Nicholls felt that familiarity with his action offered some assistance, but stressed that Bumrah remained an exceptional bowler.

"He's obviously got a unique action and, lucky enough, I've played him a few times and that gives you a little bit of a benefit. But he's certainly an incredible bowler in all formats," he said.

The New Zealand batter was especially impressed by the amount of movement Bumrah generated and expects the challenge to continue when the teams return for the second day's play.

"Today, the way he was swinging the ball both ways was incredible bowling. I'm sure tomorrow morning it'll be more of the same and another tough challenge," Nicholls added.

India's fast bowlers had made full use of the conditions in the morning, putting New Zealand's top order under sustained pressure and claiming five wickets before the hosts could reach 100.

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"They asked fantastic questions, certainly in that first session. You saw that from the pressure we were under," Nicholls said.

The innings, however, took a different turn after Phillips joined Nicholls at the crease. While Nicholls concentrated on building his innings, Phillips took the attack to the Indian bowlers, easing the pressure and allowing his partner to settle.

"That partnership and the way Glenn played really alleviated my role. The way he counter-attacked certainly made it a bit easier for me," Nicholls said. The left-hander also highlighted the understanding between the two, pointing to Phillips' attacking instincts and their ability to keep the scoreboard moving through quick running.

Bavuma sets new Test captaincy record with 14 wins in 1st 16 matches

United News Of India



JOHANNESBURG, NOV 19 :South Africa captain Temba Bavuma has established a new benchmark in Test cricket, becoming the most successful captain in the format in terms of victories in his first 16 matches, with 14 wins following his team's emphatic nine-wicket triumph over Bangladesh in the opening Test here. Bavuma moved past former Australia captain Lindsay Hassett, who had recorded 13 victories in his first 16 Tests as captain. Australia's Bill Woodfull, Steve Waugh and Ricky Ponting, along with England's Ben Stokes, are next on the list with 11 wins each.

The latest victory at the Wanderers also extended South Africa's impressive run in Test cricket. The Proteas have now won 16 of their last 18 Tests and consolidated their position among the leading sides in the format. The victory also strengthened their position at the top of the 2025-27 World Test Championship standings, boosting their prospects of reaching next year's final in London.

Bavuma's captaincy record has been built on significant victories against leading Test sides, including three wins each against Australia and India. South Africa's triumph over Australia in the 2025 World Test Championship final was among the defining achievements of his leadership. Against Bangladesh, the Proteas demonstrated their batting depth and bowling strength. After Bangladesh posted 400 in their first innings, South Africa responded with 557, securing a substantial 157-run lead.

Star-studded India A face Nepal's spin test, Lamichhane holds key to upset bid

United News Of India



DOHA, NOV 19 :India's formidable batting firepower will come up against Nepal's spin challenge, with skipper Sandeep Lamichhane leading the Himalayan side's hopes of pulling off an upset when the two teams clash in the ACC Men's Asia Cup Rising Stars tournament here on Friday.

Boasting an exciting combination of established international performers and emerging talent, India A will start as overwhelming favourites, with Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh and teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi lending considerable muscle to their batting lineup.

But Nepal, under the leadership of the experienced Lamichhane, will be looking to make India's

star-studded outfit work for its victory and use the contest as an opportunity to announce its credentials against a heavyweight opponent.

The biggest challenge for Nepal will be containing India's aggressive batting approach. Abhishek's ability to take the attack to the opposition from the outset,

Tilak's versatility and Rinku's finishing skills give India A a formidable combination across the batting order.

The presence of Sooryavanshi further strengthens the batting unit, with the young left-hander's fearless strokeplay offering India another attacking option.

His ability to change the complexion of a contest quickly could make him one of the players Nepal will be particularly keen to keep quiet.

However, Nepal have a potential trump card in Lamichhane, whose leg-spin, variations and experience of playing against top-level opposition could prove decisive in the middle overs.

The Nepal captain will be central to his team's plans, particularly if he can break partnerships and prevent India's batsmen from dictating the tempo.

His battle against India's power-hitters could well determine how competitive Nepal remain in the contest.

For Nepal, the fixture is also an important opportunity to measure its progress against a side packed with players who have already made their mark in international cricket.

Aryaman's 7-under surge puts him 3 shots off lead

United News Of India

DIGBOI (ASSAM), NOV 19 :Mumbai's Aryaman Aditya Mohan reignited his title hopes with a spectacular seven-under 65 in the third round of the 26th Indian Oil SERVO Masters Golf here today, moving into tied fifth place and within striking distance of the three leaders.

The 25-year-old produced the lowest round of the day, climbing 20 places on the leaderboard to reach eight-under 208, just three shots behind Kapurthala's Yuvraj Singh, Mhow's Om Prakash Chouhan and Bengaluru's Raunil Kukar, who shared the lead at 11-under 205.

Aryaman's charge was built around an eagle on the par-five seventh, eight birdies and three bogeys. His aggressive scoring approach helped him make one of the biggest moves of the tournament so far and emerge as a serious challenger heading into Friday's final round.

The Mumbai golfer will now look to carry that momentum into the final day, where another low round could bring him into contention for the title. However, he will need to overcome a three-shot deficit against a leading trio that has maintained consistency over the first three rounds. Chandigarh's Akshay Sharma also made a significant move, joining Aryaman in tied fifth at eight-under 208 after carding a six-under 66.

Nicholls matches Williamson, Crowe's record with dogged Basin Reserve century

United News Of India



WELLINGTON, NOV 19 Henry Nicholls produced a magnificent exhibition of patience and resilience to etch his name alongside New Zealand greats Kane Williamson and Martin Crowe, scoring his fifth Test century at the Basin Reserve in just 15 innings against India here on Thursday.

The left-hander's unbeaten 113 was more than just a personal milestone. Coming after New Zealand had slumped to 70 for five, Nicholls' determined effort helped pull the hosts out of trouble and put them in a position of strength at the end of the opening day of the first Test.

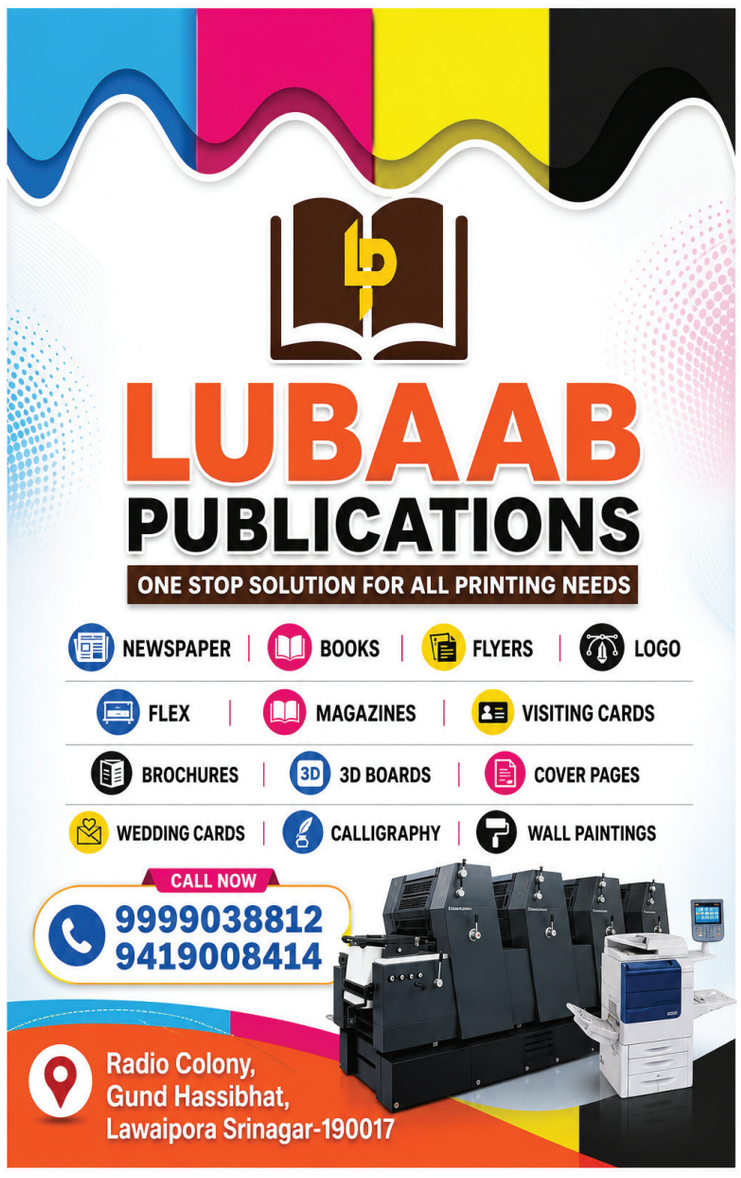
With his fifth hundred at the Wellington venue, Nicholls became the third New Zealand batsman to reach the landmark. However, he achieved it in considerably fewer innings than his illustrious predecessors.

Crowe took 17 innings to score five centuries at the Basin Reserve, while Williamson needed 30. Nicholls has reached the same tally in just 15 innings. He has also registered four half-centuries at the venue, further highlighting his consistency.

Nicholls brought up his hundred with a single off Prasidh Krishna, surviving an inside edge onto his pad before completing the run. The moment sparked celebrations in the New Zealand dressing room, with the entire team rising to applaud an innings that had transformed the course of the day.

Glenn Phillips, who was at the other end, embraced the centurion, while Daryl Mitchell celebrated







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