

# Kashmir Convener



Access to judiciary has been 'weaponised' to promote anti-national sentiments: Dhankhar

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## Cabinet Clears New I-T Bill



KC NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** The Union Cabinet on Friday approved the new income tax bill, which will replace the six decades old I-T Act, sources said. The new bill seeks to make direct tax law

simple to understand and not to impose any new tax burden. It will not have provisos and explanations or long sentences.

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the New Income Tax Bill, sources said.

Sources said the new income tax bill will now be introduced in the Parliament next week and would be sent to Parliament's Standing Committee on Finance.

The first leg of the ongoing budget session ends on February 13. The session will reconvene on March 10 and sit through April 4.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced in Budget 2025-26 that the new tax bill will be introduced in the ongoing session of Parliament. Sitharaman had first announced a comprehensive review of the Income-tax Act, 1961 in July 2024 Budget. The CBDT had set up an internal committee to oversee the review and make the Act concise, clear, and easy to understand, which will reduce disputes, litigations, and provide greater tax certainty to taxpayers.

Also, 22 specialised sub-committees have been established to review the various aspects of the Income Tax Act.

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## PM Modi to visit US from February 12

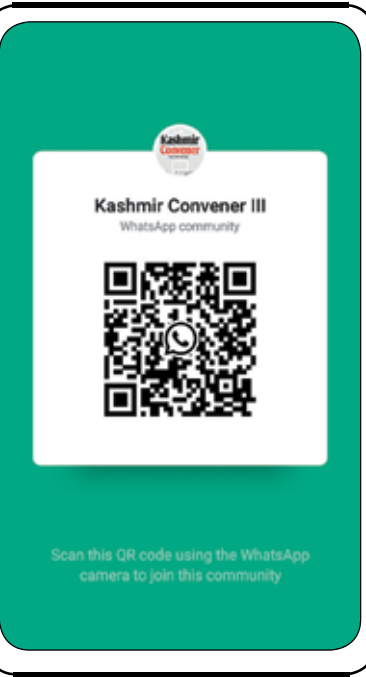


KC NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pay a two-day working visit to the US from February 12 during which he will meet President Donald Trump, the external affairs ministry Friday announced.

Addressing a press conference, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misra said Modi's visit will give further impetus and direction to India-US bilateral relationship.

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**NEET-UG To Be Conducted On May 4: NTA**

KC NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** The medical entrance exam NEET-UG will be conducted on May 4, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Friday.

The application process for the the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)-UG began on Friday and will conclude on March 7. It is the largest entrance exam in the country in terms of the number of candidates appearing for the test.

In 2024, a record more than 24 lakh candidates took the exam. The NTA conducts the NEET every year for admission into medical colleges. A total of 1,08,000 seats are available for MBBS course. Approximately 56,000 of them are in government hospitals and about 52,000 in private colleges.

Admissions to undergraduate courses in Dentistry, Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha also utilise the results of the NEET for admission.

>>>SEE ON P-7

## CM Omar Chairs Pre-Budget Consultation Meetings



KC NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Continuing with the pre-budget consultations for the third consecutive day, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah engaged in extensive discussions with public representatives and key stakeholders to gain firsthand

insights into the issues and developmental priorities of various sectors and districts. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary Education Shantmanu, Additional Chief Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Administrative Secretaries of Finance, Social Welfare,

Tourism, Industry & Commerce, Youth Services & Sports, Deputy Commissioners of Pulwama and Reasi districts, and heads of various departments, both in person and virtually. Public representatives, including District Development Council (DDC) Chairpersons and Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from Pulwama and Reasi districts, raised concerns regarding electricity supply, drinking water schemes, flood management, staffing of schools and hospitals, upgradation of primary health centers, construction of bridges, and the development of new tourist

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5th Khelo India winter games

## Div Com Directs Strengthening Interdepartmental Coordination



KC NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Friday convened a meeting of officers to review

overall preparation for the successful conduct of 5th Edition of Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) to be held at Gulmarg later this month. The mega event of national winter games phase

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## Govt to Finalize Guidelines on CDF in Budget

Mubashir Alam

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu & Kashmir government is in the process of framing guidelines for the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), sources disclosed.

Sources told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the Finance Department is working to finalize the guidelines for the utilization of the CDF. "The guidelines will ensure transparency, accountability, and effective utilization of the funds for development works identified by MLAs," sources said.

They said the proposed guidelines are likely to be placed before the cabinet for approval.

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## CM Omar Reviews Preparations For Jammu Half Marathon & Ultra Marathon 2025



KC NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a review meeting to discuss the preparations for the Jammu Half Marathon & Ultra Marathon 2025, scheduled to be held later this year. The meeting was attended

by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance Satosh D. Vaidya, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, Commissioner Secretary Tourism Yasha Mudgal, Director

Tourism Jammu, representatives from BISAG-N, marathon experts, and other concerned officials, both in person and virtually. Speaking at the meeting, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah appreciated the initiative, emphasizing that the marathon should receive widespread publicity to attract top athletes from across the country.

The chief minister highlighted the significance of such events in boosting tourism in Jammu & Kashmir and positioning the region as a prime destination for sports and adventure tourism. "The success of this marathon will not

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## LG Sinha calls World Book Fair ideal opportunity to promote reading habit



KC NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today visited the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025, at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

The Lieutenant Governor

commended the endeavour of National Book Trust, India, under the Ministry of Education, Government of India, for providing an engaging platform to book lovers, publishers and authors. He has also asked the National

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## Vande Bharat Passengers Can Buy Food Onboard: Railways

KC NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** Passengers of Vande Bharat trains can purchase food onboard even if they do not select any food options at the time of ticket booking, the Railway Board said on Friday.

"In order to provide options, choice of services and adequate catering facilities to current booking & non-optee passengers in Vande Bharat trains, sale and service of food items in Vande Bharat trains may be resumed by the IRCTC (Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation)," the Railway Board said in a circular addressed to the chairman and managing director of IRCTC on Friday.

It added, "For current booking and non-optee passengers, the option of cooked meal may also be resumed (if available) which would be in addition to customised Ready to Eat (RTE) meal option."

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## JK Govt Approves Diversion Of Forest Land For 29 WSS



KC NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Pursuant to clearance of Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEFCC), the Jammu and Kashmir Government has approved diversion of more than 10 hectare of forest land for various Water Supply Schemes (WSS) in Doda and Udhampur districts.

The projects mostly pertained to water supply infrastructure projects related to Jal Jeevan Mission for augmentation of water supply schemes in the districts. Additionally, clearance has been given for diversion of 1.23 hectare of forest land of Social Forestry Division Baramulla for Srinagar-Baramulla-Uri road.

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## Govt directs deptts, officers to accord priority, protocol to MLAs

Asks officers to deal with them in professional, respectful manner

Sajid Raina

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir government has instructed all departments and officers to prioritise attending to elected representatives, ensuring proper protocol and cooperation in all official matters.

In to a circular, government has directed officers and all department that communications, requests, and grievances raised by elected representatives shall be acknowledged and processed in priority.

It further stated officers and officials shall deal with elected representatives in a professional and respectful manner.

The circular added that MLAs be invited to all official functions and meetings organised in their respective jurisdictions, including official visit of any dignitary. The government urged strict compliance with these instructions to strengthen coordination between administration and

>>>SEE ON P-7

Budget session 2025-26

## Depts To Submit Money Bills For Approvals In Advance To Raj Bhavan

Sajid Raina

**SRINAGAR :** In a significant move, the Jammu & Kashmir Government has directed departments to submit money bills at least 21 days in advance for necessary approvals to the Lieutenant Governor's secretariat.

Ahead of the budget session, the Department of Justice, Law and Parliamentary Affairs has directed departments to submit money bills for necessary approvals 21 days in advance to Raj Bhavan for LG's recommendation.

"For proposals requiring the Lieutenant Governor's recommendation under Section 36 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019, departments must submit them at least 21 days in advance for necessary approvals," reads the circular issued by the department, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Under the said provision of the Act, any bill or amendment related to taxation, government financial obligations, or appropriation of funds from

the consolidated fund can only be introduced in the Legislative Assembly with the prior recommendation of the Lieutenant Governor.

The department underlined that there is a need



for timely submission and legal vetting of legislative proposals before their introduction in the House.

"To ensure thorough examination, departments must refer all Bills and

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# Access to judiciary has been ‘weaponised’ to promote anti-national sentiments: Dhankhar



**BENGALURU:** Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar said on Friday that in recent years access to the judiciary has been “weaponised” in a way that is not happening in any other country. He was speaking at the inauguration of the third edition of the Kamataka Vaibhava Literature and Cultural Festival held in Ranebennur, Haveri district.

Dhankhar said the divisive forces operate in different ways. “They have adopted new paths, and on many issues, you will see them turning to the judiciary”.

“I am concerned because our Constitution has given every individual

a right within the judicial system. And what is that right? The right to seek the shelter of the court. But in recent years, money has been used to fuel anti-national sentiments,” he claimed. He further stated, “The forces challenging the nation and attempting to create a clash between nationalism and regionalism must be met with a strong response.

They seek to undermine our cultural heritage.” Emphasising the need to preserve the nation’s cultural philosophy, Dhankar said, “On this day, when I look to one side, I see India’s progress through the eyes of the world and the people living within

the nation. They are like the feathers of a peacock dancing in the rain... But when I look at the peacock’s feet, I become worried, forced to reflect, and then I feel the need for our cultural philosophy. We are trying to cut the very branch on which we thrive, on which we sit.” Expressing deep concern over attempts to influence the electoral process within the country, the Vice President said, “In the country with the oldest democracy, the strongest democracy, the most progressive democracy, and the most vibrant democracy—and constitutionally the only country in the world with a democratic system at every level, be it village, city, state, or nation—there is an attempt to influence our electoral process in a manner it should not be influenced.

“Referring to India’s economic progress, he said, “The world’s leading institutions, such as the IMF, World Bank, and others, state that if there is any shining star in the world for investment, opportunities, and showcasing talent, it is India. India is considered a global favourite destination for investment and opportunities.”

## ACB Serves Notice To Kejriwal Over Claims Of BJP Poaching AAP Candidates Ahead Of Delhi Poll Results

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) on Friday served a legal notice to AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal, seeking details and evidence regarding his allegations that the BJP attempted to bribe his

refers to a post on X by Kejriwal accusing the BJP of offering bribes to 16 AAP candidates to switch sides. The notice asks Kejriwal to confirm whether the tweet was made by him and provide



party candidates ahead of the Delhi Assembly election results. The legal notice comes just a day before the counting of votes is scheduled to take place for the Delhi Assembly elections held on February 5. The notice, delivered at Kejriwal’s 5, Ferozeshah Road residence, has intensified the political tensions between AAP and the BJP, with the former calling it a politically motivated move. The ACB’s notice specifically

detailed information on the alleged poaching attempts. It also seeks the names of the 16 candidates who received phone calls, the phone numbers of those who contacted them and any supporting evidence to substantiate these claims. “Provide the evidence and proof to support the claim/ allegations of the offer of a bribe levelled by you and your party members on various media/ social media platforms,” the ACB notice reads.

The notice also warns of potential legal action, asking Kejriwal to explain why those spreading such allegations should not be prosecuted for creating “panic and unrest” among the people of Delhi. “Explain as to why an appropriate legal action should not be taken against the persons spreading such information on media/social media platforms, which is tantamount to creating panic and unrest situations amongst the people of Delhi,” the notice reads. Earlier, high drama unfolded as AAP strongly criticised the ACB’s action, calling it an attempt to intimidate the party ahead of the election results. AAP’s legal cell chief Sanjeev Nasiar alleged that the ACB initially had no legal notice and was sitting outside Kejriwal’s house without clarity on their purpose. “They did not have any legal notice at first. After one-and-a-half hours, they served us with a notice. This drama is orchestrated by the LG office in collusion with the BJP. The officers were under pressure,” Nasiar claimed.

## Hospital admissions worth Rs 1.19 lakh cr authorised under AB-PMJAY: JP Nadda

**NEW DELHI:** A total of 8.59 crore hospital admissions worth Rs 1.19 lakh crore have been authorised under the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) as on January 1, Union Health Minister J P Nadda said on Friday. Underlining that steps are taken for prevention and detection of different kinds of fraud in the implementation of the scheme, he said suitable actions, including de-empanelment of 1,114 hospitals, levying penalty worth Rs 122 crore on 1,504 errant hospitals and suspension of 549 hospitals have been taken against fraudulent entities.



In a written response to a question in Lok Sabha, he said the National Anti-Fraud Unit (NAFU) has been established at National Health Authority and works in close coordination with State Anti-Fraud Units (SAFU) to investigate and take joint action against issues related to fraud and abuse. Further, any claims by empanelled hospitals found to be suspicious by NAFU are withheld until proper scrutiny by SAFU teams, including field verification where necessary. As on February 4, nine doctors and 71 hospitals have been suspended under the scheme in Gujarat. Additionally, two hospitals have been de-empanelled and one hospital has been blacklisted.

## Can’t Drag Family Members In Domestic Violence Cases In Sweeping Manner: SC



**NEW DELHI:** Observing domestic violence cases need to be handled with utmost sensitivity, the Supreme Court on Friday said family members of an accused cannot be implicated without specific charge in the criminal case in a sweeping manner. A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and N Kotiswar Singh said in matrimonial disputes, emotions run high, and there may be a tendency to implicate other members of the family who do not come to the rescue of the complainant or remain mute spectators to any alleged incident of harassment. “In criminal cases relating to domestic violence, the complaints and charges should be specific, as far as possible, as against each and every member of the family who are accused of such offences and sought to be prosecuted, as otherwise, it may amount to misuse of the stringent criminal process by indiscriminately dragging all the members of the family,” said the court. The observations reflected in a judgement

that quashed the criminal proceeding against the family members against whom a woman filed a domestic violence case aside from her in laws. The Telangana High Court had refused to quash the proceedings against the maternal aunt and cousin of the main accused. The top court said it couldn’t constitute a criminal act without there being specific acts attributed to the family members. When tempers run high and relationships turn bitter, there is also a propensity to exaggerate the allegations, which does not necessarily mean that such domestic disputes should be given the colour of criminality, it added. “There may be situations where some of the family members or relatives may turn a blind eye to the violence or harassment perpetrated to the victim, and may not extend any helping hand to the victim, which does not necessarily mean that they are also perpetrators of domestic violence.

## Fire At Camp In Maha Kumbh Mela, None Injured

**MAHAKUMBH NAGAR:** A fire broke out at the ISKCON camp in Mahakumbh Nagar on Friday and quickly spread to over a dozen nearby camps, leaving them gutted, officials said. No casualties have been reported. Chief Fire Officer Pramod Sharma told PTI that the blaze was reported at 10.35

am after which around a dozen water tenders were rushed to the spot. “Upon receiving information about the fire at the ISKCON camp in Sector 18, fire tenders were immediately dispatched. The fire was contained fully in half an hour,” he said. The fire spread to over a dozen nearby camps, causing significant damages. Officials said the cause of the fire and the damage incurred due to it were being ascertained. DIG (Maha Kumbh) Vaibhav Krishna said the fire incident has “completely been controlled” by the fire brigades.

“There is no one injured in it,” he posted on X. ISKCON’s camp was highlighted for its mega community kitchen being run in association with the Adani Foundation at Sector 19. Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani and his family also visited Maha Kumbh in January, distributing free meals to pilgrims and offered prayers at Sangam. Officials here said, the Friday fire took place at ISKCON’s other camp in Sector 18, some distance away from its Sector 19 camp. This is the third major fire at the Maha

Kumbh besides multiple minor such incidents. On January 19, a massive fire broke out in the Maha Kumbh Mela area’s Sector 19 due to a cylinder blast. While no casualties were reported, the blaze had left over a dozen camps gutted. Earlier on January 25, two cars caught fire in Sector 2 of the Maha Kumbh fair area, but no casualties were reported. Short circuit in one car led to the fire which then spread to the other vehicle parked next to it, according to officials. The Maha Kumbh, which started on January 13, will continue until February 26.

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) ELECTRIC DIVISION KASHMIR, ENGINEERING

Complex Srinagar Rajbagh.  
Near Silk Factory Srinagar- 190008.  
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

E-NIT No.194/R&B/Electric Division Kashmir of 2024-25 issued under Endorsement No: ERB/9625-33  
DATED:06-02-2025.

For and on behalf of The Government of J&K(U/T) e-tenders (in Double covers system) are invited on percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/UT/Central Government Departments for the following works:-

Sl. No.	Name of Work	E/ Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of Tender/ Doc. (In Rs.)	2% E/ Money (In Rs.)	Time of Completion (Calendar Days)	Class of Contract	Major Head of Account	Remarks
01	Raising of 1st floor over existing complex at Sub Store Bijbehara Anantnag BWO Electrification.	Rs. 2.294/= Lacs	Rs 200/ =	Rs 4590/=	15 Days	"AAY" Class Electrical	Capex Budget	Accord of Administrative Approval Accorded by Director Geology and Mining Department J&K UT Vide endorsement No.DGM/P&S/1st-floor Bijbehara/2022/36/3241 Dated:-20-07-2022

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	06-02-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	06-02-2025 from 06.00 PM
3	Bid submission Start Date	06-02-2025 from 06.00 PM
4	Bid Submission End Date	18-02-2025 upto 04.00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	19-02-2025 at 02.00 PM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Electric Division Kashmir, Engineering Complex Srinagar Rajbagh.
6	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.

The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, drawings, bill of quantities (BOQ), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen /downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:

As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Secretariat Finance department vide No. OM No. Note:- The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the E-NIT carefully before uploading soft's copy. A/24(2017)-651 dtd.07-06-2018 which reads as under:-

a) Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared 1st Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.

- The Cost of tender document should be collected by introducing Treasury Challan (Receipt).
- 1.1. The successful Bidder has to produce Performance Security Deposit @5% of contract value in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG after issuance of Letter of Acceptance which shall be released after successful completion of work with DLP. The EMD @ 2% of successful bidder will be released only after the submission of 5% performance Security deposit.
- 1.2. The bidder who so ever participate the e-tenders floated by this office will submit Additional Performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG in case the bidder has Submitted the below Percentage Bid against the Advertised Cost for the work as per below mentioned percentage Breakup in order to avoid unbalancing of e-tender and shall be released after 70% completion of work:

S. No.	% age of Unbalanced bid Viz-a-viz advertised cost on account of Low Rate.	Additional Performance security to be Deposited on quoted bid by L1
1.	Upto and including 15%	NIL
2	Greater than 15% upto & including 20%	5%
3.	Greater than 20% upto & including 25% 10%	
4.	Greater than 25% upto & including 30	15%
5.	Greater than 30% below	20%

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Electric Division Kashmir, Srinagar (Tender receiving authority)

- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.
- The Employer reserves the right to invite fresh tender without any Prior Notice to the Bidders.

ANNEXURE – I  
Treasury Receipt performa

The Treasury Office, \_\_\_\_\_ Treasury,  
Srinagar.  
Subject: Tender Fee Receipt For the works

E-NIT No. S.NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Sir,  
Kindly receive an amount of Rs. Electric Division Kashmir. Under MH:0059 PWD in favour of Executive Engineer, PW(R&B)  
Yours Faithfully, \_\_\_\_\_  
Received amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dated: \_\_\_\_\_  
No. ERB/9625-33  
DATED:-06-02-2025

DIPK-11677/24

**SD/- Executive Engineer,  
(R&B) Electric Division Kashmir  
Engineering Complex Srinagar  
Rajbagh**

## Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION AWANTIPORA

E-mail: [rbdivisionawantipora@gmail.com](mailto:rbdivisionawantipora@gmail.com)

com  
NO: T-1 /EEA/9680-81 Date: 07/02/2025

CANCELLATION NOTICE.

Subject: Construction of road /drain from H/O Syed Ab rashid to H/O Gh Mohammad Bhat at Harpora Ward No 06 at MC Awantipora.  
Reference: 65/EEA/RNB/Of 2024-25/5277-87 (s.no 02) Dated 15/10/2024  
It is for the information of all registered contractors/firms/Agencies, that The above subjected work is hereby cancelled due to zero bid response and shall be invited afresh.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer  
R&B Division Awantipora**

DIPK-11705/24

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North) Sopore

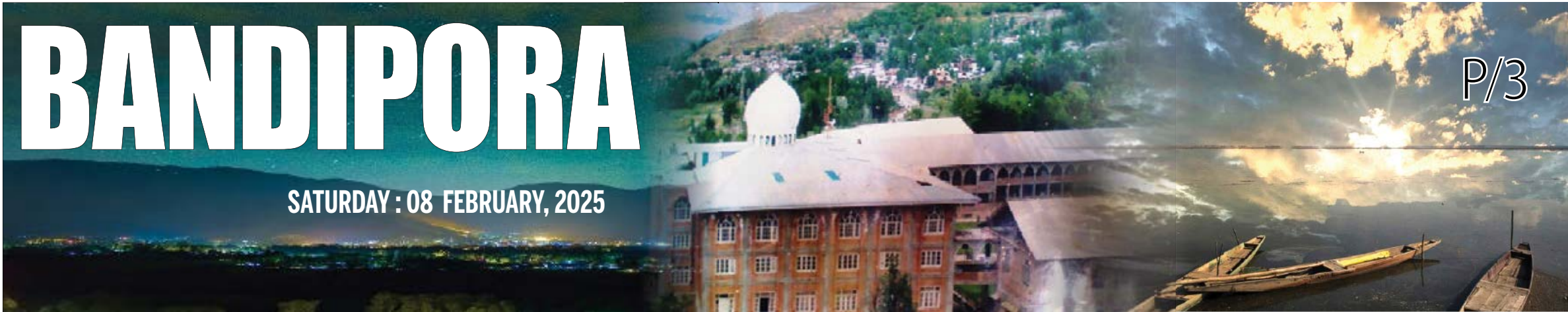
Email: [phe.mdns2@gmail.com](mailto:phe.mdns2@gmail.com)  
Corrigendum

Sub: Correction in power service cable.  
Ref: This office E-NIT No. PHE/MDNS/NIT/E-54 of 2024-25.  
The Size of power service cable for item figuring at Serial No. 14 of above referred e-NIT shall be read as "120mm<sup>2</sup>".  
All other terms and conditions shall remain same.  
No.: PHE/MDNS/DB/7541-43  
Dated: 06-02-2025

**Sd/- Executive Engineer  
Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North)  
Sopore**

DIPK-7855/24





# Thousands Join Sugamya Yatra 2025 to Advocate for Inclusive Accessibility in JK

**JAMMU:** Thousands of men, women and children Friday joined Sugamya Yatra 2025 with an aim to advocate for inclusive accessibility in Jammu and Kashmir.

An official spokesperson said the Sugamya Yatra 2025 was a landmark initiative to promote accessibility and inclusion for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) across all districts of JK.

The Yatra was organised by the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Social Welfare Department, J&K, in collaboration with all District Level Committees on Disability, headed by respective Deputy Commissioners (DCs), and actively supported by the District Social Welfare Units.

Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities Iqbal Lone, while speaking on the occasion, said the primary objective of Sugamya Yatra 2025 was to raise mass awareness about accessibility chal-

lenges faced by Persons with Disabilities and to sensitize stakeholders about their responsibilities

and authorities about accessibility rights and obligations.



under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016.

He said the Yatra focused on Sensitizing public

The Yatra focused on sensitising the public and authorities about accessibility rights and obligations, visiting key public places, including government

offices, educational institutions, healthcare centers and tourist spots to assess accessibility, encouraging use of digital tools like the Yes to Access mobile app for real-time data collection and promoting a constructive and collaborative approach towards improving accessibility.

The event was conducted in a peaceful and inclusive manner, ensuring constructive engagement with local authorities and stakeholders. The participants were encouraged to provide feedback to concerned officials to foster improvements in accessibility across public infrastructure.

Lone said the Deputy Commissioners across all districts played a crucial role in coordinating the Yatra, ensuring its smooth execution and mobilising stakeholders, including representatives from the disability sector, civil society organisations and accessibility auditors.

## Inferior Material Used in Laharwalpora Road Construction, MLA Bandipora Seeks Explanation

**BANDIPORA:** MLA Bandipora, Nizamuddin Bhat, Friday raised serious concerns over the alleged use of substandard materials in the construction of the Laharwalpora road in Bandipora,



local connectivity.

"During the inspection, the team discovered that the material used for construction was of substandard quality, raising serious concerns about the road's durability and safety," spokesperson added. Reports suggest that the road is already in poor condition, making it nearly impossible for people to walk on.

Taking immediate action, MLA Nizamuddin Bhat raised the issue with PMGSY authorities, including the Executive Engineer (Xen), demanding an explanation for the substandard construction.

He urged the concerned department to rectify the issue without delay to prevent further suffering for residents. "The people of this area should not

face hardships due to negligence. The road must

be built using quality materials to ensure long-term sustainability," he asserted, calling for swift action from the authorities.

Meanwhile local residents have also expressed their frustration, urging the administration to intervene and ensure proper execution of the project. The matter is now under review and further developments are expected soon.

a vital connectivity project worth 3.10 crore.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Convener, Spokesperson said on the directions of MLA Bandipora, Nizamuddin Bhat, a team from the MLA office visited Laharwalpora to inspect the ongoing construction of a vital road connecting the area with the rest of Bandipora.

He informed that the project, undertaken at an estimated cost of 3.10 crore, is crucial for

## J&K Bank customers aghast as mobile banking app develops 'snag'

RAJA SYED RATHER

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Bank customers had to face tremendous hardships as the mobile banking has gone for a toss from the last two days, thus leaving the customers to lurch at large.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the customers of J&K Bank said that the mobile banking application (MPay) & GPay and Other Digital services are lying defunct from the last two days after the fresh version of the application was updated.

"We have never witnessed such a situation in the past as it is for the two consecutive days that I am not able to use mobile banking," Suhail Ahmad, a businessman from Srinagar said. He added that the users are not even able to log into it. "We are surprised to see that the authorities concerned don't even bother to fix the error for the betterment of the users," he said.

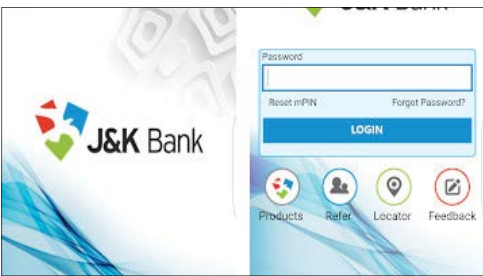
Another customer informed KNO from Ganderbal, Aqib Rasool that they are being forced to spend a lot of time visiting the banks for their work, which otherwise was possible to be done at home. "We want the concerned authorities to fix the errors at earliest," he said.

Many of the netizens have also expressed their resentment and highlighted their sufferings due to the defunct mobile banking application.

"JK Bank puts digital transaction facilities including mpay, net banking on suspension mode to revert

back to withdrawals, cheques, pay in slips for transaction now," a netizen wrote in his Facebook post

"While heading to the petrol pump today, my Gpay & Mpay decided to act up, I had my ID card on



hand to make it through! It's very unfortunate that JK Bank doesn't provide us with the necessary facilities," a netizen wrote.

"JK Bank's non-functional services (both Mpay Delight and JK Bank UPI) have failed me for two days, causing repeated embarrassment. Now, while paying my water bill, it disappoints me yet again, two back-to-back embarrassments for J&K Bank. First at the salon when UPI didn't work, and now when I tried sending money to someone, I failed again because the receiver's bank is #JKBank. Despite charging unnecessary and frequent fees, their servers are always down," Gaznafar wrote on X.

Local businessmen and officials and transporters appeal to the bank authorities to resolve this issue, or else "we will be forced to switch to a different bank"—(KNO)

## Pulmonologists calls for regulating mobile phone usage to prevent addiction, mental fatigue

JAHANGEER GANAIE

**SRINAGAR:** Renowned pulmonologist Dr Naveed Nazir Shah has called for regulating mobile phone usage, particularly among children and the elderly, to prevent addiction and mental exhaustion.



Speaking to the media in Srinagar, Dr Naveed, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), acknowledged the importance of the digital revolution, noting that mobile phones and the internet have become essential for official work, studies, and communication. However, he warned that excessive screen time is leading to addiction, affecting not only children but also retired individuals who spend prolonged hours on their devices.

He highlighted the growing influence of artificial intelligence, saying that an overreliance on AI-driven content is contributing to mental fatigue. Urging parents to monitor their children's screen time, he recommended the use of parental controls to track online activities.

Dr Naveed underlined the importance of balanced mobile usage and called for greater awareness of the potential harms of excessive screen exposure, especially among individuals under 18.

Addressing health concerns specific to Jammu and

Kashmir, the noted pulmonologist said that respiratory illnesses are common due to the region's climatic conditions. "Cold and dry air in winter often worsens symptoms such as cough, breathlessness, chest tightness and wheezing, particularly for individuals with pre-existing respiratory conditions like

asthma, bronchitis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)," he said.

These respiratory issues, Dr Naveed said, are due to multiple factors, including climatic conditions, smoking and high pollen concentrations due to Kashmir's greenery. "During the spring season, pollen levels in the atmosphere rise significantly, leading to a higher incidence of allergic diseases," he said.

With winter coming to an end and spring approaching, Dr Naveed cautioned that allergy-related issues will likely increase. He advised patients to follow their doctor's recommendations carefully, saying that adhering to treatment protocols can help keep symptoms under control and prevent severe complications.

"We often see patients seeking treatment only when symptoms appear. However, those suffering from chronic respiratory conditions should follow a continuous treatment regimen, just like diabetic and hypertensive patients do," he added—(KNO)

## Police arrest 3 peddlers in Anantnag, Shopian

**SRINAGAR:** Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police on Friday said to have arrested three drug peddlers in Anantnag and Shopian and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

In Anantnag, Police Station Mattan received a specific information through reliable sources that one person namely Farooq Ahmad Kumar son of Mohd Subhan

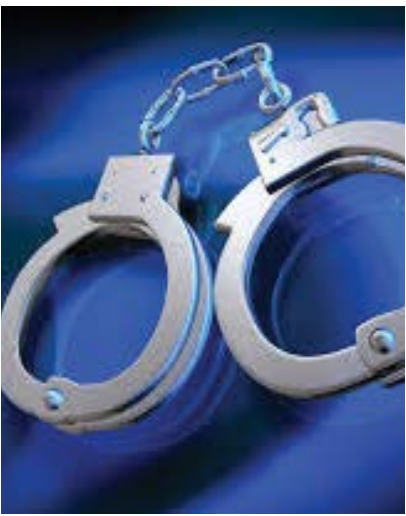
Kumar resident of Khul Chohar Mattan has indulged in peddling of narcotic substances and accordingly has hoarded a large quantity of narcotic substance in his residential house, a police spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Accordingly, police said that a case under relevant sections of law was registered in Police Station Mattan and investigation was taken up. "On receipt of this information, a police party alongwith Executive Magistrate concerned carried out the search of the said house. During search, about 10 Kgs of Charas Powder and cash of Rs. 2,16,650/- was recovered from the said house besides, the owner of the said house was also arrested. Further investigation in the instant case is going on," police said.

Additionally, Police Party from Police Station Pahalgam at a checkpoint established at Langabal Pahalgam, apprehended one person identified as Shahrukh Ahmad Sheikh son of Mohd Ramzan Sheikh resident of Sheikh Mohalla Sallar and recovered 120 grams of Charas from his possession. In this regard a case under relevant sections of law was registered at Police Station Pahalgam and investigation was initiated, police said.

Similarly in Shopian, a Police Party led

by SHO Police Station Heerpora under the supervision of SP Hqrs Shopian Shri Javed Ahmad-JKPS at a checkpoint established at Borihalan, intercepted a suspicious person. During the search, 920 grams of Cannabis powder was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Manzoor Ahmad Wanaah son of Gamah Wanaah resident of Devpora. Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 02/2025 under relevant



sections of law has been registered at Police Station Heerpora. Further investigation is underway to unearth the forward and backward linkages of the arrested individual, police said.

"We urge the common masses that if you witness drug peddling or any other crime anywhere near you, feel free to contact nearest police establishment or dial 112. People are requested to cooperate with police in curbing the menace of drugs from the society. We reassure the community members that police will act tough against the criminals as per law," the statement said—(KNO)

## FDCL Employees Deprived of Pay Commission Benefits and Allowances, Demand Urgent Government Intervention

**JAMMU:** Employees of the Forest Development Corporation Limited (FDCL), formerly known as the Forest Corporation, are facing severe financial hardships due to the non-implementation of successive pay commissions and the denial of essential allowances.

Despite its conversion into FDCL in 2019, employee benefits have seen no improvement, leaving the workforce struggling with low wages and stagnant career growth.

While employees of other government corporations have received pay commission benefits, FDCL employees remain excluded. The 6th Pay Commission (2010) and 7th Pay Commission (2016) were implemented for government employees, and with the 8th Pay Commission now in place, FDCL workers have yet to receive a single pay revision since the corporation's restructuring in 2019.

Aggrieved employees said, adding to our distress, FDCL employees said they are also deprived of child allowances, making it difficult for them to afford basic educational necessities for their children. Additionally, SRO-43 cases, pending since 2019, remain unresolved, leaving many deserving employees and their families in uncertainty.

Another major concern is the stagnation in career growth. Despite FDCL operating with only 1,300 employees, the majority belonging to Class-IV categories, many workers have remained in the same positions since 1990. The Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) has not convened since 2013, depriving employees of long-overdue promotions.

The financial hardships faced by FDCL employees have led to growing frustration, with workers demanding immediate government intervention. They have urged authorities to implement the 8th Pay Commission, provide child allowances, resolve pending SRO-43 cases, and conduct the DPC to grant promotions.

FDCL employees have warned that if their demands are not met soon, they will intensify protests and consider legal action to secure their rightful dues. The government is now under pressure to address these grievances before the situation escalates further.

## 43 judicial posts vacant in J&K, Govt informs Parliament

SAJID RAINA

**SRINAGAR:** The Union government has informed Parliament that Jammu and Kashmir currently has 43 vacant positions in district and subordinate courts.

The figures were presented in response to a query regarding pending cases in courts and judicial vacancies across the country by the Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Law and Justice; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Arjun Ram Meghwal.

According to official data, the sanctioned strength of judicial officers in Jammu and Kashmir stands at 322 as of February 3, 2025. Of these, 43 positions remain unfilled.

Over the past five years, the number of sanctioned positions has increased. In December 2020, the sanctioned strength was 296, with 41 vacancies.

By December 2021, the sanctioned strength rose to 300, while vacancies increased to 59. In December 2022, the sanctioned strength reached 314, with 91 vacancies. By December 2023, the number of sanctioned posts had increased to 317, with 94 vacancies.

The latest data shows that while the sanctioned strength has grown to 322, the number of vacant positions has decreased to 43.

The government also provided data for Ladakh, where the sanctioned strength of judicial officers remains at 17, with six vacancies—(KNO)

## J&K gets three herbal garden projects worth 7.42 crore, Centre informs Parliament

RAJA SYED RATHER

**SRINAGAR:** The Government of India (GoI) informed Parliament on Friday that Jammu & Kashmir has been sanctioned three herbal garden projects in the past three years.

The Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Ministry of AYUSH, Prataprao Jadhav, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that these projects aim to promote medicinal plant cultivation, boost research, and strengthen the region's traditional medicine ecosystem.

The Government Unani Medical College, Ganderbal, Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora, and Government College of Education, Jammu, have been selected for this initiative.

Between 2021-22 and 2024-25, the Union Territory (UT) of J&K received rupees 7.42 crore for herbal garden projects. The funding has shown an upward trend over the years, indicating increased government focus on this sector.

In 2021-22, rupees 1.83 crore was allocated, followed by rupees 1.12 crore in 2022-23. The amount increased to rupees 1.48 crore in 2023-24 and reached its highest in 2024-25 at rupees 2.99 crore.

Jammu & Kashmir submitted nine proposals for herbal gardens, of which three were sanctioned, resulting in an approval rate of 33 per cent, the minister said—(KNO)





# Economic Determinism in Marriage: The Role of Hypergamy and Hypogamy in Kashmir

Aasif Ahmad Shah

Marriage is a pivotal social institution, traditionally characterised as the union of two individuals, most often of opposite sexes. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the concept and practice of marriage have experienced remarkable transformations across different cultures and regions worldwide. The legalisation of same-sex marriage in numerous countries signifies a critical expansion of the marriage definition to incorporate unions between same-sex couples, illustrating an increasing acceptance of diverse sexual orientations. This institution transcends the romantic relationship between partners; it also intertwines the lives of their respective families, significantly influencing social dynamics and fostering community ties. This interconnectedness underscores a universal principle: marriage is not only a binding agreement between partners but also encompasses their broader familial networks, thereby affecting the social fabric of the community at large.

My primary focus in this exploration is to delve into the concepts of hypergamous and hypergamous marriages, especially within the cultural and social milieu of Kashmir. We must establish clear definitions for these two distinct terms to investigate this topic thoroughly. Hypergamy refers to the practice where an individual, typically a woman, chooses to marry someone of a higher socioeconomic status. This decision is often motivated by the desire to elevate one's social standing and improve life circumstances within the community. Conversely, hypogamy involves marrying someone of lower socioeconomic status, which may result in a perceived downward shift in social standing for the marrying partner. The core difference between these two marriage types frequently resides in the intentions and motivations of those involved—whether an individual seeks to enhance their social status or marry for more personal, cultural, or emotional reasons.

Understanding these intentions becomes paramount as it illuminates the socio-economic factors and cultural norms that mould marital choices in Kashmir. It also provides insight into how these practices affect relationships and broader societal structures within the region. For example, suppose a young man aspires to marry a woman who is seen as possessing a higher socioeconomic position within society. In that case, this scenario falls into the category of a hypergamous marriage. In contrast, if he aims to unite with a woman from a lower socioeconomic background, this union is categorised as hypogamous.

In pursuing this analysis, I plan to employ deductive reasoning, drawing from various case studies to illustrate the correlations between success and divorce rates as they relate to these two marriage systems. By examining the underlying motivations and outcomes associated with hypergamy and hypogamy, I aim to provide a more profound understanding of how these marriage practices influence personal relationships and societal dynamics in Kashmir. This exploration will highlight the implications of socioeconomic status on marital stability and contribute to a broader dialogue regarding the evolving nature of marriage within the region's rich cultural tapestry.

Upon reviewing several case studies, I have deduced that when a man marries a woman of higher socioeconomic status, she often does not receive the same level of social acceptance or treatment from the man's family and relatives. For instance, if a woman possesses advanced qualifications and holds a job, this scenario can raise pointed questions about the couple's compatibility, reflecting traditional beliefs about gender roles. In the context of Kashmir, many women who contribute income do not regard this as a liability impacting family support; traditionally,

the expectation has been that the primary responsibilities for the family's survival rest with the male. Nevertheless, many women

situations tend to be particularly contentious, leading to tension and discord.

interplay of cultural expectations and religious stipulations often leads to misunderstandings and, regrettably, culminates



have made substantial socioeconomic contributions to support their families without asserting that these responsibilities should solely pertain to the male partner. Despite this, the prevailing attitude in many families continues to organise marriages under the belief that all financial liabilities rest on the male figure.

Furthermore, case studies indicate that some women over the age of 35 exhibit a greater willingness to marry men who may not align with them in terms of socioeconomic status, prioritising the establishment of marital ties over financial considerations. Many of these women report leading relatively fulfilling lives, although a subset may experience feelings of depression. This emotional complexity can arise when men feel overwhelmed or insecure due to the perceived financial superiority of their spouses. This dynamic may prompt men to adopt more conservative, traditionally masculine attitudes driven by the perception of their subordination regarding financial contributions. In conservative enclaves of Kashmir, the more progressive mindset exhibited by these women can be viewed unfavourably, often resulting in judgment regarding a man's masculinity and social standing. This ongoing tension between traditional expectations and the modern realities of marriage invites more profound reflection on the changing cultural landscape in Kashmir and the evolving roles of both men and women within it.

In various case studies examining marital dynamics, it has become apparent that issues often arise between couples after marriage, despite their initial compatibility during the pre-marital phase. This phenomenon is particularly notable within Kashmiri families, where traditional values and economic considerations significantly influence marital relationships. A typical scenario occurs when a woman pursues higher education and secures a job with a salary more significant than her husband's. Such

Many women in these communities express concerns that if the husband earns more than is necessary for the family's needs, he may harbor thoughts of marrying additional wives. While this practice is permitted under Islamic law, its acceptance is challenged by the socio-cultural norms prevalent in Kashmir, which overwhelmingly frown upon polygamy. ..

Many women in these communities express concerns that if the husband earns more than is necessary for the family's needs, he may harbor thoughts of marrying additional wives. While this practice is permitted under Islamic law, its acceptance is challenged by the socio-cultural norms prevalent in Kashmir, which overwhelmingly frown upon polygamy. The intricate

in divorce for many couples.

The prevailing sentiment in Kashmiri society tends to favour marriages where the husband holds a higher socio-economic status than the wife. Traditionally, families resist unions where the bride is more economically stable than the groom, which is perceived to undermine traditional masculinity and male authority within the home. This societal expectation creates significant pressure on men, as it is deemed inappropriate for them to rely on their wives' earnings to support their families. Similarly, it places a heavy burden on women, who often find their choices and aspirations constrained by these societal expectations, evoking a sense of the weight of these expectations in the audience.

The marriage system in Kashmir is heavily influenced by economic determinism, where financial stability and social status play critical roles in forming marital bonds. This state of affairs is compounded by deeply rooted beliefs that a man's worth is intrinsically linked to his ability to provide for his family. As I write this article, I aim to shed light on these complex issues and offer logical reasoning for the rising divorce rates in the region. My research will delve deeper into understanding the causes behind unhappy marriages, mainly through the lens of hypergamous and hypergamous marriage patterns within Kashmiri society. The urgency and importance of further research on marital challenges is underscored, fostering a sense of the need for continued academic exploration in the audience.

This article serves as a preliminary exploration, drawing from an array of case studies while also acknowledging its incomplete nature. It lays the groundwork for further research into the intricate dynamics of marital relationships in Kashmir, seeking to illuminate the factors that contribute to both the challenges and the context in which divorces occur.

## KUMBH: The Scientific Form of Creation and Destruction



By Amit Tyagi

The word Kumbh means Kalash (sacred pot), which symbolizes infinity and emptiness. Infinity is eternal, and the foundation of creation lies in particles. Everything in existence—whether solid, liquid, or gas—is composed of particles. A particle itself is made up of multiple molecules. In recent times, modern science has discovered the "God particle," known as the Higgs boson, through an experiment conducted in a 27-kilometer-long tunnel. However, thousands of years ago, the Vedas had already described a similar concept in the form of the Brahma particle.

The Nasadiya Sukta, found in the oldest Veda, the Rigveda, explores ancient human curiosity about the origins of the universe. It states that before creation, there was nothing—neither sky, earth, nor water. The verse compares Brahma to Hiranyagarbha (the golden womb) and explains that before creation, only Brahma existed, and everything emerged from him. Following the Vedas and Upanishads, the Puranas further elaborate on the cyclical nature of time, detailing the beginning and end of different Yugas (ages). According to the Puranas, one day of Brahma is equivalent to 4.32 billion years, which constitutes a Mahayuga

(great age) consisting of four Yugas. At the end of each Mahayuga, a cosmic deluge occurs, erasing civilizations and knowledge, paving the way for a new cycle of creation.

The concepts of creation and destruction are fundamental to current scientific theories regarding the origin of the Earth. The Earth's formation and transformation, including the development of continents, oceans, mountains, and plains, involve continuous cycles of creation and destruction. Over the past 150 years, modern science has traced the Earth's early formation to a massive landmass known as Pangaea and an oceanic expanse called Panthalassa. Due to natural geological forces, Pangaea experienced stress, tension, and contraction, eventually breaking apart and forming two major landmasses: Gondwanaland in the south and Angaraland in the north. Through gradual shifts, the present-day continents, oceans, rivers, and lakes emerged. Subsequent natural processes led to the formation of essential resources such as water, air, vegetation, minerals, and energy, sustaining life. Modern science acknowledges this as a gradual evolutionary process.

### The Indian Knowledge Tradition

In Indian philosophical and spiritual traditions, the dual forces of creation and destruction are often represented as divine and demonic energies. This cosmic struggle is metaphorically described as Samudra Manthan (churning of the ocean). According to this legend, the great churning at the depths of the ocean (Panthalassa

in scientific terms) produced the Amrit Kalash (nectar of immortality), which sustains life. Thus, in Indian tradition, the Kalash is regarded as a source of creation and is an integral part of every sacred ritual.

The battle between divine and demonic



forces for the Amrit Kalash signifies the balance of opposing energies in the universe. From a scientific perspective, the universe exists within this perpetual interplay of creation and destruction. This cosmic struggle is commemorated through the Kumbh Mahotsav (Kumbh festival). The act of bathing in the sacred confluence of the Ganges during the Kumbh Mela has a strong scientific basis. The major bathing dates align with specific planetary alignments, particularly the positions of the Sun, Earth, and other celestial bodies. The festival begins with Snan Yoga on Makar Sankranti, marking the Sun's northward movement (Uttarayan).

### The Scientific Significance of Kumbh

The Kumbh Mela, held every 12 years, is directly connected to the movement of celestial bodies. According to mythology, it took 12 days for the gods to transport the Amrit Kalash to

heaven. Since one divine day is equivalent to one human year, the cycle of the Kumbh aligns with this celestial timeframe. Einstein's theory of relativity supports this concept, emphasizing the variation of time with different frames of reference.

Ancient texts mention that the Sun, Moon, and Saturn played key roles in protecting the Amrit Kalash. Scientifically, the occurrence of the Kumbh is determined by the relative positions of these celestial bodies. The four main Kumbh Mela locations—Prayagraj, Haridwar, Nashik, and Ujjain—are chosen based on these astronomical calculations.

Scientific studies suggest that water is highly responsive to atmospheric vibrations, cosmic

energy, and local environmental conditions. Since the human body is composed of approximately 70% water, these natural vibrations influence our overall well-being. Ancient Indian sages had profound knowledge of liquid crystals and their electromagnetic properties. At Kumbh Mela sites, the Ganges water contains biologically active substances that exhibit liquid crystalline properties, enabling it to reflect specific wavelengths of light.

Moreover, the Ganges possesses remarkable self-purifying abilities. The presence of bacteriophages prevents harmful bacteria like E. coli from thriving in its waters. Minerals such as sulfur and phosphorus, naturally found in the river, have the ability to absorb atmospheric oxygen, keeping the water fresh for extended periods. This scientific phenomenon supports the belief that bathing in the Ganges during Kumbh enhances physical and spiritual well-being. The alignment of the Sun, Jupiter, and Moon during the Kumbh period creates positive magnetic effects, further contributing to overall health.

### Conclusion

The Kumbh Mela is not merely a religious festival but a phenomenon deeply rooted in scientific principles. The alignment of celestial bodies, the impact of cosmic energy on water, and the self-purifying properties of the Ganges all contribute to its significance. Ancient Indian wisdom, as recorded in the Vedas and Puranas, aligns closely with modern scientific discoveries, reinforcing the idea that the cycles of creation and destruction are fundamental to the universe.



# Javed Rana reviews implementation of JJM in Budgam

**JAMMU:** Jal Shakti Minister, Javed Ahmed Rana, today reviewed the progress on works being executed under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) n Budgam during an online meeting held here in this regard. Present in the meeting were Legislators, Ali Muhammad Dar, Shafi Ahmed Wani and Saif Ud Din Bhat besides other concerned. Addressing the meeting, Javed Rana impressed upon all the officers of Jal Shakti Department to expedite the execution of works under JJM and work in unison for smooth implementation of the ambitious mission in Budgam. The Minister reviewed the status of under construction Water Supply Schemes, DPRs, tendering, work allotments of all JJM works and stressed on speedy work completion of all ongoing JJM projects to ensure adequate potable drinking water supply to all households.



He stressed upon the officers to gear up the execution of works

without further delay so that the people are facilitated with the piped drinking water. He directed all concerned officials to address any bottlenecks promptly ensuring expeditious completion of ongoing projects. Javed Rana directed the officials to prepare Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) in consultation with local legislators. He said that being elected representatives of the area, MLAs have a mass reach and officials can take their help in ensuring that each eligible beneficiary is covered under the government schemes. The Minister said that taking local MLAs into confidence while formulating and implementing the government schemes in the district provides feedback about the ground realities, enabling the government to formulate policies that effectively address the public needs.

## Mission Director reviews implementation of Poshan schemes in Jammu District

**JAMMU:** Mission Director, Mission Poshan J&K Kishori Lal Sharma today chaired a review meeting of District Jammu, focusing on the implementation of Mission Poshan schemes. The meeting was attended by District Programme Officer Pankaj Kumar Anand, all the CDPOs and Supervisors of Poshan Projects of District Jammu. At the outset, the District Programme Officer (DPO) gave a detailed presentation on use of Poshan Tracker for effective nutrition services, benefits provided to pregnant and lactating mothers under PMMVY scheme, benefits provided under Ladli Beti scheme, Provision of Creches, Bal Vidhyalas, Status of Expenditure, Recruitment of Sanginis and Sahayikas etc.

The Mission Director emphasized the need for enhanced efficiency in the distribution of nutrition services, ensuring that benefits reach the most vulnerable sections of society, particularly pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children below six year age. He asked for giving special attention to streamlining supply chains, improving data monitoring systems, and strengthening interdepartmental coordination to achieve the Mission goals effectively. The MD impressed upon all the CDPOs to enhance the registration of beneficiaries under PMMVY, clear all the pending CAS cases, enhance the registration of left out children from 0-6 years, maximize the registration of beneficiaries under Ladli Beti conduct frequent visits to Anganwadi Centres and ensure timely utilization of funds under all the Schemes. The review meeting concluded with a commitment to accelerating efforts towards reinforcing the vision of Mission POSHAN.



## MLA Sham Lal Sharma encourages youth to avail KVIB's lucrative schemes for employment generation

**JAMMU:** Member Legislative Assembly, Jammu North Sham Lal Sharma today presided over an Awareness Camp held at Mishriwala Jammu organised by J&K Khadi and Village Industries Board. Speaking on the occasion, Sham Lal Sharma stated that promoting entrepreneurship and skill development, especially among women and marginal sections of the society, is a key focus of the government schemes. While lauding the role of J&K KVIB in employment generation, he underscored the need for conducting more awareness/sensitization campaigns to disseminate the information about the employment generation schemes



and programmes among the local communities. He added that promotion of employment generation schemes would help in reducing unemployment

## Satish Sharma addresses mammoth gathering at Khour; participates in Guru Ravi Das Jayanti

Reaffirms govt's commitment in resolving people's grievances

**JAMMU:** Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology and Information Technology, Satish Sharma, today conducted an extensive tour of Khour and addressed a mammoth gathering there. The event witnessed a significant turnout of people from various walks of life, highlighting issues ranging from infrastructure development to basic amenities. Satish Sharma attentively heard the concerns of the attendees and assured them that the issues and concerns raised by them would be taken up with the concerned authorities and addressed promptly. While addressing the people, the Minister said that he will work with utmost zeal and vigour to bring enhanced development and prosperity in the region. He sought public cooperation in realising the set development targets. While emphasising the unwavering commitment of the government towards addressing the pressing issues faced by the common people, the Minister



said under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, we are dedicated to deliver effective governance and ensuring that public grievances are addressed on priority. The Minister asked the officers of the line departments to put in their sincere efforts in rendering prompt services to the people. He instructed them to work in synergy so that people don't face any kind of inconvenience. Earlier, Satish Sharma participated in Shobha yatra at Akhnoor organised in connection with 684th Prakash Utsav of Shri Guru Ravi Das's Jayanti. The Minister, on the occasion, prayed for peace and prosperity for mankind and Jammu and Kashmir in particular.

## Deputy Commissioner Poonch reviews progress of NABARD-RIDF projects

**POONCH:** Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal, today chaired a meeting to review the physical and financial progress of the NABARD-RIDF initiatives in the district. The meeting focused on appraisal of infrastructure improvements in underserved areas, emphasizing the importance of timely and quality construction. The Deputy Commissioner reviewed progress of work on roads, issuing strict instructions to the Executing department regarding adherence to construction standards and timeline, stating that any negligence would not be tolerated. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Engineers to compile and submit a list of pending dispute cases from respective divisions to his office promptly. He also instructed Sub Divisional Magistrates to conduct on-site visits to facilitate dispute resolutions. SDM Mendhar and SDM Surankote participated virtually, providing detailed updates on the ongoing works and also briefed the dispute cases in their respective divisions.

## Deputy Chief Minister joins 108th birthday celebration of Swami Guru Giri Ji Maharaj



**NOWSHERA:** Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today joined the devotees and followers in celebrating the 108th birth anniversary of Swami Guru Giri Ji Maharaj at Nowshera. The event was marked by spiritual fervor, prayers and discourses highlighting the teachings and contributions of the revered saint. On the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister paid rich tributes to Swami Guru Giri Ji Maharaj, emphasising his role in spreading the message of peace, harmony and selfless services. "Swami Guru Giri Ji Maharaj dedicated his life to the welfare of society, promoting spiritual enlightenment and humanitarian values. His teachings continue to inspire generations," he said. The celebration witnessed the participation of religious scholars, devotees, and local dignitaries. Bhajans and kirtans were performed and special prayers were offered for communal harmony and prosperity. The Deputy Chief Minister also lauded the contributions of the saint in fostering social unity and urged the people to follow his path of righteousness and service to humanity.

## KVK Pulwama and SKUAST-K Distribute Quality Potato Seeds in Tribal Area Machihama Zarihar



Mushtaq ul Islam

**Pulwama:** In a significant step towards empowering tribal farmers and boosting potato production, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)/Extension Training Centre (ETC) Pulwama, in collaboration with the Division of Vegetable Science, SKUAST-Kashmir, organized an Awareness and Seed Distribution Program in Machihama Zarihar under the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) of AICRP (Potato). During the event, quality potato seeds and other essential agricultural inputs were distributed among 100 tribal farmers. Experts from SKUAST-K provided valuable insights into modern potato cultivation practices, with a special focus on high-yield varieties and organic farming techniques. Dr. Syed Faheema Mushtaq, Principal Investigator of the project, emphasized the potential of potato seed production as a lucrative opportunity for farmers. She encouraged growers to adopt high-yield varieties for better income generation. Dr. Syed Shujat Hussain highlighted the importance of organic potato cultivation and the role of organic inputs in improving soil health and sustainability. Dr. Javeed Ahmad Mugloo, Head of KVK Pulwama, gave an overview of potato cultivation in the temperate conditions of Kashmir, particularly in the upper reaches of Pulwama. He also underlined the crucial role of KVK in transferring modern agricultural technologies to farmers' doorsteps. The program concluded successfully with a vote of thanks by Dr. Khursheed Hussain, Co-Principal Investigator of the project. The initiative was well-received by the local farming community, marking a step towards enhancing productivity and self-sufficiency in potato farming. Additionally, the organizers distributed packet lunches among the participants, ensuring a warm and hospitable conclusion to the event.

## ACS reviews educational scenario of Kashmir division

Emphasis adoption of moral, quality education, innovative methods

**SRINAGAR:** Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Education, Shantmanu, today chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review the educational scenario of Kashmir division. While reviewing the steps being taken, the ACS directed the CEOs and ZEOs to ensure that in the coming session, the respective heads in all schools of the valley take extra steps to impart moral education to the children. He said that when we talk about quality education, we should give special attention to the mother tongue along with imparting moral education to the children. Shantmanu emphasized that the current time is an era of Artificial Intelligence (AI), so we cannot imagine quality education unless we provide education to children by adopting innovative methods and innovative tools. The ACS also emphasised that we cannot enhance the personal development of children unless we remove learning gaps through a friendly environment in schools, enhance children's communication skills and strengthen their confidence. Shantmanu directed the officers and school heads to adopt these suggestions at the ground level to see a new change in the education scenario. Earlier, Director School Education Kashmir, Dr. G.N. Itoo, while presenting the details of the current educational scenario in the valley, said that the department has prepared a roadmap for providing effective education to the children for the coming session. The meeting was attended by Director School Education Kashmir, Chief Educational Officers of Kashmir Division and other concerned.



## Divisional Commissioner reviews reparations for 5th Khelo India winter games

Directs strengthening interdepartmental coordination

**SRINAGAR:** Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Friday convened a meeting of officers to review overall preparation for the successful conduct of 5th Edition of Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) to be held at Gulmarg later this month. The mega event of national winter games phase 2nd of KIWG shall commence at winter wonderland Gulmarg from February 22 and shall conclude on February 25. Over one thousand athletes, coaches & officials will participate in the event of national importance. Deputy Commissioner, Budgam, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Director Urban Local Bodies, MD JKTD, Director Health Services Kashmir, CEO Gulmarg Development Authority, SSP Budgam, SSP Baramulla, SSP Traffic, Secretary J&K Sports Council, officers from various departments including SMC, PHE, KPDCL, R&B, MED, Transport, Airport Authority, Cable Car Corporation, Information, Tourism, H&H, NHIDCL, SDRF, CISF, HAWS and other essential



departments attended the meeting. While chairing the meeting, Div Com reviewed multitude of arrangements & preparations including arrival of participants at Srinagar Airport, transportation of participants, accommodation facilities, essential services including electricity, drinking water, sanitation, Mobile Network, critical health services besides effective coordination among all departments. Addressing the meeting, Div Com emphasized on close coordination & synergy among all the departments and the appointment of Nodal Officers for different roles, assignments and departments. He instructed

effective communication among the stakeholders departments & dissemination of relevant information & directed for strengthening of interdepartmental coordination. Earlier, Secretary J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gull presented a detailed PowerPoint Presentation to inform the meeting regarding comprehensive strategy for successful conduct of KIWG. PPT encompassed all the aspects & nitty-gritty of event including number of participants, officials, supporting staff, sports events, cultural events, accommodation, transportation, promotional activities and other aspects of the game.

## Sugamya Yatra 2025 successfully conducted across J&K

**JAMMU/ SRINAGAR:** Sugamya Yatra 2025, a landmark initiative to promote accessibility and inclusion for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), was successfully held today across all districts of Jammu & Kashmir. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of thousands of men, women and children, both with and without disabilities, demonstrating a collective commitment towards building an accessible and inclusive society. The Yatra was spearheaded by the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Social Welfare Department, in collaboration with all District Level Committees on Disability, headed by respective Deputy Commissioners (DCs) and actively supported by the District Social Welfare Units. The primary objective of Sugamya Yatra 2025 was to raise mass awareness about accessibility challenges faced by Persons with Disabilities and to sensitize stakeholders about their responsibilities under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016. The Yatra focused on

sensitising the public and authorities about accessibility rights and obligations, visiting key public places, including government offices, educational institutions, healthcare centers



and tourist spots to assess accessibility, encouraging use of digital tools like the Yes to Access mobile app for real-time data collection and promoting a constructive and collaborative approach towards improving accessibility. The event was conducted in a peaceful and inclusive manner, ensuring constructive engagement with local authorities and stakeholders. The participants were encouraged to provide feedback to concerned officials to foster improvements

in accessibility across public infrastructure. The Deputy Commissioners across all districts played a crucial role in coordinating the Yatra, ensuring its smooth execution

## DC Shopian takes review Good Governance Index of District, calls for improving governance indices

**SHOPIAN:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a meeting of concerned officers of line departments to review the district's progress and performance of indicators under District Good Governance Index here today. The review focused on evaluating current standings and strategizing improvements in governance metrics. The Good Governance Index, developed by the UT Government with the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), assesses the impact of various government interventions at district level and provides futuristic roadmap for improving district level governance and service delivery.



The Deputy Commissioner took detailed sector wise appraisal

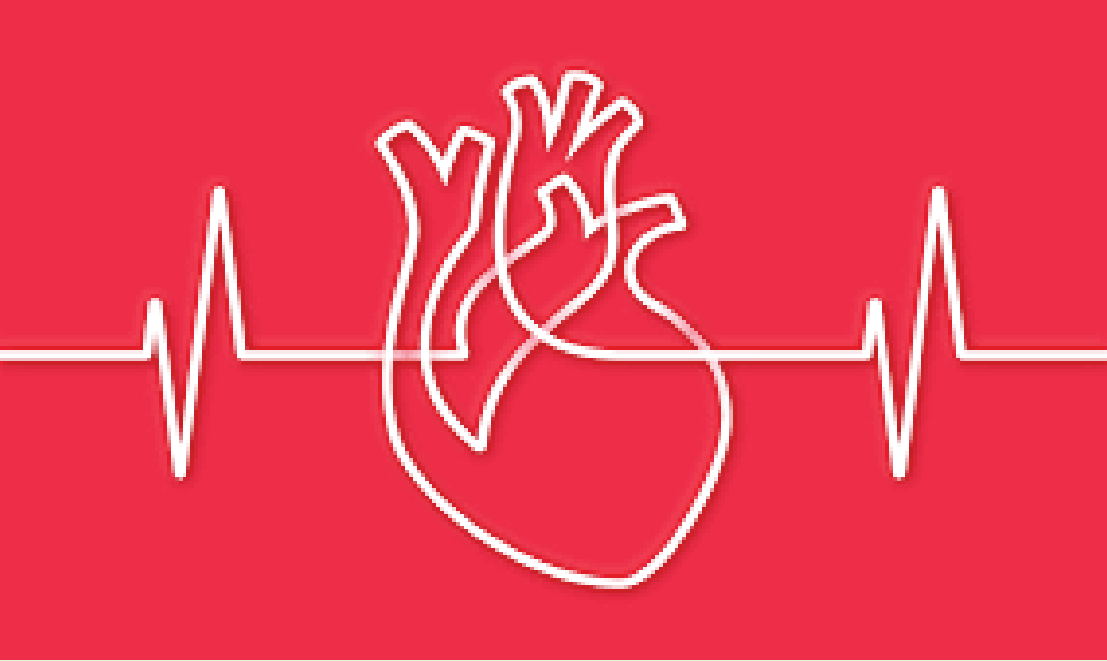
of performance from all the departments till date. DC impressed upon all district heads to improve the developmental parameters during the ensuing year by working through effective coordination with a targeted approach. The meeting was attended by ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone, ACD, LDM, DFO, CAO, DPO, Tehsildars, BDOs and other district officers.



# Unexpected signs of silent heart attack

### Signs of silent heart attack

In the movies, heart attacks always happen in the most dramatic fashion, with the patient crushing under severe pain in their chest, at the site of their heart. But in reality, a heart attack could happen with not-so-evident signs. This makes it all the more risky,



for people may not be able to identify the deadly condition, and dismiss it as something less urgent or serious.

There are certain tell-tale signs of this silent heart attack, which can especially happen in the morning. Knowing these and paying attention to them if they happen is essential for immediate treatment. Here are some of these signs in detail:

### Waking up in a cold sweat

If your arteries are clogged, your heart will have to work harder with more pressure to push the blood throughout your body. When such extra exertion happens, your body may sweat more to keep your body temperature down. In case you experience cold sweats or clammy skin upon waking up in the morning or in the middle of the night, you should consult your doctor.

### Feeling nauseated

You may also experience mild indigestion and other gastrointestinal problems before having a heart attack. It is important to not take these for granted by popping antacids, and seek medical attention. Older people, who are typically more prone to digestive issues, are more likely to dismiss these signs of heart attack as heartburn or any other food-related problem.

### Vomiting

Nausea may also be accompanied by stomach pain. Some people may even experience vomiting. When you vomit, the contents of your stomach are forced up through the food pipe and out of the mouth. Vomiting is not healthy and you should see your doctor.

People may often dismiss these signs as symptoms of flu. However, even if similar, pay attention to your body and you may feel that this does not feel flu-like as before.

Study says 150 minute of workout per week can lower risk of death; know details

### A large scale study has revealed interesting facts

An extensive study in which more than 116,000 people had participated and were studied for over 30 years has found that exercising for even 150 minutes a week can lower the risk of death by a large extent.

The participants were from the Nurses' Health Study and Health Professionals Follow-up Study (1988–2018). They were asked to answer a questionnaire with detailed self reports of physical activity.

The research study titled "Long-Term Leisure-Time Physical Activity Intensity and All-Cause and Cause-Specific Mortality: A Prospective Cohort of US Adults"

adults who exercised 2X to 4X the recommended amount might lower their mortality risk by as much as 31%," the American Heart Association (AHA) has captioned a social media post on the study and the importance of physical activity.

### 32% deaths worldwide happen due to heart issues

One of the leading causes of deaths in the world, heart diseases claim close to 18 million lives annually. Most of the deaths associated with heart diseases are due to heart attacks and strokes.

Heart diseases also account for premature deaths. The World Health Organisation (WHO) says, one third of these deaths occur prematurely in people under 70 years of age.

Out of the 17 million premature deaths (under the age of 70) due to noncommunicable diseases in 2019, 38% were caused by heart diseases.

In the latest report on top causes of death worldwide, the WHO had said that heart diseases were the number one killer among all non-communicable diseases.

### What do other research studies say on the importance of exercise on heart health?

This is not the first time a study has talked about the effect of physical activity on heart health; though it might be one of the first studies done on such a massive scale and over a longer duration.

As per a 2010 study: More activity is associated with a lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease when compared to less physical activity. Although there may be a threshold over which activity levels convey greater risk, only those who are totally sedentary (i.e., "weekend warriors") or who have pre-existing

### What did the researchers find out?



The researchers found that physical activity, even in moderate duration, reduced the risk of all cause deaths.

The study saw a dip in mortality risk in those people who were engaged in physical activities 150-599 minutes per week. "Participants reporting 2 to 4 times above the recommended minimum of long-term leisure-time activity (150-299 minutes per week) or moderate activity (300-599 minutes per week), had 2 to 4% and 3 to 13% additional lower mortality," says a health report.

"The nearly maximum association with lower mortality was achieved by performing ≈150 to 300 min/wk of long-term leisure-time VPA, 300 to 600 min/wk of long-term leisure-time MPA, or an equivalent combination of both," the study found.

### What do experts say?

"When it comes to exercise, more might be better. A new study found that people who followed the recommendations for physical activity lowered their risk of dying from any cause by as much as 21%. But

health conditions are at risk for acute CV events with sudden, vigorous-intensity physical activity. "The gradual introduction of activity combined with physician evaluation prior to starting an exercise program may mitigate these risks," the study suggests.

A 2003 study published in Circulation journal of AHA stressed on the risk that a sedentary lifestyle poses on the human heart. "A sedentary lifestyle is one of the 5 major risk factors (along with high blood pressure, abnormal values for blood lipids, smoking, and obesity) for cardiovascular disease," the study said and had suggested walking, golf playing, calisthenics, gardening, cycling, swimming and climbing hills among various physical activities one should do.

### What are the risk factors?

There are several risk factors for heart diseases. Overuse of tobacco, consumption of more salt, less consumption of seasonal fruits and vegetables, no physical activity, and overdrinking of alcohol are the risk factors associated with heart disease.

"The effects of behavioural risk factors may show up in individuals as raised blood pressure, raised blood glucose, raised blood lipids, and overweight and obesity,"

warns the WHO.

Apart from this, hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol also influence heart diseases. "In addition, drug treatment of hypertension, diabetes and high blood lipids are necessary to reduce cardiovascular risk and prevent heart attacks and strokes among people with these conditions," the global health agency has said.

### Things to do

The symptoms associated with heart diseases are too subtle to be observed. Only when it poses a risk to your health, does it become visible.

However, if you have a history of heart disease running in the family you need to be extra careful about your health. Also, those who have diabetes and/or high cholesterol should also be careful about heart diseases.

Apart from these factors lifestyle habits like drinking, smoking or having sedentary life can also influence the occurrence of heart complications to a large extent.

Additionally, diet also plays a crucial role. Always try to portion your meal with an exact amount of nutrients and vitamins. Include a portion of seasonal fruits and vegetables on your food plate.



If your arteries are clogged, your heart will have to work harder with more pressure to push the blood throughout your body. When such extra exertion happens, your body may sweat more to keep your body temperature down.

In case you experience cold sweats or clammy skin upon waking up in the morning or in the middle of the night, you should consult your doctor.



## White or pink guava: Which is healthier?

Experts always suggest that seasonal fruits be added to one's diet. But, it must be noted that some fruits have many varieties, each having its own set of health benefits. One such fruit is the guava — which comes in pink and white varieties. Taking to Instagram, dietitian Shikha Kumari listed the benefits of having guava, and also the differences between the two.

Some of the health benefits of the light green, mildly sweet, and tangy fruit are:

- \*Helps to lower blood sugar levels.
- \*Boost heart health.
- \*May help relieve painful symptoms of

menstruation.

- \*Extremely good for the digestive system.
- \*Good for weight loss.
- \*May have an anti-cancer effect.
- \*Helps to boost your immunity.
- \*Is good for your skin.

Besides these benefits, guavas are also a good source of iron, calcium, and phosphorus, said Tanvi S Chiplunkar, senior dietician at Bhatia Hospital Mumbai, adding that guava is a "good source of dietary fibre" which is useful in maintaining blood sugar levels in diabetic people.

Now, let's find out which one should you pick "Pink guava has more water content, less sugar, less starch content and vitamin C, and less seed or is even seedless. On the other hand, white guava has more sugar, starch, vitamin C and more seed. The white-fleshed guava is high in antioxidants, but the red-fleshed variety has even higher," said Kumari.

She added that pink guava contains naturally occurring class of organic pigment called carotenoid, which gives carrots and tomatoes their distinct red colour. The concentration of carotenoid vary from

species to species depending upon which the colour of guavas also range from light pink to deep pink. The carotenoid content of white guava, on the other



hand, is insufficient to impart colour to its pericarp (pulp). Apart from above mentioned reason, white and pink guava also slightly vary in their taste, said Kumari.

Agreed Chiplunkar and added that ripe guava or the pink ones should be avoided if you are suffering from regular cold and cough. On the other hand, raw ones are recommended to be taken to reduce mucous formation.

Pink guavas are frequently marketed as 'super fruits' as they are high in vitamins A and C, as well as omega 3 and omega 6 poly unsaturated fatty

acids and dietary fibre. It is high in fibre and is beneficial to diabetics, said Dr Archana Batra, nutritionist, and certified diabetes educator.

What is the best way to consume them?

It is best to have vitamin C-rich fruits as a whole so that you do not leave a cut piece for a long time in the open, advised Dr Rohini Patil, nutritionist, MBBS, and CEO of Nutracy Lifestyle. "Otherwise, its vitamin C content starts to decrease," she said.

What should you keep in mind when buying guavas?

Best to buy small to medium-sized guavas such that you can eat one guava completely in one sitting, said Dr Patil.

Look for a guava that is free of blemishes, cuts, or bruises, as these can affect the flavour. "When purchasing guava, consider its quality and also know that many types of adulteration occur in guava, such as hard guava, green guava, desi guava, and so on. So, try to buy guava from a reputable store and pay attention to its quality. Use your fingers to gently squeeze the fruit to check for ripeness. You can also smell the fruit to get an idea about its sweetness," said Dr Batra.







# Cummins and Hazlewood ruled out of Champions Trophy

Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood have both been officially ruled out of the Champions Trophy. The two of them "are managing some ongoing injuries and haven't come up in time for the Champions Trophy," selection chair George Bailey said on Thursday.

Australia have until February 12 to finalise their Champions Trophy squad, and they will have to make at least four changes to the initial 15-man squad they had named on January 13. Apart from Cummins and Hazlewood, they are also without Mitchell Marsh, who is grappling with a back injury and was ruled out of the tournament on January 31, and Marcus Stoinis, who announced on Thursday that he would be retiring from ODI cricket, removing himself from the Champions Trophy squad as a result after being selected in the original 15.

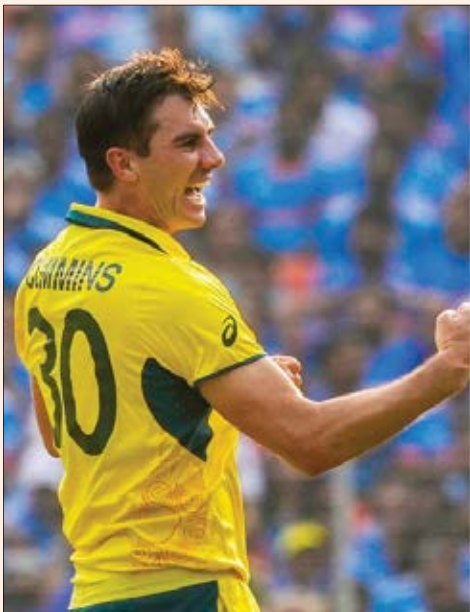
February 12 is also the day when Australia play the first of two ODIs against Sri Lanka in Colombo. They have added three quicks, Sean Abbott, Spencer Johnson and Ben Dwarshuis for those two games as well as legspinner Tanveer Sangha, spin-bowling allrounder Cooper Connolly and batter Jake Fraser-McGurk.

It's possible that two of the three quick bowlers could get into the Champions Trophy squad while Fraser-McGurk appears to be the like-for-like replacement for Marsh given he has not been bowling much recently in ODI cricket and was locked in to bat at No. 3. Connolly could be the replacement for Stoinis but there is now only one seam-bowling allrounder, Aaron Hardie, left in the current

squad. Test allrounder Beau Webster has not been included among the additions to the Sri

IPL ahead of the World Test Championship final against South Africa at Lord's in June

"Steve Smith and Travis Head are the two that we've been having conversations with



while we've been building out that Champions Trophy team along with Pat back home," McDonald said.

"They'll be the two that we look at for that leadership post. They're the two obvious ones. Steve has done a great job here in the [first] Test match. He's done some good work in one-day international cricket across the journey as well. So it's between those two."

Cummins skipped the Sri Lanka Tests to be at home for the birth of his second child, but he has also been nursing the ankle issue that had flared up after a heavy workload in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India. Hazlewood is understood to be dealing with a hip issue after recovering from the side and calf injuries that made him miss three of the five Tests against India and the Test tour of Sri Lanka.

Lanka ODI squad.

"While disappointing, it does present a great opportunity for other players to perform for Australia in a world event," Bailey said.

Cricket Australia said Cummins and Hazlewood would begin an "extended period of rehabilitation". They are missing the ongoing Test series in Sri Lanka too. Both have IPL contracts with Cummins set to lead Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) again while Hazlewood is returning to Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB). Whether they can play any part in the

remains to be seen.

Australia are likely to pick between Steven Smith and Travis Head to lead Australia in the two Sri Lanka ODIs and then the Champions Trophy.

Prior to Thursday's confirmation, Australia coach Andrew McDonald told SEN radio on Wednesday that Cummins was "heavily unlikely" to make the Champions Trophy which meant Australia would need a new captain with the ODI vice-captain Marsh also unavailable.

The selectors might also have a challenge cobbling an XI together for the first ODI against Sri Lanka given that, apart from the missing players, there is only one travel day scheduled between the fifth day of the second Test and the first ODI, with ODI squad members Head, Smith, Marnus Labuschagne, Josh Inglis, Alex Carey and Mitchell Starc all playing the Test match that is currently on in Galle. Starc would seem very unlikely to play in those two ODIs.

**Cummins skipped the Sri Lanka Tests to be at home for the birth of his second child, but he has also been nursing the ankle issue that had flared up after a heavy workload in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India.** Hazlewood is understood to be dealing with a hip issue after recovering from the side and calf injuries that made him miss three of the five Tests against India and the Test tour of Sri Lanka.

## It's a catch 22 situation for out-of-form Rohit: Ashwin

**NEW DELHI:** Former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin feels it's a "catch-22 situation" for an out-of-form Rohit Sharma, and believes it's high time for the India skipper to silence his critics by letting his bat do the talking ahead of the upcoming Champions Trophy.

Rohit, who had dropped himself from the final Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia owing to poor form, scored just two runs in the first ODI against England in Nagpur on his return to international cricket after a month.

"This is not easy. If you look at it from Rohit's point of view, then obviously, it is frustrating for him. He wants to concentrate on the series. He thinks that I've done well in this format and I'd like to continue.

"I'm going into the tournament with a lot of confidence on the back of the One-Day tournaments that I've played," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel.

"But people will ask questions. The ones who are watching will obviously ask. It's a catch-22 situation. You can't stop these questions. When will they stop? When he performs," he added.

Rohit has scored just 166 runs in his last 16 innings across formats.

"But as a cricketer, I understand what Rohit is going through. It's not easy. I pray that he does well and scores a century in this series," Ashwin said.

India won the first ODI against England in Nagpur by four wickets on Thursday. The second ODI will be played in Cuttack on Sunday.

Ashwin, meanwhile, was full of praise for Ravindra Jadeja, insisting that the all-rounder was "more gifted" than him.

In the first ODI, Jadeja returned with impressive figures of 3 for 26 from his nine overs and later remained unbeaten on 12 off 10 balls while chasing the target.

"Our media fails to appreciate when a player does well. Whenever we lose, everyone becomes a villain. He dismissed Joe Root. Jadeja goes always under the radar. He is a 'Jackpot Jango'."



# Khyber Cement Ka Zarra Zarra Dil Se Bana Hai

