

# Kashmir Convener



Anti-Dalit mindset:  
Rahul slams BJP  
after leader 'purifies'  
Rajasthan temple

P/02



SC Raps Centre Over  
Delay In Cashless Scheme  
For Accident Victims,  
Summons Transport Secy

P/02



No divide and rule  
policy to be allowed in  
Bengal: Mamata Banerjee  
assures minorities

P/02

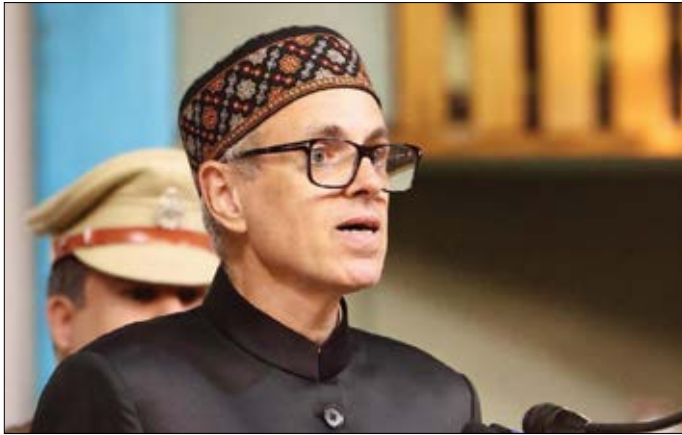
## No J&K Govt Ever Tolerated Terrorism: CM Omar Abdullah

KC News Network

**JAMMU:** Asserting that no government ever tolerated terrorism, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday reiterated that the people's cooperation is a must to eliminate militancy which was at its lowest ebb in 2014.

He also said there will be no shortfall in the efforts for restoration of promised statehood to the Union Territory. "I hope this process will start soon." Talking to reporters at the end of a 21-day-long budget session here, he said every past government has had "zero tolerance" against terrorism.

"Which government has tolerated terrorism? At least, the government (NC-Congress) which I was part of never tolerated terrorism. I believe we should



take J&K where I (as chief minister) had left it in 2014 (after completion of the tenure). The whole of J&K was almost freed of terrorism. Except two-and-a-half

districts, the militancy was nowhere to be seen in Kashmir," Abdullah said.

He said the government, during his previous term, had also zero tolerance against terrorism at that time.

He was responding to a question about Home Minister Amit Shah's recent visit to Jammu and Kashmir and his direction to the security officers to follow zero tolerance for terrorism.

"Today, we also want that there is no militancy and I am repeating it that without taking the people along, you cannot end militancy. In this fight (against terrorism), we have to take the people along. This is how they are going to succeed in their mission. I see the role of elected representatives and they will

>>>SEE ON P-7

## Budget Session Concludes

KC News Network

**JAMMU:** Speaker of the J&K Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather today adjourned the House sine die.

The 21 days assembly session commenced on 3rd March with LG's address and culminated today on 9th April 2025 afternoon.

The Speaker informed the house that during the Session, 1355 questions were received; 154 main questions were taken up during this session while their 353 supplementaries were answered. He also informed the house that 1738 Cut Motions were also received and 1731 were taken up for the discussions.

The Speaker further informed the house that three Government Bills were received and subsequently passed by the house. He added that 33 Private



Members Bills were also received and listed for the business.

The Speaker further informed the house that 78 Calling Attention Motions were received by the Assembly Secretariat, out of which 23 were listed for the business and 34 were disallowed.

The speaker said that the 21 day Budget session was second longest in the country during

2025. He also informed that 109 resolutions were received during the session, out of which 85 were admitted and 14 were listed for business. The Speaker further said that more than 39 hours were utilized during the Budget Session. Speaker thanked all the Assembly Members for

>>>SEE ON P-7

## NC will challenge Waqf Amendment Act, 2025 in SC

KC News Network

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq Wednesday said that Waqf Amendment Act 2025 is significantly intruding into the



religious affairs of the Muslim community and that the party will file a petition before the Honorable Supreme Court of India to challenge the Act.

In a statement released from the party headquarters Nawa-e-Subha, Tanvir said the party

believes this Act constitutes an alarming interference in the religious affairs of the Muslim community.

"It violates fundamental constitutional protections—Articles 14, 15, 21, 25, 26, 29, and 300A—and represents a direct

attack on the religious freedom, equality, and property rights of Muslims across the country. Acting on the instructions of our party president, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference has decided to file a writ petition

before the Supreme Court of India, challenging the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025," he added.

Sadiq further said that the last three days in the Assembly have been painful, and deeply unfortunate. "The Assembly was meant to be a platform where elected representatives can voice the concerns of the people and engage in meaningful debate. That is the very essence of a democracy. We came to reflect the deep anxieties of the Muslim majority, and to seek a fair discussion on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, just as legislatures in other states across the country have allowed. Our purpose was never to undermine the authority of the Parliament. It was to put on record the flaws of a Bill that strikes at the heart of religious autonomy. But the Assembly, which should have been a space for that conversation

>>>SEE ON P-7

## NC wants to protect relatives, workers who encroached Waqf land: LoP Sharma

KC NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU :** Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and senior Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) leader,

Sunil Sharma on Wednesday alleged that the National Conference (NC) leaders are trying to shield their relatives and workers, who have encroached on the Waqf land.

Talking to reporters here, Sharma as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "NC is least concerned

>>>SEE ON P-7

## Speaker constitutes House Committee to probe alleged irregularities in JJM

KC News Network



**SRINAGAR:** Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Abdul Rahim Rather on Wednesday constituted House Committee to probe alleged irregularities in Jal Jeevan Mission in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

"In view of the pressing demand of the Hon'ble Members on the floor of the House for constitution of a House Committee to probe into the alleged irregularities in implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Advocate Abdul Rahim Rather, Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, do hereby constitute a House Committee," the Speaker said in an order.

While Justice (ret'd) Hasnain Masoodi will head the committee as its chairman, the members include,

>>>SEE ON P-7

## J&K Govt sponsored Startups shine at Startup Mahakumbh 2025; wins Rs 25 Lakh cash award

KC News Network

**JAMMU:** In a significant development, two startups M/s Genetico Private Limited and M/s GR8 Private Limited from J&K have emerged victorious at the prestigious Startup Mahakumbh 2025, clinching top honors in the Startup MahaRathi Challenge.

M/s Genetico Private Limited received an award of Rs. 20 lakh under the HealthTech and BioTech sector, while M/s GR8 Sports Private Limited won Rs. 5 lakh under the Gaming and Sports sector, emerging as top



performers among startups from across India in their respective categories.

Pertinently, the Startup MahaRathi challenge is a flagship

initiative of the department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to organise competition

>>>SEE ON P-7

## True meaning of life lies in self-discovery: LG Sinha

KC News Network

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha attended the celebration of Navkar Mahamantra Divas at Raj Bhavan, today.

The Lieutenant Governor extended his felicitations to the citizens from different walks of life, members of Jain International Trade Organization, and numerous other organizations and senior officials who have joined together for the collective recitation of the sacred Navkar Mahamantra.

"For thousands of years, several significant 'Mantras' are guiding the path of seekers and devotees. Among them Navkar Mahamantra's aura and essence of divinity is unique," the Lieutenant Governor said.



The Lieutenant Governor observed that Navkar Mahamantra—the most revered and universal chant inspires inner transformation and fosters spiritual awakening.

>>>SEE ON P-7

## Power generation in JK increases by 44%

Riyaz Bhat

**SRINAGAR:** With the frequent rainfall and improvement in weather, the hydel power generation in Jammu and Kashmir has increased by 44 percent in a month.

Earlier, the Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department was able to generate only 84.17 percent owing to the low water level.

A top official informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the Jammu and Kashmir Power

Development Corporation (JKSPDC) recorded a peak hydel power generation of 721 Megawatts (MWs) from the local plants. "From the power plants of the Kashmir region, the department is currently able to produce 110 MWs of power and in case of power plants in Jammu, the peak generation is 611 MW," the official said.

The official further said that the department is likely to produce more power in the coming weeks keeping in view the water level and improvement in weather.

>>>SEE ON P-7

## Tulip Garden sees 4.46 lakh visitors in 15 days, surpass previous record

KC News Network

**SRINAGAR:** The Department of Floriculture, Gardens & Parks is pleased to announce that the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, Srinagar has surpassed last year's record footfall of 4,46,154



visitors—within just 15 days of the ongoing Tulip Show 2025.

As per an official communiqué issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), this remarkable achievement marks a new milestone for Asia's largest tulip garden, which currently features 1.7 million tulip bulbs across 74 vibrant varieties. With several days of the show

>>>SEE ON P-7

## BJP Protests Outside J&K Assembly Over Regularisation Of Daily Wagers

KC News Network

**JAMMU:** BJP MLAs on Wednesday held a protest dharna outside the House over the rejection of their adjournment motion to discuss the pressing issues of regularisation of daily wagers and employment opportunities for youth in Jammu and Kashmir.

As the ruckus continued for the third consecutive day by the treasury benches including the Congress and Independent members, BJP legislators led by Sham Lal Sharma drew the attention of Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather towards their adjournment motion moved by MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia. It sought a discussion on the regularisation of daily wagers and the growing unemployment problem.

When Speaker Rather rejected the adjournment motion, saying the issue must be fresh, the BJP members protested and trooped



into the well of the House. They raised slogans like "discuss daily wagers' regularisation and unemployment" and sat on a dharna.

As the Speaker adjourned the House for three hours, all BJP MLAs led by Leader of Opposition (LoP) Sunil Sharma sat on a protest dharna outside the Assembly entrance.

They shouted slogans such as "Dramabazi bandh karo, daily

wagers par discussion karo".

The BJP legislators alleged that the ruling coalition was avoiding discussions on public issues and trying to monopolise the Assembly's agenda. The session witnessed heated exchanges as both sides defended their positions.

"Today, our senior leader Balwant Singh Mankotia submitted an

>>>SEE ON P-7

## CS reviews arrangements for smooth conduct of NEET exam

KC News Network

**JAMMU:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high level meeting to take stock of preparedness for smooth and fair conduct of NEET (UG) 2025 examination across various districts of the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Education, Shantmanu; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir; Deputy Commissioners of all districts; Directors of School Education for both divisions; officials from the National Testing Agency (NTA) and senior officers from the Education Department.

The Chief Secretary emphasized the importance of seamless coordination between the civil administration and the NTA to ensure professional and transparent conduct of this prestigious national level exam. He directed all the Deputy Commissioners to personally



visit the designated exam centres and assess the on-ground requirements. He asked them to coordinate closely with the City Coordinators of the NTA to finalize the logistics and ensure availability of all essential amenities.

He further instructed both the Divisional Commissioners to put in place adequate arrangements for security and administrative oversight by deploying duty magistrates and ensuring

police presence at each centre. "The credibility of both the civil administration and Police must be upheld through efficient and professional handling of this examination," he stated.

The Chief Secretary observed that the overall arrangements will be overseen by the Additional Chief Secretary, School Education Department. He asked the divisional and district administrations

>>>SEE ON P-7



# SC Raps Centre Over Delay In Cashless Scheme For Accident Victims, Summons Transport Secy

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Wednesday rapped the Centre over the delay in formulating a cashless medical treatment scheme for motor accident victims and summoned the secretary of the Ministry of Road Transport for an explanation.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan took objection that despite its January 8 order, the Centre did not comply with it.

“The time granted has expired on March 15, 2025. This is a serious breach and violation of not only orders of this court but a violation of implementing a very beneficial legislation. We direct the secretary, ministry of road transport and highways to appear on video-conferencing and explain why the directions of this court were not complied with,” the bench said.

Only when top government officers are summoned here they take the orders of the court seriously, it added.

Additional solicitor general Vikramjeet Banerjee, appearing for the Centre, said there were “bottle necks”.

The bench, however, remarked, “This is your own legislation, people are loosing lives, because there is no facility for cashless treatment. This is for the benefit of common people. We are putting you to notice, we’ll take action under contempt. Ask your secretary to come and explain.” The official was directed by the top court to appear on April 28 for the explanation.

The bench also directed the secretary of transport department to issue instructions in writing to all district magistrates to upload the claims of hidden hit-and-run cases on the General Insurance Council (GIC) portal.

On January 8, the top court directed the Centre to formulate the scheme for the cashless medical treatment of motor accident victims in the “golden hour” period mandated under the law.



It had referred to Section 162(2) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and ordered the government to provide by March 14 the scheme which could save numerous lives with prompt medical care to accident victims. The golden hour, defined under Section

care during the critical period and said delays caused by financial concerns or procedural hurdles often cost lives.

It had underlined the statutory obligation on the Centre to frame a scheme under Section 162 for cashless treatment and said the provision sought to uphold and protect the right to life guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution.

The law therefore provides the insurance companies carrying on general insurance business in India to provide for the treatment of road accident victims, including during golden hour in accordance with the scheme made under the MV Act, it said.

It was noted despite the provision being in force since April 1, 2022, the government was yet to implement the scheme, prompting the court’s intervention.

The Centre had submitted a draft concept note outlining a proposed scheme, which included a maximum treatment cost of Rs

1.5 lakh and coverage for only seven days.

However, these limitations were criticised by counsel representing the petitioner, who argued they fell short of addressing the need for comprehensive care.

The GIC was tasked with administering hit-and-run compensation claims and developing a portal to streamline the process, it said.

The portal would enable the upload of required documents, inform states of deficiencies, and reduce delays in processing claims.

The order had said 921 claims under the hit-and-run compensation scheme remained pending as of July 31, 2024, due to document deficiencies, and asked the GIC to coordinate with claimants and address the issue.

The GIC was further instructed to expedite the development of the portal and report compliance by March 14, 2025.

## Maharashtra polls were won through ‘fraud’: Kharge

**AHMEDABAD:** Alleging that the BJP won the Maharashtra assembly polls through a “fraud” like never before, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday made a strong pitch for having elections on ballot paper.

Addressing the AICC session here, Kharge also accused the Modi government of “selling off” government assets to benefit crony capitalists and finishing democracy slowly.

“The whole world is moving from EVMs to ballot paper but we are using EVMs. This is all fraud. They ask us to prove it. You have devised such techniques that benefit the ruling party and put the opposition at a disadvantage,” Kharge said.

But the youngsters of this country will rise and “say we want ballot paper”, he said in his inaugural address at the session being held here on the banks of the Sabarmati river.

“What happened in Maharashtra. We raised the issue



everywhere, Rahul Gandhi raised the issue strongly. What kind of voter list they made... Maharashtra election was a fraud. The same thing happened in Haryana,” the Congress president said.

Kharge pointed out that the BJP won 90 per cent of the seats and said this had never happened before.

“There has never been a fraud like the one that happened in Maharashtra polls, which was aimed at destroying democracy,” Kharge charged.

“We will find out about it.

The thief always gets caught. Our lawyers and leaders are working for it. We are trying that,” he said.

Kharge said in the last 11 years, the ruling party has been attacking the Constitution.

“Constitutional institutions and principles are being attacked and we have to fight to protect them,” Kharge said.

He alleged that the government ran Parliament’s Budget session according to their whims and fancies.

“The Speaker took the Leader of Opposition’s name but did not let

him speak. This is shameful in a democracy. If you do not allow LoP to speak how will you let people to raise their voice,” Kharge said.

Instead of debating issues of the people, the government conducted debate till late night for its agenda of communal polarisation, Kharge said in an apparent reference to the debate on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill.

He pointed out that the debate on Manipur took place at 4 am and he requested that it be held the next day but the government did not agree, Kharge said and alleged that it seems the government wants to hide something.

“Democracy is being finished slowly, slowly, slowly,” Kharge alleged.

He said the opposition was not allowed to raise in Parliament the issue of imposition of tariffs by the US. He said monopoly is being established with resources being handed to a few crony capitalists.

Kharge also alleged that SC, ST and OBC reservation was being finished through privatization.

## Anti-Dalit mindset: Rahul slams BJP after leader ‘purifies’ Rajasthan temple

**AHMEDABAD:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday accused the BJP of having an “anti-Dalit mindset” after its leader sprinkled Ganga water at a Ram temple in Rajasthan’s Alwar to “purify” it following Congress’ Tikaram Jyoti’s participation in the consecration ceremony there.

He also asserted that the country will be run by the Constitution and its ideals, not by “Manusmriti” “which considers Bahujans as second class citizens”.

The Congress on Tuesday had accused the BJP of being “anti-Dalit” and demanded an apology from its top leadership after a party leader sprinkled Ganga water at a Ram temple in Alwar to “purify” it following Jyoti’s participation in the consecration ceremony there.

Referring to the incident, Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X, “Another example of BJP’s anti-Dalit and Manuvadi thinking! BJP has been continuously insulting Dalits and attacking



the Constitution.” “That is why it is important not just to respect the Constitution but also to protect it. Modi Ji, the country will be run by the Constitution and its ideals, not by Manusmriti which considers Bahujans as second class citizens,” Gandhi, who is here to attend the AICC session said.

Congress leaders, including Jyoti and former chief minister Ashok Gehlot, have termed Gyandev Ahuja’s act an insult to Dalits, but the BJP leader denied the charge.

Maintaining that there was

no caste angle to his act, Ahuja, however, defended his action, saying Congress leaders have “no moral authority” to attend such ceremonies as the party’s leadership had questioned the existence of Lord Ram and “boycotted” the consecration ceremony in Ayodhya last year.

The consecration ceremony at the Ram temple in a residential society of Alwar was held on Sunday on the occasion of Ram Navami and Jyoti was in attendance. On Monday, Ahuja said the consecration ceremony

was a “good programme”, but there were some “discrepancies”.

“I went there today and sprinkled Ganga water to purify the temple premises,” he told reporters in Alwar. “The Congress’ former president Sonia Gandhi had got affidavits submitted in court, calling Lord Ram mythical.

Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi boycotted the historic Ram temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya.

So the party leaders have no moral authority to attend such programmes,” he said.

When contacted, Ahuja told PTI that he took the step because of Congress leaders’ view and approach towards Lord Ram and not because Jyoti is a “Dalit”.

Jyoti, on the other hand, claimed that Ahuja’s act was indicative of the BJP’s mentality towards Dalits.

He claimed it was not only an attack on his faith but also an effort to promote the crime of untouchability.

## UP has been a sacred land of Jain Tirthankaras, says CM Adityanath on World Navkar Mahamantra Day



**LUCKNOW:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday highlighted the state’s deep connection with Jain heritage and called upon people to adopt the teachings of Jainism in their daily lives.

“UP has been a sacred land of Jain Tirthankaras, where the tradition of spirituality and religion was carried forward,” he said while addressing a grand event on the occasion of World Navkar Mahamantra Day at the Sangeet Natak Akademi in Gomti Nagar here.

“The state has a deep connection with Jain heritage. All of us should adopt the teachings of Jainism in our daily lives,” he added.

“Lord Rishabhdev, the first Jain Tirthankara, was born in Ayodhya. Five Tirthankaras were born in Ayodhya, and another in Kashi,” he said, underscoring the religious significance of the region.

The event was organised by the Jain International Trade Organization (JITO) with a focus on promoting peace, energy, positivity, and global welfare through the chanting of the Navkar Mantra.

He also referred to an inspiring message delivered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi via video conferencing, in which the PM outlined nine resolutions to bring the Namokar Mantra into practical life.

“These resolutions are worth adopting

by every individual,” he said.

Extending greetings on the occasion of Lord Mahavir Jayanti, CM Yogi urged people to spread the message of non-violence and compassion taught by Jainism.

Describing the Navkar Mantra as a powerful spiritual tool, he said, “This mantra is a means of liberation from physical, divine, and spiritual sufferings. When one connects with the spirit of penance, self-purification, and the welfare of the world, one not only uplifts oneself but becomes an inspiration for others as well.” He said that the lives of all 24 Jain Tirthankaras were dedicated to the welfare of humanity.

“Through their teachings and penance, they established a noble path of living, which remains relevant even today. Every Indian should draw inspiration from these ideals and incorporate them into their lives,” he said.

Hailing the event as historic, CM Yogi said this was the first time World Navkar Mahamantra Day was celebrated simultaneously across the globe, establishing Jain values on an international platform. He expressed hope that this global initiative would inspire countless people to embrace peace and harmony.

The Chief Minister extended heartfelt greetings on Mahavir Jayanti and urged everyone to imbibe the values and teachings of Jainism in their lives.

## No divide and rule policy to be allowed in Bengal: Mamata Banerjee assures minorities

**KOLKATA:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said Muslims were aggrieved because of enactment of the Waqf (Amendment) Act and assured the minority community members that she will not allow “any divide and rule policy” to persist in the state.

Addressing a programme of the Jain community here, Banerjee asserted that she would protect all minority people and their properties.

“I know you are aggrieved because of the enactment of the Waqf Act. Have faith, nothing will happen in Bengal by which one can divide and rule. You send out a message that all have to stay together,” she said.

Banerjee, also the Trinamool Congress supremo, appealed to those who provoked them to launch a political movement.

Apparently referring to



the violence over the Waqf (Amendment) Bill in Murshidabad district on Tuesday, she said, “See the situation in the bordering areas of Bangladesh. This (Waqf Bill) should have not been passed now. We have 33 per cent of minorities in Bengal. What will I do with them?”

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on April 3, and by the Rajya Sabha in the early hours of the next day

after marathon debates in both Houses of Parliament.

President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent to the Bill on April 5.

“History says that Bengal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India all were together. Partition took place later. And those are living here, it’s our job to give them protection,” she said.

Banerjee said that if people are together, they can conquer

the world.

“Some people will provoke you to assemble and launch a movement. I will appeal to all of you not to do it. Please remember when Didi (Banerjee) is here, she will protect you and your property. Let us have trust in each other,” the chief minister said.

At the Jain community programme, Banerjee said she visits places of all religions and will continue to do so.

“Even if you shoot me dead, you will not be able to separate me from (that) unity. Every religion, caste, creed... all of them pray for humanity and we love them,” she said.

Banerjee said she goes to Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Jain and Buddhist temples, gurdwara, church and Guru Ravidas temple.

“In Rajasthan, I visited Ajmer Sharif as well as Brahma Temple in Pushkar,” she said.

## India, China Moving In ‘Positive Direction’: EAM Jaishankar

**NEW DELHI:** India and China are moving towards a “positive direction” in their ties and work needs to be done to normalise the relationship, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Wednesday.

“I think we are moving in a positive direction,” he said.

India-China relations plunged to their lowest point since the 1962 war following the Galwan Valley clashes.

Following a series of diplomatic and military talks, the two sides withdrew their troops from several friction along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

In October last, the two sides firmed up a disengagement pact for Depsang and Demchok, the last two friction points in eastern Ladakh.

“It’s obviously better than the last time I was here. I think the disengagement, particularly the Depsang-Demchok was important,” he said at the News 18 Rising Bharat Summit.

In October last, the two sides firmed up a disengagement pact for Depsang and Demchok, the last two friction points in eastern Ladakh.

Days after the agreement was finalised, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held talks in Kazan and took a number of decisions to improve the ties.

Jaishankar suggested that issues on the border remained to some extent because of the force build up over a period of years.

## Indian students abroad ambassadors of country’s values, culture: LS Speaker Birla

**NEW DELHI:** Indian students studying abroad are ambassadors of the nation’s values and culture, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said on Tuesday while addressing a gathering of youngsters in Uzbekistan.

“Despite staying thousands of miles away, these students continue to be deeply rooted in Indian values and spread them in their host countries,” he said in an interaction with Indian students at the Samarkand Medical University.

“Despite staying thousands of miles away, these students continue to be deeply rooted in Indian values and spread them in their host countries,” he said in an interaction with Indian students at the Samarkand Medical University.

Birla is on a four-day visit to Uzbekistan, leading an Indian parliamentary delegation for the 150th Assembly of



Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The speaker said India cares deeply

about the welfare of Indians living in every corner of the world.



# Bandipora Admin Holds Mega Block Diwas at Ajas

■ DC Manzoor Qadri Assures Timely Redressal of Public Grievances

**BANDIPORA:** The District Administration Bandipora on Wednesday conducted mega Block Diwas at Ajas Bandipora aimed to strengthen grassroot governance.

The programme presided over by Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Manzoor Ahmad Qadri witnessed participation of District Development Council Member Hajin B Ghulam Mustafa Khan, civil society representatives, youth delegates and large public gathering.

During the programme, the Deputy Commissioner took firsthand appraisal of public grievances and developmental demands.

Delegations from Go Green Ajas, Civil Society, Tehsil Welfare Committee Ajas, Ex-BDC Chairman Nazir Ahmad, Youth Representatives, and representatives from ST community highlighted various issues including macdamization of inner links, construction of tehsil office, availability of staff in schools, approach road to NTPHC, upgradation of school infrastructure, construction of play ground and public library, effective waste management, and other issues of public importance.

Speaking on the occasion, DDC Member Hajin B, Dr. Ghulam Mustafa Khan emphasized the need for development of sports infrastructure to engage youth positively and keep them away from drugs and substance abuse. He also high-



lighted the need for ground-level implementation of the Forest Rights Act besides also raised various issues of public importance.

Responding to public issues, the Deputy Commissioner M.A.Qadri assured that all genuine demands will be addressed in a time-bound manner.

He said, that Block Diwas is a vital initiative

to ensure good governance at the doorsteps of the public and to bridge the gap between people and administration.

Regarding waste management, the Deputy Commissioner directed Tehsildar Ajas to identify land for construction of Material Recovery Facility (MRF) besides also instructed BDO Hajin to conduct awareness programmes to generate

awareness regarding proper waste segregation and disposal.

The Deputy Commissioner also instructed tehsildar to identify land for construction of the playground and Public library.

Regarding irrigation concerns, the DC directed Tehsildar Ajas and Executive Engineer I&FC to ensure removal of encroachments from irrigation canals, and assured that all issues related to irrigation for agricultural land will be resolved on priority.

Highlighting the importance of the IEC campaign against drug abuse under Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the participation of the general public, civil society members and youth in the ongoing panchayat level IEC campaign to combat drug abuse.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited the NTPHC Ajas to take firsthand appraisal of the issue concerning the approach road besides reviewing the functioning of the health facility and interacting with the staff to ensure quality healthcare delivery to the public.

Chief Planning Officer Mohammad Maqbool Lone, Tehsildar Ajas Abdul Wasee Deva, BDO Hajin Fayaz Ahmad, District Officers of various Departments and other concerned were present on the occasion.

## Court Sittings Start at Sumbal

**SUMBAL:** The Bar Association Sumbal has welcomed the initiation of court sittings by the Ad-



ditional District and Sessions Judge, Bandipora, at the Sumbal Headquarters, calling it a significant stride in improving judicial access for the people of the Sumbal Sub-Division.

In a statement, the association extended deep appreciation to the Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh for approving the move. As per the schedule, court proceedings will now be held locally three days a week—Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

The Bar also expressed special gratitude to MLA Sonawari, Hilal Akbar Lone, for his persistent advocacy and instrumental role in fulfilling this long-standing demand of the region's residents.

## Indian Army Holds Interaction with Ex-Servicemen, Veer Naris in Reasi

**Reasi:** In a heartfelt outreach initiative, the Indian Army on Tuesday organised a special interaction programme with ex-servicemen and Veer



Naris at Balmatkote in Reasi district. The event aimed at acknowledging the contributions of veterans and families of soldiers who laid down their lives in service of the nation.

A total of 22 ex-servicemen attended the event, along with local representatives including the Sarpanch and Naib Sarpanch. During the programme, Army officials briefed the participants on various welfare schemes, pension-related issues, medical facilities, and resettlement opportunities available to veterans and their families.

A medical camp was also set up at the venue, offering free health check-ups and consultations. The initiative was part of the Army's continued efforts to reach out to its veteran community, particularly in remote and far-flung areas, and to address their concerns on a priority basis.

Officials reiterated the Army's commitment to supporting its retired personnel and the families of fallen soldiers, stating that such programmes are essential to maintain strong bonds between serving soldiers and the veteran fraternity.

## Bandipora Police Organises Anti-Drug Awareness Workshop

**Bandipora:** Continuing its fight against drug abuse, Bandipora Police on Wednesday organized a one-day awareness programme titled Yodha Programme on Drug Abuse at the Conference Hall of District Police Lines (DPL), Bandipora.

An official spokesperson said the initiative was conducted under the ambit of Operation Sanjivani – a sustained campaign by Jammu and Kashmir Police to combat the rising drug menace.

The programme was chaired by DySP Headquarters Bandipora, Latief Khan, who also serves as the Nodal Officer for NCORD in the district. A total of 53 students and teachers from Government Degree Colleges of Bandipora and Sumbal participated in the event.

The primary aim of the workshop was to educate young minds, particularly college-going students, about the devastating effects of drug addiction on individuals and society. Police officials stressed the urgent need

for community-wide awareness to prevent youth from falling into the trap of substance abuse.



Speaking on the occasion, DySP Latief Khan highlighted the psychological and medical repercussions of drug use, especially among adolescents. "Narcotic drugs affect the nervous system and ruin the future of our youth. Awareness is the key

to prevention," he said.

He reiterated the Jammu and Kashmir Police's commitment to eradicating the drug menace and emphasized the importance of such awareness campaigns in engaging and empowering the youth to become active participants in the fight against drugs.

Students who attended the session appreciated the initiative taken by Bandipora Police, noting that such programmes not only inform but also inspire youth to stand against addiction and guide their peers in making health-

ier choices.

The workshop is part of a broader effort by Bandipora Police to build a drug-free society through education, community involvement, and strong enforcement under Operation Sanjivani.

## GDC B'la hosts IEC prog. under PM Internship scheme

**BARAMULLA:** In a significant step towards youth empowerment and community outreach, an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) programme was organized today at Government Degree College (GDC) Baramulla under the ambit of the Pradhan Mantri Internship scheme.

The initiative aimed to harness the potential of young students by involving them directly in awareness generation related to key government schemes and developmental programmes.

The event was organized by the District Employment and Counselling Centre (DECC) Baramulla, and was attended by Assistant Director, DECC Baramulla, Rahil Amin, who also serves as the Nodal Officer for the Pradhan Mantri Scholarship Internship scheme in the district.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of Government Degree Colleges of Baramulla, Pattan, Sopore, as well as Polytechnic College Kanispora Baramulla and Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Baramulla.

Interns actively engaged with the community through interactive sessions, informative talks, and direct interactions, disseminating vital information on entrepreneurship, skill development, self-employment opportunities, and various government welfare schemes.

Prominent dignitaries present on the occasion included Prof. Tariq Ahmad Chalkoo, Principal, Government Degree College Baramulla; Javed Ahmad, Principal, Industrial Training Institute Baramulla. Representatives of other Colleges, their presence added value to the programme and encouraged student participation.

To ensure wider outreach, pamphlets and IEC materials were distributed during the event. Q&A sessions further enriched the interaction, allowing participants to clarify doubts and better understand various schemes.

## DC Baramulla visits Baba-Gael in Uri

**BARAMULLA:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, visited the remote border village of Baba-Gael in Uri Sub-division to assess on-ground de-



velopmental issues and engaging directly with the habitants living close to the border to understand and resolve any infrastructural and service delivery challenges faced by them.

During the visit, the locals put forth several pressing issues affecting their daily lives which include frequent wild animal attacks resulting in loss of life and property, need for macadamization and upgradation of road infrastructure, construction of retaining walls in landslide-prone areas, and improvement in healthcare and education facilities.

The DC gave a patient hearing to all the concerns raised by the villagers and assured the public

that the administration is committed to the development and welfare of border residents and that all genuine issues would be addressed in a time-bound manner.

He further issued directions to the concerned departments to conduct on-ground assessments for necessary action, especially in critical areas like road connectivity and prevention of landslides. Earlier, DC visited the under-construction Water Supply Scheme at Shakot-Warikha being constructed under NABARD, with a capacity of 50,000 gallons. The concerned Executive Engineer apprised that 70 percent of the work has been completed and the scheme is expected to be completed by July 2025.

The DC was accompanied by SDM Uri, Shubhankar Pratayush Pathak and other concerned officers during the visit.

## Bandipora Police Organises Free Medical Camp for Serving and Retired Personnel

**BANDIPORA:** Bandipora Police on Tuesday organised a mega free medical health camp at District Police Lines (DPL) Bandipora under the Civic Action Programme of Jammu and Kashmir Police.

An official spokesperson said the camp was aimed at providing quality healthcare services to serving and retired police personnel of the district.

SSP Bandipora, Harmeet Singh Mehta inaugurated the camp in the presence of ASP Bandipora, DySP Headquarters, and other senior officers.

Renowned doctors from the Health Department were available at the camp for free consultations, and a wide range of medical services were offered, including general and specialist check-ups, laboratory investigations, and distribution of free medicines.

Addressing the gathering, SSP Harmeet Singh Mehta emphasized the importance of physical and mental well-being for police personnel who work in demanding and high-stress environments. He highlighted that maintaining good health is vital for ensuring higher productivity and better public service.

Health officials also educated the attendees about the benefits of various government healthcare schemes and the importance of personal hygiene and preventive healthcare measures.

At the conclusion of the event, the participating doctors were felicitated with mementos of appreciation by the Bandipora Police for their contributions. Official spokesperson said the initiative was widely appreciated by the police personnel and is seen as a step towards fostering well-being and morale among the force.



## Bandipora Schools Launch Fit India Campaign to Promote Drug-Free Lifestyle

**Bandipora:** Schools across Bandipora district on Tuesday launched the Fit India Campaign under the broader framework of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan in an effort to combat substance abuse among youth.

An official spokesperson said the initiative aims to promote physical fitness and a drug-free lifestyle among students.

A central function was held at PM SHRI Higher Secondary School Quilmuqam, where students participated in a series of outdoor sports activities, including a marathon. The campaign saw enthusiastic participation from both students and staff, who collectively pledged to abstain from drugs and promote healthy living.

Speaking on the occasion, teachers emphasized the critical role of physical activity in fostering mental well-being and steering youth away from addiction. "Physical fitness is not just about health, it is a powerful tool in the fight against drug abuse," one of the speakers remarked.

Officials present at the event said the campaign is aligned with national efforts to curb substance use and raise awareness among school-going children about the harmful consequences of drug addiction.

Students also shared their experiences, noting that the event offered a refreshing break from regular academics and encouraged them to focus more on their physical and mental well-being.

Faculty and staff members actively supported the campaign and pledged to continue promoting such activities to ensure the holistic development of students and a drug-free educational environment.

The campaign will continue across various schools in the district, with regular awareness sessions and fitness programs aimed at empowering youth to make healthy life choices.

## Six Years On, Hajin's Mini Secretariat Still Incomplete

**BANDIPORA:** The much-awaited Mini Secretariat in Hajin Tehsil of Bandipora district remains unfinished six years after its construction began in 2019.

Initially proposed to bring major relief to the people of Hajin by housing all key administrative offices under one roof, the delay in its completion has led to growing public concern.

Currently, various government departments are functioning from scattered and rented accommodations across the tehsil. This disjointed setup is causing significant inconvenience to the local population, who are forced to move from one location to another to get their official work done. The absence of a centralized administrative facility has not only hampered efficiency but also added to the daily challenges of visitors.

Locals say the current setup is causing significant inconvenience, with people having to travel from one location to another for basic administrative tasks. "It is extremely difficult, especially for the elderly and those from far-flung areas. One has to visit multiple buildings to get even a single job done," said Abdul Gani, a resident of Hajin.

Residents urged the district administration and the elected MLA to intervene and expedite the construction. "The foundation stone was laid with much fanfare, but after that, progress has been painfully slow. We appeal to the Deputy Commissioner Bandipora and our local MLA to prioritize this long-pending project," said another local.

The incomplete project is being seen as a missed opportunity for improving public service delivery in the region. With public pressure mounting, locals hope the authorities will take swift action to ensure the early completion of the Mini Secretariat.





Editorial

MUDRA at 10

As the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) completes a decade since its launch in 2015, it marks more than just a policy milestone—it reflects a shift in India’s development narrative. Designed to offer collateral-free credit to micro and small enterprises, MUDRA has, over the years, emerged as one of the most inclusive and impactful economic interventions in post-liberalisation India. The scheme, divided into three credit categories—Shishu, Kishor, and Tarun—has provided loans ranging from ₹50,000 to ₹10 lakh to over 40 crore beneficiaries, the majority of them from underserved and underbanked sections. What makes MUDRA transformative is not merely the volume of credit disbursed, but the socio-economic empowerment it has enabled at the grassroots level. From rural artisans and vegetable vendors to tailors and small manufacturers, MUDRA has democratised access to credit for those often overlooked by traditional banking systems. In a country where self-employment and informal sector businesses form the economic backbone, MUDRA has bridged the credit gap that stifled small entrepreneurs. It has also helped in mainstreaming women and youth into entrepreneurial activity—nearly 68% of MUDRA loan accounts are held by women and over 50% belong to SC/ST and OBC beneficiaries. This inclusive design has served not only as a financial lifeline but as a tool of social justice. However, the road ahead demands more than celebration. The next decade of MUDRA must focus on enhancing loan utilisation tracking, reducing Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), and ensuring timely repayments. Training in financial literacy, digital tools, and business management must become an integral part of the scheme to ensure that borrowers not only survive but thrive. Access to credit must be complemented with access to markets, technology, and formal networks.

Aroma Of Tulip Garden



SAHIL MANZOOR

The spring season in the Kashmir Valley opens its wings with the aroma of the tulip garden. This year on 26th March, the department of floriculture is going to welcome visitors with full energy and enthusiasm. Tulip has great charm and fame throughout all corners of the world and attracts millions of visitors every year. This garden may remain open throughout the calendar year, but nature—the phenomenon of nature—won’t allow it because the flowers bloom only once during the year. Why is the tulip garden famous in all corners of the world? Every year since 2007, this garden has remained the highlight of electronic media, print media, and social media. The tulip garden has unique identification among the tourist destinations as this garden is considered the largest tulip garden in Asia. The tulip garden was inaugurated by Chulam Nabi Azad, then chief minister of the J&K erstwhile state, in the year 2007. This garden is also known as the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden. The famous and charming garden nestled between the Dal Lake and the Zabarwan Mountains in the heart of the valley in Kashmir. How does it look? The tulip garden has a vast diversity of different species of different tulips. This year 50000 tulips were imported from the Netherlands; hopefully this will enhance its charm to certain limits. There are 74 varieties of tulips, including two new varieties added this year. 17.50 lakh tulip bulbs and other flowers are planted this year. As per the source of the Global Kashmir newspaper, this year an online ticket booking system has been initiated to facilitate the visitors and minimize the flow at the ticket counters, and a QR code-based ticket booking system is also available at the Tourist Reception Centre and at the airport to avoid flow at the Tulip Garden. Charm of tulip garden The tulip garden is really charming, sensuous, beautiful, lavish, and endowed, and nature has bestowed the whole valley. The tulip garden not only attracts the visitors

from all corners of the world but also attracts the locals as well. Locals have been waiting since the news circulated on media platforms.

every lush green pine of Pir Panjal looks whitish. During winters, Gulmarg and Doodhpathri are the famous tourist destinations that witness a huge

Kashmir Valley. Summers has no alternative. Summers bestow peace of mind and provide a great chance to trekkers. During summers the eminent mountains



From 26 onwards, the banks of the Dal Lake witnessed traffic jams, and hopefully the concerned traffic department has made all the possible efforts to respect the visitors.

All the general public should have patience and give chances to outsiders to visit and catch the memories for a long time. Almighty has blessed the Kashmir Valley in all the seasons, like in winter, spring, summer, and autumn as well. What are the attractions in winter? Winters commonly cast their shadows with the snowfall, and every corner looks white, where

rush of outsider visitors.

Gulmarg: The cable car (gondola) and winter sports activities of Gulmarg are the reasons that the tourists love to visit Gulmarg and catch their awesome memories for a lifetime. Attraction in spring The tulip garden and the opening of famous Mughal gardens like Nishat Garden, Shalimar Garden, Pari Mahal, and Chashma Shahi attract the locals as well as the visitors from all corners of the world.

Attraction during summers

Summers are so charming and sensuous in the

of our panjal witness ample rush of campers and trekkers. Valley has great potential for the campers and for the trekkers from June to September.

Attraction during the autumn

Autumn, when every leaf looks brown Autumn is one of the pleasant and charming seasons of the Kashmir Valley. The leaves of the plane tree look so mesmerizing when they start falling on the surface of the earth and provide a great chance for visitors to catch the memories in their cameras. People love to take photographs at the Chinar Bagh Srinagar and enjoy every bit with peace of mind and feel relaxed.

Back to November, But At What Cost?



Aubaid Ahmad Akhoun

When the structure of time is altered, the responsibility to adapt must be matched with support, not silence. In recent years, our educational system has seen multiple reform efforts, but one of the most talked-about is the restoration of the October–November academic session by the current government under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. This session structure had existed for years before being altered by the previous LG-led administration, in order to implement “Uniform Academic Policy” which shifted it to March. Now, with the return of an elected government, the earlier session has been promptly reinstated. While the move is intended to provide relief from harsh winters and better align with the national academic framework, its abrupt implementation has surfaced several challenges that demand immediate and thoughtful intervention. This shift, although welcome in spirit, has brought both convenience and complication. The current academic year will now span barely 6 to 7 months. In such a short duration, completing the entire syllabus has become an overwhelming task for students and teachers alike especially in demanding streams like medical/JEE where even 10 to 11 months often fall short. Coaching centres, already packed with back-to-back batches, are struggling to compress months of content into mere weeks. With school hours now running from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and coaching centres starting their sessions post 3:00 PM until 7:00 PM, the day has become incredibly hectic for students. Coaching centres can’t function during school hours, and thus, the learning time outside formal schooling is significantly restricted. Students now shuttle between two learning spaces, barely getting time to rest or reflect, let alone revise. With classes starting late in the afternoon and stretching into the evening, one wonders how meaningful instruction can truly be delivered in such a crammed schedule. To cope with this transition, students must now think smart and act smarter. It’s no longer sufficient to rely solely on offline classes. A hybrid approach leveraging both online and offline resources can empower students to not just keep up with the syllabus but also secure adequate time for revision. Access to recorded lectures, digital notes, mock tests, and doubt-clearing sessions can greatly ease the pressure on young minds. The time has also come to revamp government schools. It’s unfortunate that despite having qualified staff, thousands of students prefer



private schools. The reason is simple: outdated infrastructure, passive teaching methods, and lack of accountability. If we truly want government institutions to thrive, they must embrace modern education systems. From smart classrooms and interactive labs to extracurricular development and life skills training, every element of the schooling experience needs a 360-degree upgrade. In line with competitive demands, subjective assessments must be supplemented with OMR-based testing to prepare students for national-level exams. The Directorate of Education must not wait for a crisis to take action. Teachers need to be trained and motivated to conduct extra classes both online and offline. Incentivising their involvement and recognising their contribution can breathe new life into the teaching community. If we expect miracles from teachers, we must empower them with tools, training, and trust. But let’s not stop at calendar reforms. Our education system today is a patient showing signs of chronic illness. We’re churning out batches of degree holders replete with theoretical information but lacking in practical life skills. Graduates roam the streets with files and resumes, while the job market remains indifferent to their qualifications. We must ask ourselves: What good is a degree

that can’t help a youth stand on their own feet? What use is education that fails to instil dignity through self-reliance? It’s concerning that many degree-holding graduates remain unemployed or underemployed, while those with practical skills often thrive economically. This isn’t to undermine any profession, but rather to highlight a fundamental flaw in our education system. We continue to focus heavily

a future without a foundation. Educational institutions should be more than examination factories; they should be spaces where integrity is instilled, empathy is encouraged, and social responsibility is shaped. Values like honesty, respect, cultural pride, and compassion must not be sidelined; they must be central to the curriculum that shapes our next generation.

ing the time. The real reform must begin beyond the timetable.”

This shift, although welcome in spirit, has brought both convenience and complication. The current academic year will now span barely 6 to 7 months. In such a short duration, completing the entire syllabus has become an overwhelming task for students and teachers alike especially in demanding streams like medical/JEE where even 10 to 11 months often fall short. Coaching centres, already packed with back-to-back batches, are struggling to compress months of content into mere weeks.

The world has moved light-years ahead, but we still walk the path with a lantern. It is time for a complete overhaul: Revise and update curricula with future-ready content. Train teachers continuously and empower them with modern tools. Introduce students to diverse skill sets beyond academics. Promote digital learning alongside physical classrooms. Restore values and ethics as a central part of education. Upgrade libraries, labs, and infrastructure across institutions. Create balance in daily schedules to avoid student burnout. Offer flexible, well-structured timelines to allow space for revision and mental health. And finally, let the school environment be one of openness—not a prison of pressure. Let children breathe, explore, and express. Let them make mistakes and learn. Because true education is not about suppressing voices but nurturing potential. Bottom line: Become More Aware. Let us become more aware of what’s truly worth our time and energy. Reform is not a luxury—it is an urgent need. Let’s not wait for another batch of students to suffer under an outdated system. Change begins with awareness, and awareness begins with you. “Shifting the session without shifting the system is like changing the clock without chas-

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# Div Com Kashmir for hassle-free tourist facilities at Gulmarg

**SRINAGAR:** Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Wednesday chaired a meeting of officers to streamline and augment the tourist facilities for enriching their experience at the world famous tourist destination, Gulmarg.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla; Director Tourism Kashmir; Director ULB, Kashmir; MD Cable Car Corporation; CEO, Gulmarg Development Authority; RTO Kashmir; SSP Traffic besides other concerned officers.

Addressing the meeting; Div Com instructed MD Cable Car Corporation to

increase the availability of online tickets

a tatkal booking system for a designated

improve crowd management.

He highlighted the importance of maintaining cleanliness in the Gulmarg bowl and ensuring the collection of waste from Apharwat and Kongdoori, as well as addressing the issue of legacy waste.

Further, he directed for ensuring pothole free roads at tourist destination, regulation of traffic movement, management of parking spaces, besides enjoined for regulation of service providers. He also directed for enforcement of polythene ban at Gulmarg.

Moreover, he urged all departments to collaborate effectively to provide seamless and efficient services for tourists.



for the Gondola ride from 3,400 to 5,000. He also directed the implementation of

time slot one day in advance to optimize the Gondola service operations and

## DC Kupwara Appeals People to Avail Benefit of Solar, Farming Schemes

**KUPWARA:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired the weekly Block Diwas programme at Trehgam block of district Kupwara to listen to the grievances and developmental issues of the people.

On her arrival, DC visited various stalls set up by different departments showcasing their schemes and achievements. She enquired from the concerned officers about the progress of these schemes in Trehgam block.

People in large numbers attended the block diwas. District and Block level officers, besides, a large number of employees were also present at the event.

In her address, DC said that the Government is committed to holistic development and welfare of the people especially belonging to far flung areas. She highlighted various Government schemes aimed for welfare of

the people and urged upon the people to come forward and avail the benefits of these schemes.

Regarding Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna,



Ayushi said that the scheme aims to reduce the electricity bill of the consumers to make them self-reliant.

She urged them to enroll themselves under the scheme which is heavily subsidized by the Government for the benefit of the consumers. She appealed to the people to register themselves under the scheme to take benefit of free electricity which will

reduce their electricity bills.

While raising awareness on JK Samadhan portal, DC said that the portal provides opportunity to the citizens to raise their grievances through online mode and appealed to the people to register on the portal to get their grievances redressed which will save their time and efforts from physically visiting the government offices.

Earlier, senior citizens and youth spoke and put forth their demands and issues of the area including beautification of Trehgam stadium, completion of ongoing JJM schemes, upgradation of link roads etc.

After giving patient hearing to the issues raised by the people, DC redressed several issues on the spot and assured them that all their genuine concerns would be addressed in a phased manner with active coordination from relevant departments.

## Training prog. for Ganderbal Hajj pilgrims on April 12

**GANDERBAL:** The Hajj orientation/ training programme for the selected Hajj pilgrims of District Ganderbal about the Manasik-e-Hajj is scheduled on 12 April, 2025 at Markazi Hanfia Jamia Masjid Sharief Beehama Ganderbal at 10:30 A.M.

As such all the selected Hajj pilgrims of the district are informed to attend the said training programme on the scheduled date and time.

# Block Diwas held at Noorkha Block in Baramulla

**BARAMULLA:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa Wednesday presided over a Block Diwas at Noorkha Block of Boniyar Tehsil, drawing significant public participation.

General public on the occasion flagged-off various developmental concerns and demands with the district administration.

Key issues raised included road connectivity, with demands for macadamization of inner link roads like Chala to Noorkha. Locals also called for the promotion of Vijitop Gagward as a tourist destination and requested construction of tourism infrastructure such as huts. The upgradation of the High School at Bimyar to a Higher Secondary School was strongly advocated to improve access to higher secondary education.

Concerns were also raised regarding drinking water shortages in certain habitations. Locals demanded swift

completion of PHE schemes under Jal Jeevan Mission, and also requested the establishment of ration depots in underserved areas.

Healthcare demands included the deployment of a veterinary doctor at Phelipora, as well as an ambulance, lab technician and night staff at PHC Bimyar. Residents further demanded linking of the irrigation pump at Naganari with Ijjara and the development of a local playground.

Responding to the issues, DC issued several on-spot directions to the concerned departments. The Executive Engineer PHE was directed to expedite work on ongoing schemes and ensure that all unconnected habitations are covered in a time-bound manner.

The officers from FCS&CA, were instructed to examine the feasibility and take necessary steps for establishing additional ration stores in the region to meet public needs.

The concerned Zonal Education Officer was asked to

process the proposal for upgradation of the High School at Bimyar to Higher Secondary level and submit it for consideration at the appropriate level.

Regarding road development, the DC informed that PMGSY Phase 4 is underway, with DPRs submitted and around 40 roads in Sub Division Uri likely to be approved soon. He directed concerned engineers to prioritize macadamization of roads under (CND) scheme, especially in areas highlighted during the Block Diwas.

DC also stated that the Hilan to Hakhpatri road would be developed to enhance regional tourism potential. On healthcare, he assured that an ambulance will be provided to PHC Bimyar under CSR funding, and other staff-related demands are being reviewed. Minga Sherpa reiterated the administration's commitment to inclusive and responsive governance and assured the public that all genuine demands will be addressed with urgency.

## PDD daily wager lineman succumbs to injuries after 5 days

**Bilal Habib**

**PAMPORE:** A lineman working on daily wager in the Power Development Department (PDD), Sub Division Pampore, succumbed to injuries sustained after falling from an electric pole few days ago in the Saffron Town area of Pampore in South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

According to reports, the lineman, identified as Mohammad Yousuf Dar, a resident of Gooripora Barsoo village, was repairing an electric line when he fell from a pole in the Freestabal area of Pampore on April 05 (Saturday).

Dar was immediately rushed to the Sub-District Hospital Pampore and later referred to SKIMS Soura, Srinagar, for advanced treatment. However, he succumbed to his injuries on Wednesday evening, an official told Kashmir Convener.

Assistant Executive Engineer, along with other officials and field staff of the Electric Division Pampore, visited the hospital soon after the hospital to express their concern and support for the injured worker, officials said.

Talking to Kashmir Convener, Assistant Executive Engineer of Sub Division Pampore, Er. Mohammad Iqbal told that Mohammad Yousuf Dar, a PDL worker critically injured on duty on April 5, succumbed to his injuries today evening around 5 PM at SKIMS Soura, Srinagar. Dar had been admitted at SKIMS since the day of the incident. A pall of gloom descended on Gooripora village in Pulwama district as the news of Dar's death reached his native place. Meanwhile, hundreds of people, including PDD officials, participated in the last rites of the deceased lineman at Gooripora village.

## ICE campaign against Drug Abuse gains momentum in Ganderbal

**GANDERBAL:** As part of its ongoing efforts to combat drug abuse, the District Administration Ganderbal today organized a series of awareness programs under the Nasha Mukti Jammu and Kashmir campaign, aiming to curb the menace of substance abuse and educate the youth and general public about its harmful impacts.

Camps were held across multiple educational institutions in the district including Government Degree College Ganderbal, BHSS Gund, GHSS Kangan, BHSS Wakura, BHSS Manigam, BHSS Safapora and BHSS Kurlhama.

The events witnessed active participation from various departments including Health, Police, Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development.

The primary focus of these camps was to sensitize students, parents, and the wider community on the physical, psychological and social repercussions of drug abuse.

The sessions emphasized early intervention, strong community support systems and the availability of rehabilitation services.

At Government Degree College Ganderbal, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Fahim Bihagi graced the occasion as the chief guest. The event saw enthusiastic participation from college staff, students, and community members.

Speaking on the occasion, the ADC highlighted the need for collective responsibility and community engagement in eradicating drug abuse. He underscored the importance of education, family support, and active community involvement in both prevention and rehabilitation efforts.

# CS Atal Dulloo for boosting last mile connectivity under PMGSY-IV

**JAMMU:** In a decisive step towards enhancing rural infrastructure, the UT Level Standing Committee (UTLSC) meeting was today convened here under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, to review and approve critical proposals under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Phase-IV (PMGSY-IV).

The meeting besides Principal Secretary, Home; Secretary, PWD; Secretary, Transport; Secretary, Revenue; DG, Budget; Engineer-in-Chief was attended by other concerned officers from the various departments.

The Chief Secretary emphasized upon utilizing this scheme for expanding all-weather rural road connectivity to underserved areas across the Union Territory. He made out that the department should target speedy approval for all the surveyed roads.

Dulloo directed the department to prioritise these projects as per the Comprehensive New Connectivity Priority List (CNCLP) so that same receives early nod from the central government. He also advised them to ensure that the far off areas get last-mile connectivity under this flagship scheme.

The newly launched PMGSY-IV initiative, approved by the Ministry of Rural Development, aims to connect rural habitations those are eligible due to increased populations as recorded in the 2011 Census. Spanning from 2024-25 to 2028-29, this

phase promises to bridge critical gaps in access to education, healthcare, markets and

Roads previously constructed with just Stage-I formation under PMGSY-I, lacking



administrative services by giving them access through construction of all-weather roads.

About the criteria, Secretary, PWD, Bhupinder Kumar, informed that the PMGSY-IV has been structured to ensure inclusivity with population thresholds of 500+ in plains, 250+ in Hilly States/UTs and 100+ in LWE (Left Wing Extremism) affected areas.

He further elaborated that the cluster approach combines habitations within a 500-meter radius (or 1.5 km in hilly terrain) to qualify as a single entity for connectivity. In addition to sensitive border blocks, all habitations within a 10 km path distance are considered a cluster to address strategic and developmental priorities.

It was also revealed that all-weather roads under PMGSY-IV would ensure minimal service disruption with no more than 24 hours of blockage at a time and not exceeding six such instances per year.

essential pavement layers, will also be completed under the current phase.

Regarding the funding model, it was revealed that the share of Centre would be 90% with 10% UT share. The UT would be responsible for full maintenance for a decade post-construction.

It was apprised that a Comprehensive New Connectivity Priority List (CNCLP) has been finalized at block and district levels. The list incorporates inputs from the Home Department to factor in security-related exigencies, especially in sensitive or border-adjacent areas.

The committee reviewed and approved a district-wise alignment of road projects proposed under Batch-I.

These included not just new roads but also the de-sanctioning of 13 road projects and 11 bridges under PMGSY-I, which are proposed to be taken up afresh under PMGSY-IV for early completion under this scheme.

## Awareness prog. held for LSUC, support for Admission/ Re-admission in schools at B'gam

**BUDGAM:** In a significant move, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Budgam in collaboration with Juvenile Justice Board, Budgam organized an awareness programme for Legal Services Unit for Children (LSUC). Support for Admission/ Re-admission in Schools at Juvenile Justice Board Budgam.

The programme was organized under the aegis of J&K Legal Services Authority and under the guidance of O.P Baghat, Chairman DLSA (Pr&Distt.Judge) Budgam and under the supervision of Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary DLSA Budgam and Shabber Ayaz, Principal Magistrate Juvenile Justice Board Budgam.

Sandeep Kour, Member Child Welfare Committee Budgam gave a brief introduction about the programme.

Advocate. Feroz Ahmad Khan Member Child Welfare Committee, Budgam, briefed the audience about LSUC and about educational opportunities for children particularly those rescued from trafficking, abuse, and other challenging circumstances and how they can be supported for Admission/Re-admission in Schools.

Mehreen Zafer, Panel lawyer DLSA Budgam briefed the audience about the role of DLSA in rendering the services. She urged the collaborative partners including Child Welfare Committees and Child help line to raise awareness about the free and competent Legal aid meant for the juveniles and other marginalized sections of society.

In her address she also apprised the audience about

specific legal provisions for vulnerable children, including those with disabilities, transgender children, and children at risk of trafficking or abuse. She clarified legal provisions, children's rights, and remedies available through legal services for children in need.

NALSA Helpline (15100), Child Helpline (1098), Divyangyan Helpline (14456), and other relevant helplines were also displayed in the programme to ensure that children and their families are aware of legal and child protection helplines.

The programme witnessed active participation of Members of LSUC, staff of Child Welfare Committee, Juvenile Justice Board Budgam, members of Child Helpline Budgam and Staff and PLVs (Adhikar Mitras) of DLSA Budgam.

## DC Kulgam chairs DRSC meet, calls for strict action against traffic violators

**KULGAM:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) to review the implementation of the Road Safety Action Plan and deliberate on various measures to improve road safety across the district.



The meeting featured detailed discussions on the Road Safety Act, traffic calming measures, road signage and the rectification of accident-prone spots.

DC reviewed the progress on tasks assigned to various departments in previous meetings and stressed the importance of inter-departmental coordination to strengthen the road safety framework.

Officers briefed the chair on steps taken to rectify black spots, erect crash barriers, and install road signage at critical points.

Active participation from committee members

led to meaningful discussions and formulation of strategic measures aimed at enhancing road safety throughout the district. The DC directed the concerned departments to take strict action against traffic rule violators and emphasized the need for curbing violations effectively. He instructed ARTO to prepare a comprehensive road safety awareness calendar. All departments were directed to ensure timely updates on the iRAD (Integrated Road Accident Database) portal.

The DC also instructed the R&B and PMGSY departments to conduct road safety audits, identify black spots and blind spots, and project them for rectification to reduce accident risks. Furthermore, the MVD and other stakeholders were directed to carry out extensive awareness campaigns across the district.

The DC directed the R&B department to conduct safety audits of major structures and bridges in the district. Directions were also given to R&B Department to make the approach road to NHW at Qaimoh trafficable by 20-4-2025.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Viqar Ahmad Giri; ACR, Riyaz Ahmad Shah; Executive Engineer R&B, ARTO, DY-SP, officers from Traffic police and other committee members.



# Freedom To Flourish For Muslim Women: Diversity Of Opinions And Rights Discourse



DR MAROOF SHAH

Certain ahadithincluding the following constitute basis for mercy and ease:

- "La darara wa la dirara fil Islam" [no harm shall be inflicted or tolerated in Islam]
- The Prophet only chose the easier of two alternatives so long as it did not amount to a sin.
- "Allah loves to see that His concessions (rukhsah) are observed, just as He loves to see that His strict laws (azaa-im) are observed".

The above would confirm that no unnecessary rigour is recommended in the enforcement of commands and that the Muslims should avail of the flexibility and concessions of Shariah. As Ghazzali expounded, Maslahah consists of considerations which secure a benefit or prevent a harm.

Another related point complementing the point on ease and open-endedness is attitude of humility advocated in the tradition. Instead of saying what does Islam say we should ask what do Muslim jurists say on this or that point say Caliphate/Islamic State, rights of religious/sexual minorities/women, freedom of belief/disbelief, triple talaq, qurbani, permissibility of music, compatibility of modern banking with Islam, dress code and grooming/hair code. To claim that Islam says this or that about issues that are often debated (we don't debate invariant value/ethical coordinates), is, generally speaking, problematic. We can only strive to know (to make best approximations) what Islam says/God really means/ intends on questions usually asked – on other questions that are more foundational we usually don't need to ask and do largely know what Islam says as we know what our fitrah demands or what aq'l-i saleem requires or what conscience allows. And jurists differ in their conclusions on almost all these questions. They don't differ in matters of worship to significant extent and that explains why none including Muslim modernists/reformists asks for reconstructing them. In transactions (muamalat) they are bound to differ and long back they have agreed to disagree (thus, as has been remarked by a modern scholar, synthesizing two apparently opposite traditionally rehearsed teachings "My community will not agree on error" "Difference of opinion in my ummah is a mercy"). It means Shariah in practice becomes open ended and we can't close the debate that this or that is the Islamic view of it and hence uncontested. Before one can go for it or for any rigid polemics for and against the host of legal opinions that are hotly debated (our sermons and book shops are stuffed with this polemics on issues that God hardly minds and that require/invite divergent legitimate responses – and one wants to laugh at the anxiety to suppress difference), one needs to consider the following qualifiers or filters that force us to recognize essentially tentative nature of our views and give benefit of doubt to other opinions.

In fact we find the earliest instances dialogue in classical age being close to this ideal – everyone, not just majority, often, agrees on the solution proposed after discussion. Isn't it sad to note that the issues of democracy, mixing of schools of fiqh, many modern economic and social institutions, travel without muharram relative, women drivers/heads of larger institutions including state, burqa/hijab imposition, views on philosophy and Sufism, supposed innovations in popular piety/devotion, divorce etc. violently divide us to this date?

Fiqh is the attempt to think and concretize Shariah and it differs not just from school to school but even from jurist to jurist. Since God wants to save all souls or make the world livable for everyone who agrees not to destroy it for others, and people differ from region to region, from time to time, from stage to stage of their lives, fiqh adapts accordingly. Fiqh is open ended – we are invited to exert ourselves in choosing their decisions so that God's intention is fulfilled – there are situations where no fiqh manual comes to our help and we stand naked before God/conscience. It is interesting to find all kinds of opinions within the prescribed limits entertained by Muslim jurists and we find upbringing, politics, theology, considerations of public good etc. impacting on them. Regarding the much debated hudood ordinances in Islamic law, it is noteworthy how Islam's theory of limits, as framed in Muhammad Sharur (whose reception has been much affected by some of his controversial views and simplistic reductionist view of mysticism) in contemporary times, makes man free to choose from one end of the spectrum to the other without incurring any sin. Applying mathematical notion of limit (to the Quranic notion of hadd) developed by mathematicians of the West, certain old controversies in hudood/inheritance laws get reframed and appear almost resolved. He has argued that "Allah set the limits for the law whose upper and lower boundaries encompass the scope of legislation that human societies are allowed to explore freely."

Since it is very hard to ascertain the precise meaning/intention of the author of Sharia and one can't, ordinarily, vouch for one's interpretation as the final one, one can't delegitimize other possible interpretations. There is so much freedom to legislate and all we have been given is limits that must not be transgressed. The dialogue must go on while we keep striving for knowing the meaning intended by the Canon.

### Liberal vs. Conservative Women Debate

Regarding number of questions that divide more conservative and liberal women – shaping of brows, veil or particular mode

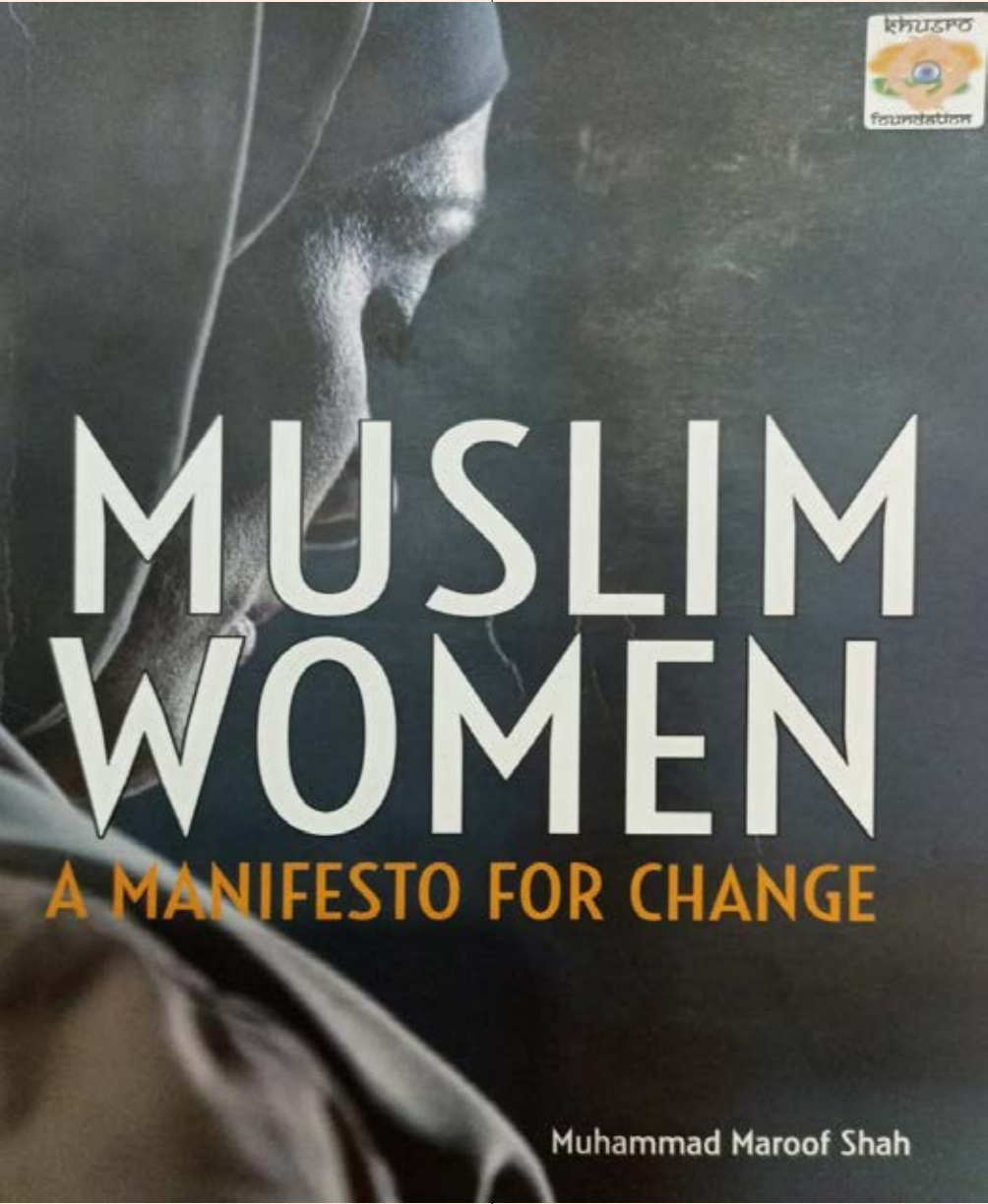
of dressing or appearance in public and one may add various questions one can see on various websites or modern fiqh works – the following general remarks may be kept in consideration.

- Many fuqaha have clarified that it remains to be determined if routine shaping of brows amounts to cursed mutilation or qualifies the act as nams and it appears in the opinion of many it isn't to be framed as nams that distinguished women of loose character in that specific context of Arabian culture. Divergence of options amongst equally qualified jurists amounts to room for any opinion that strikes one as more true to one's lived experience of faith or spirit of it or passes the court of our conscience that has been approved as the Court when one is in doubt. For any question one should first question the anxiety to question. God and His Prophet didn't like the zeal to ask too many questions and have chosen silence or in principle

- Farhad draws our attention to Al-Nawawai's remarks on the hadith recorded in the Muslim in which Abu Salamah said: that "The wives of the Prophet (pbuh) used to cut their hair until it came just below their ears." "Al-Nawawi quotes from Qadhi Ayyaz that it appears that the wives of the prophet (pbuh) would do this after the death of the prophet (pbuh) to avoid embellishment and to be able to manage their hair better. Al-Nawawi then writes: 'in this (hadith) is evidence of allowing cutting hair for women and God knows best' (Sharh al-Nawawi, 4:5).

### Farhad is point blank in stating his views against segregation:

I can assure you that there are no strict restrictions on the working of the women outside, mixed with other men. This is



given approval or ibahi asli to all things generally perceived as wholesome and that don't harm us. The Quran has given a list of four prohibited items and the prophetic sunnah has added to this list implied few items. Anything that contravenes moral and spiritual health stands disapproved and should be so and this is universal verdict of morally and spiritually alive people. Regarding burqa/hijab and how to appear in public, one may state that God is concerned with safeguarding human dignity. Whatever is compatible with modesty or decency and isn't flaunting of pathological ego– or is illusory deceitful expression – is what wouldn't invite God's/Reality's displeasure or hell. Against the picture of woman defended in modern neo-Salafi version as encapsulated in Rulings of Council of Religious Legal Opinions (C.R.L.O) listed in appendix to Speaking in God's Name of Khalid Abu al-Fadl we find version in Ghamidi, Asghar Ali Engineer and Farhad Shafti besides various Muslim feminist scholars including Merenessi, Rifat Hassan, Kecia Ali and Laila Bakhtiar. A few points from the later camp in Farhad Shafti are here presented to show the liberal-conservative divide and it will be followed by some reflections on possibility of bridging or recognizing divergent views and how is it possible to bypass their association with one's otherworldly prospects. response to CRL0 present divergent views of two approaches

- Women have been told to abide by a number of rulings for which there is inconclusive evidence on the supposition that we have been directed to avoid the doubtful. Alluding to oft quoted hadith calling for avoiding the doubtful, Farhad argues for need to read it in conjunction with another one from Ibn Majah, This is because taklif (wujub) only comes with certainty. This certainty is available regarding a handful of issues and thus vast corpus of fiqh rulings.

- Replying to the query regarding hadith stating that the women with head like a camel hump will not enter paradise," Farhad in his blogs on [www.exploringislam.com](http://www.exploringislam.com) notes that the hadith invoked here

has nothing to do with any kinds of innocently covering a long hair in any fashion. The hadith is clearly referring to women who have inappropriate behavior. 'Heads like humps of camel' is only one of their signs. The problem with these women therefore is not the style of hair, but their evil behaviour.

Second, 'heads like humps of camel' can have many meanings, as the scholars have explained. To interpret it to mean covering a long, ponytail like hair, is only an interpretation. The wording itself does not say that.

The hadiths that appear to prohibit cutting hair are referring to a kind of cutting hair that gives a look that is against the nature of a woman, as created by the Almighty.

I also do not believe that looking like non-Muslim women per se is an issue. Within the limits of modesty, as promoted in the Qur'an, looking similar to a non-Muslim is not forbidden.

There is a hadith in the book of Muslim, that is often used by the scholars who do not consider cutting hair for women to be forbidden:

Abu Salamah said: "The wives of the Prophet (pbuh) used to cut their hair until it came just below their ears." (Muslim, al-Haydh, 320)

In his commentary on this hadith Al-Nawawi quotes from Qadhi Ayyaz that it appears that the wives of the prophet (pbuh) would do this after the death of the prophet (pbuh) to avoid embellishment and to be able to manage their hair better. Al-Nawawi

”

I can assure you that there are no strict restrictions on the working of the women outside, mixed with other men. This is a concept that has been developed among Muslims gradually, and only after the demise of the Prophet (pbuh), for various reasons. When you read the history and note how some Muslim women were active outdoors at the time of the Prophet (pbuh) you may agree with me that it seems like some Muslims at our time are more sensitive about gender interaction, compared to our beloved Prophet (pbuh)!

”

then writes: "in this (hadith) is evidence of allowing cutting hair for women and God knows best" (Sharh al-Nawawi, 4:5).

### Farhad further notes that

It is not changing the way that God has created a certain individual that is wrong, what is wrong is changing the way that God has created human beings. I can assure you that there are no strict restrictions on the working of the women outside, mixed with other men. This is a concept that has been developed among Muslims gradually, and only after the demise of the Prophet (pbuh), for various reasons. When you read the history and note how some Muslim women were active outdoors at the time of the Prophet (pbuh) you may agree with me that it seems like some Muslims at our time are more sensitive about gender interaction, compared to our beloved Prophet (pbuh)!

It is interesting to note the spectrum of opinions within the revivalist camp and internal debate within it on face veil and cutting of hair or public roles or wearing good looking abayas or wearing jeans under a loose long overcoat or brow shaping. Modernists or those classified as liberals seem to simply adopt one end of this spectrum or further open it up. It appears that we have gradually evolved responses that are less sharply defined or less judgmental of the other. It is hard to clench the argument for this or that position and we can agree to keep dialogue open and have the consolation that we shall face God on different terms or according to our divergent opinions of Him. What is clear is certain lack of clarity or intended ambiguity in matters that don't vitally or obviously affect our prospect for salvation. There is consensus on the following points anyway:

- That we shall be judged as per our sincere effort and understanding of God's will.
- That God's will as expressed in the canon is fraught with complexities and often sustains divergent readings
- That hadith corpus itself is open ended in a way and we can't foreclose the debate on authenticity and contextual considerations or diverse framing of several key traditions that are at the heart of the debate between rival Muslim camps and as such we can't afford too strong views without granting some scope to the other opposite views.

TO BE CONTINUED...



# Continued From P1...

## No J&K

continue to play their role,” the chief minister said.

Asked about restoration of statehood, Abdullah said there will be no shortfall in the efforts in this direction.

“Statehood is our right and we have been promised of its restoration (by the central government). I hope this process will be initiated soon,” he said. (Agencies)

## Budget Session

their cooperation for smooth conduct of the Assembly proceedings. He also thanked Information Department, Assembly Secretariat, Health Department, Radio, Doordarshan, J&K Police, Media and other stakeholders for support during the Budget Session

## NC will

, was turned into a battleground, Unfortunately, the BJP, with deliberate intent, disrupted the proceedings and repeatedly blocked our attempts to speak. What was even more shameful was the tactical support extended to them by the PDP, PC, and a few others. Instead of standing with us in defense of religious rights and constitutional values, they chose to stand with the very party that is dismantling them. On a day when over 300 Members of Parliament across the country opposed this Bill, they chose silence on the first day And worse, complicity on the other. Their betrayal will not be forgotten. While the Assembly could have served as a forum to express our concerns, the real battle must now be fought in the Supreme Court,” he said.

Sadiq said by approaching the Supreme Court the party is sending a stronger and unequivocal message that the party will oppose it legally and not just for any fanfare.

“Let us be very clear, while we could have raised these concerns inside the Assembly, doing so would have only recorded our opposition. By approaching the Supreme Court, we are sending a stronger message: we will fight this legally, constitutionally, and with full determination. We are confident that justice will prevail,” he further added.

“At the same time, the developments in the Assembly led to yet another, even more serious consequence—the vital and long-overdue resolution for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir’s statehood was not introduced. This critical resolution carried immense significance, as it represents a core demand that lies at the heart of our people’s aspirations,” he said.

“Let us remind everyone, statehood is not a demand, it is a democratic right. It is central to the identity, dignity, and empowerment of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference will continue to strongly and unequivocally advocate for the restoration of statehood.

This is our commitment,” he added.

He also appreciated the speaker of the house for taking into account the sense of house against the Waqf amendment bill 2025. “The Honourable Speaker expressed the sentiment of the House and, taking into account the sense of the House, clearly stated that it is evident this House is against the Waqf Amendment Bill. The fact that this has now been officially recorded is exactly what we had hoped for,” he said.

## Speaker constitutes

Rajiv Jasrotia, M Y Tarigami, Ali Mohammad Dar, Ranbir Singh Pathania, Tanvir Sadiq, Javid Riyaz (Bedar), Muzaffar Iqbal Khan, Rafiq Ahmad Naik, Arjun Singh Raju and Iftikhar Ahmad.

## True meaning

“Where there is love and harmony there is God. It is true power. A man is closest to God when heart is filled with goodwill. It is my firm belief that the most precious assets of society are love, harmony, peace and compassion. A person full of

these qualities can uplift humanity.

I believe that the true meaning of life lies in self-discovery. When we know ourselves then one thing becomes clear that God has not given this life for small things but there is a big purpose behind it and that is selfless service to society and welfare of all living beings,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

In a global initiative, people from more than 108 countries participated in ‘Navkar Mahamantra Divas’ celebration promoting peace, and universal hamony. The occasion also encourages all individuals to reflect on the values of self-purification, tolerance, and collective well-being.

Anand Jain, ADGP Armed Police; Rajeev Jain, North India Advisor, Jain International Trade Organization (JITO); Pankaj Jain, President SS Jain Sabha; Sandeep Jain, General Secretary, SS Jain Sabha and representative JITO J&K, senior officials, and people in large number were present on the occasion.

## NC wants

about Waqf bill. It is trying to divert the attention as the party leaders want to protect their relatives and workers, who have encroached the lands.” He said that NC is calling it as a ‘land jihad’ in Kashmir.”

He added that the ‘land jihad’ is getting legislative protection, which he said is a ‘Legislative Jihad’.

Pertinently, the Legislative Assembly witnessed disruptions for the third straight day on Wednesday with the NC MLAs protesting over the Waqf Amendment Bill in the House while as the Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather rejected the discussion over it, saying that the matter is already sub-judice

## J&K Govt

among promising recognised early and growth stage startups across 10 high impact sectors wherein 2400 startups participated from across the country. The awards were given on the eve of concluding ceremony of Startup Mahakumbh organised by the DPIIT at Bharat Mandapan, New Delhi from 3rd April to 5th April, 2025.

With a funding pool of over Rs. 70 crore, the challenge not only offered grant support but also provided startups with national recognition, global exposure, structured mentorship, incubation opportunities and access to leading investor networks.

Five startups from Jammu and Kashmir participated in the Startup Mahakumbh 2025, namely GR8 Sports Private Limited (Gaming & Sports), CLMRAT Sports, AL-Hamdaan Crafts, Studio Agama, BISA Innovation Private Limited. These startups were led by Irtif Mehraj Lone, In-charge Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Business Modeling (CIIBM), JKEDI and Zahid Ali Dar, Project Manager, JKEDI.

The J&K Industries and Commerce Department has played a pivotal role in laying a strong foundation for the startup ecosystem in the Union Territory. The recognition of these two promising startups from Jammu and Kashmir demonstrates a growing startup ecosystem in the UT. The department has not only formulated a vibrant J&K Startup Policy-2024, but has also taken necessary steps for ensuring its speedy implementation through the designated Nodal agency, viz., the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI).

Sharing his thoughts on the achievement, Arjun Gupta, Founder of Genetico Private Limited, said, “It is wonderful that our years of hard work and commitment are being recognized by the government. There is a highly motivated and capable team behind Genetico. The award is not only for the founders but their team, customers, government, incubators, advisors, mentors and well-wishers.”

Fawz-ul-Kabir, Founder of GR8 Private Limited, expressed gratitude stating, “We are truly honoured to represent Jammu and Kashmir on such a prestigious platform. This recognition reaffirms our belief in the power of gaming and technology to drive positive impact. We thank the J&K Government and JKEDI for their unwavering support.”

Notably, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir has allocated Rs. 50.00 crore for 2025–26 fiscal for

implementation of J&K Startup Policy 2024-27. The funds shall be utilized for various components, including providing seed funding to eligible startups, startup awards, grants for setting up and scaling incubators, mentorship support, awareness and innovation-driven initiatives, aimed at strengthening the startup ecosystem across the Union Territory.

## Power generation

“Currently, we are able to produce more than 60 percent of power against the total generation capacity of 1197.4 MW,” the official said.

Pertinently, till the third week of February, an official had said that Jammu and Kashmir was relying on more than 85 percent of coal and solar power amid acute deficit of hydro power generation.

Officials of PDD department had claimed that local hydro power generation from the local power plants have reduced by nearly 90 percent.

An official had informed that “At present Jammu and Kashmir is 85-90 percent dependent on coal and solar energy that is being procured from the other states because as of now we don’t have a local power generation.”

“In winters the local hydro power generation of Jammu and Kashmir power plants has reduced by almost 90 percent and in order to cater the requisite power demand, we need to have a base power availability that we procure from outside states. The energy is coal based energy,” the official had said.

## Tulip Garden

remaining, the garden is on track to achieve an unprecedented visitor turnout.

This surge in footfall highlights the garden’s growing global appeal and its key role in promoting tourism and showcasing the natural splendour of Jammu & Kashmir.

Pertinently, with 1.7 million bulbs, the garden was thrown open for the general public on March 26. The famous Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden is having two more varieties imported from the Netherlands this year. 100 gardeners and casual labourers have made hectic efforts to complete all the processes and make the garden ready for the public.

On the inaugural day (March 26), the garden witnessed an overwhelming response from tourists. It recorded an unprecedented footfall of 17,259 visitors, setting a new record.

Pertinently, 4.5 lakh visitors visited the garden last year, surpassing all the previous records.

It is worth mentioning here that Tulip Garden in summer capital earned a spot in World Book of Records (London) as Asia’s largest in 2023.

In 2024, Asia’s largest Tulip Garden experienced an extraordinary surge in tourism, with a staggering 4.45 lakh visitors flocking to witness its vibrant blooms, including approximately 2,000 from foreign shores.

## BJP Protests

adjournment motion to the Speaker of the Assembly to enable a debate on two major issues – first, the regularisation of daily wagers and second, unemployment in J&K,” LoP Sharma told reporters.

He said the motion was rejected by the Speaker with a ruling.

“Even on the third day, the National Conference (NC)-Congress government does not want the Assembly to function. The purpose for which we have been elected – to represent people’s aspirations, demands and issues like bills and motions – is being continuously ignored, as the treasury benches are creating disruptions,” he added.

Sharma lashed out at the Omar Abdullah-led government and alleged that it had failed to address the concerns of the daily wagers.

“Among the various issues, the biggest is the regularisation of the daily wagers, which the National Conference government and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had promised to fulfil. But they do not want discussions on them,” Sharma said.

The BJP’s demands that daily wagers be regularised and employment avenues be debated in the House so that the government can respond on the measures it is taking to address these issues, he said.

“Instead, the government is running away from the discussion to avoid accountability. To prevent such debates, members are deliberately creating chaos in the House,” the LoP said.

He said no budgetary provision has been made for these promises. “Omar Abdullah made big promises about eliminating unemployment,



claiming they would provide 5,00,000 jobs. That would mean 50,000 jobs in six months. But nothing was delivered,” Sharma said.

Taking a dig at the government, the BJP leader said, “Instead, the Omar Abdullah government appointed a relative of a National Conference leader as a consultant in the Tourism Department through the backdoor. This is what is being done for daily wagers and unemployed youth of J&K.” He criticised the NC members accusing them of paralysing the Assembly for three days. “The treasury benches are deliberately not allowing the House to function. This is a fixed match,” he said.

Levelling serious allegations against NC leaders, he said they are trying to shield those involved in land-grabbing cases in the garb of Waqf law. The demography of Jammu has been changed by a particular community by encroaching massive lands under the patronage of governments, he alleged.

“We congratulate the Speaker for upholding the integrity of the House and adhering to the law by rejecting this proposal so that the Waqf Bill could be discussed,” he said.

He said the Budget Session is the only opportunity to highlight and resolve the concerns of MLAs and the public but even this is being squandered.

“Since March 3, when this session began, BJP members have been trying to raise the people’s issues in the Assembly but the government is evading accountability and avoiding all discussions on the promises made to the public,” LoP Sharma said. (Agencies)

# NOTICE

This is an information for general public that the Name, Father's name and Mothers Name of my Daughter has been Mistakenly Mentioned in her School Records as Aayat Mehraj, Father's name Mehraj- u - din Mir, Mother's name Gulshan, while as her actual and correct name, Father's name and Mothers Name is Aayat Mehraj - Mir, Father's name is Mehraj- ud - din Mir, and Mothers Name is Gulshan Bagum, and also Father's name and Mothers Name of my Son has been Mistakenly Mentioned in his school records as Mehraj - u - din Mir, and Mothers Name as Gulshan, while as his Actual and correct Father's name and Mothers Name is Mehraj- ud - din Mir, and Mothers Name is Gulshan Bagum. Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the principal Blooming Budds computer school Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

**Mehraj - ud - din Mir.**  
**F/O Aayat Mehraj - Mir, and**  
**Muhammad Salim Mir.**  
**R/O Plan Bandipora Ward NO:03.**

## CS reviews

to promptly report any issue or requirement to his office for immediate resolution. He directed the UT Coordinator of NTA to maintain direct communication with the ACS to align local arrangements with national level standards.

Speaking on the occasion, Shantmanu informed the participants that the final list of examination centres in J&K will be shared by the NTA tomorrow. He directed the officials to obtain and circulate the contact details of all the City Coordinators designated for J&K to ensure smooth coordination. He assured that all necessary arrangements for successful conduct of the NEET (UG) exam will be made in close collaboration with the testing agency.

Both the Divisional Commissioners informed the meeting that multiple centres, including those previously used for major competitive exams, have been preliminarily identified. These included colleges having requisite infrastructure and capacity, with necessary certifications being obtained from competent authorities.

Penitent to mention here that the NEET (UG) 2025 examination is scheduled to be held on May 4, 2025 in pen-and-paper mode using an OMR sheet. The application window remained open from February 7 to March 7, 2025. The candidates can expect release of the exam city slip on April 26, 2025, followed by the admit cards, which are anticipated to be available by May 1, 2025.

## Encounter Underway In Udhampur

**JAMMU:** An encounter broke out in Jammu and Kashmir’s Udhampur district on Wednesday after security forces established contact with three terrorists, officials said.

“During a search operation by police and other security forces, contact was established with terrorists at village Jopher in the Ramnagar police station area of Udhampur,” the Udhampur police said on X.

They stated that two to three terrorists are trapped.

“Firing is ongoing,” they added.

Police and security forces have been tracking terrorists moving from one area to another for the past 17 days following three encounters since the operation started on March 24 in the Sanyial area of Kathua district.

Two terrorists and four policemen were killed in the encounter in the area on March 27. (Agencies)

# NOTICE

This is an information for general public that in my Driving licence bearing Registration No: JK15 20200000485, my name, parantage and Address has been Mistakenly Mentioned as Mohd Assadullah Lone, S/O Ab Aziz Lone, R/O Phalwanpora (Panzigam) Bandipora, while as my Actual and correct name, parantage and Address as per my Aadhaar Card is M Assadullah Lone, S/O Azizullah Lone, R/O Burnai, Zedgy kashpat, District Bandipora. Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Assistant Regional Transport Office Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

**M Assadullah Lone.**  
**S/O Azizullah Lone.**  
**R/O Burnai, Zedgy, kashpat,**  
**District Bandipora jammu and**  
**kashmir, pin code: 193503.**

# Full Court Reference held to bid farewell to Justice Tashi Rabstan, Justice Puneet Gupta

**JAMMU:** A Full Court Reference was held today in the Court Room of the Chief Justice at Jammu Wing of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to bid farewell to Justice Tashi Rabstan, Chief Justice and Justice Puneet Gupta, Judge, on their demitting the office on superannuation.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Justice Sindhu Sharma, Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul, Justice Sanjay Dhar, Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, Justice Mohd. Akram Chowdhary, Justice Rahul Bharti, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal, Justice Rajesh Sekhri and Justice Mohd. Yousuf Wani were present on the occasion.

The Full Court reference was also attended by Justice Atul Sreedharan, Judge, High Court of Madhya Pradesh and Former Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

The former Judges of the High Court, Chief Secretary, UT of J&K, Principal Secretary to the Government, Home Department, Inspector General of Police, J&K, Secretary Law, Justice, Senior Additional Advocate General, Deputy Solicitor Generals of India, Jammu/Srinagar, President, J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu, Senior Advocates, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Jammu, Chairman, J&K Sales Tax Appellate Tribunal, Judicial Officers and Officers of the Registry of the High Court were also present on the occasion. Besides, officers and officials of the High Court and a large number of advocates had joined from Srinagar Wing of the High Court virtually.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, in his farewell address, described both Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice Puneet Gupta, kind hearted persons having great qualities of head and heart. He added that Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice Puneet were always in tireless search for delivering justice and delivered number of landmark judgments which will be of remarkable help and guidance.

Acknowledging their years of service and the impact on judiciary, Justice Sanjeev Kumar said that their joined the judiciary with a sense of purpose, bringing with them a steadfast commitment to justice, a deep understanding of law and an unwavering dedication to fairness. He expressed heartfelt appreciation to Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice Puneet Gupta for their exemplary services and contributions to the High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

Monika Kohli, Senior Additional Advocate General in her farewell address lauded the role of Justice Tashi Rabstan, for his dedication and commitment both on judicial and administrative side. She said that his tenure as the Chief Justice of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, though brief, has been marked by judicial prudence, a keen sense of justice and a commitment towards upholding the rule of law.

She appreciated the services of Justice Tashi Rabstan for ensuring access to justice for all particularly the poor and downtrodden. She added that His Lordship displayed exceptional calibre during his tenure as a Judge and then as the Chief Justice of this Court.

Monika Kohli praised Justice Puneet Gupta, describing His Lordship as a gentleman par excellence, who demonstrated dedication and commitment to his professional responsibilities and highlighted kindness and valuable contributions to the institutional growth. She further added that Justice Puneet Gupta demonstrated the positive approach and respect towards the Members of the Bar.

Nirmal Kotwal, President, J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu in his farewell address, lauded the role of Justice Tashi Rabstan for his commitment towards upholding the law and ensuring justice. His contributions to the judiciary are valued and appreciated,

reflecting his hard work and expertise. He added that His Lordship displayed exceptional calibre during his tenure as Judge and then as Chief Justice of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh. He also highlighted the generosity of His Lordship towards the Members of the Bar.

He also praised Justice Puneet Gupta highlighting the exceptional qualities of His Lordship as Judge of the High Court. He said that His Lordship demonstrated a remarkable commitment towards upholding justice and fairness. He further added that Justice Puneet Gupta was known for his simplicity and brilliance in work.

Justice Tashi Rabstan, in response to his farewell addresses, thanked one and all including Judges of High Court of J&K and Ladakh,

Officers of the Registry and Judicial Officers for their undaunted professional commitment and the support extended to him during his tenure in the High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

He said that he is overwhelmed by the warmth and affection shown to him by one and all. He also appreciated the talent of the Members of J&K Bar for their knowledge of Law and Professional competence. He also thanked his personal staff for their support and cooperation.

Justice Puneet Gupta, in response to the farewell addresses, expressed deep gratitude to the Bar and Bench, acknowledging the support of his colleagues, court staff and members of the legal fraternity. He said that no Judge can dispense real justice without the cooperation from the Bar and the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir & Ladakh.

He also appreciated the talent of the Advocates of UTs of J&K and Ladakh for their ability and knowledge of Law. He said that he is overwhelmed by the warmth and affection shown to him by all.



# We batted a bit bitter, but it’s been a frustrating season for CSK: Fleming

Head coach Stephen Fleming was relieved to see Chennai Super Kings' top-order producing some runs, but, for him, the failure of his side to cross the line in the fourth consecutive IPL match this season remained a "frustrating" element. CSK batters gave a better account of themselves in pursuit of 220 set by Punjab Kings, but still fell short of the target by 18 runs here on Tuesday.

"It (has been) a frustrating season so far," Fleming told the media after the match.

"The catching has been poor, but it was poor from both sides. Whether it was something in the light, I'm not sure, but certainly for us that was an area of concern. If you want to pick up 20 runs, it's probably that and (the) drop catches," he said.

Fleming had a point there because CSK have so far dropped 11 catches in five matches, with three of them occurring against Punjab Kings.

The Kiwi then touched upon CSK's improved batting effort as openers Devon Conway and Rachin Ravindra put on 69 runs, following which the former added another 89 runs for the third wicket with Shivam Dube (42).

"Well, positive-wise, we batted a bit better. We got some substance from the top order, which has been lacking so we were able to then construct the chase," Fleming said.

"We just weren't able to keep the run rate at a good level through the middle, and it just left too much towards the end. But we've been out of games, so to be in a game for a lot longer is a positive aspect. The game was really lost in the field," he added.

Fleming heaped praise on Punjab Kings' batter Priyansh Arya, who made a 42-ball 103 despite regular fall of wickets at the other end.

quite drastically.

"We were just a little bit sloppy. We were put under pressure, and the young man had

because you see today Priyansh Arya, then Digvesh Rathi in Lucknow (Super Giants)... the players who did well for the state league,"



**“We just weren't able to keep the run rate at a good level through the middle, and it just left too much towards the end. But we've been out of games, so to be in a game for a lot longer is a positive aspect. The game was really lost in the field,” he added.**

"Well, firstly, he had a day out, didn't he? He played very well right from the first ball. It's very brave when you come off a first ball dismissal to look to play a shot like that," Fleming said.

"Our fault was we were too wide. The plan was to bowl straight at the stumps and create some pressure that way. The first ball we bowled straight, we created a caught and bowled chance, and that changes the night

some amazing shots. We succumbed a little bit to that pressure by putting the ball in areas that he was stronger in, and we just didn't adjust quick enough," he said.

Punjab Kings' Shashank Singh, who struck a 36-ball 52 and forged two vital partnerships to help his side recover from a perilous position of 83/5, said state-based T20 competitions are important to discover talents like Arya.

"I am really in favour of these leagues

he said.

"These (competitions) are really good because obviously you get an opportunity to play under lights, play with Kookaburra ball and play in those pressure situations.

"You get to know the character of the player as well apart from skills, because skills obviously most of them have but the mental toughness, the character you get to see in the state leagues," Singh added.

**“The catching has been poor, but it was poor from both sides. Whether it was something in the light, I'm not sure,** but certainly for us that was an area of concern. If you want to pick up 20 runs, it's probably that and (the) drop catches,” he said.

## Rahane steers clear of 'chaos', will discuss Eden pitch with IPL authorities

"I prefer not to speak. If I speak, I'm in big trouble," Jose Mourinho famously muttered after a narrow defeat for Chelsea in 2014. That had to do with the refereeing in that game against Aston Villa. On Tuesday, Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) captain Ajinkya Rahane said pretty much the same thing. "Agar main kuch bolunga na toh bawal ho jayega" ("If I say anything, it'll create chaos)."

He didn't need to elaborate. After KKR fell short by just four runs in an IPL 2025 game where their spinners had little impact against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG), the murmurs around the Eden Gardens surface, and whether it plays to the strengths of the home side, began swirling again.

"Let me just keep it that way. Jo humare curator hai, unko bahut publicity mila hai (this discussion has just given our curator a lot of publicity)," Rahane went on to add in the post-match press conference. "Whatever you'd like to write about home advantage, you can go ahead. If I have any concerns, I will talk to the IPL about it, rather than you guys, and discuss with the concerned authorities."

With 238 playing 234, bowlers of all kinds were clattered around the park, but for KKR to not use all eight overs of spin at home went against popular wisdom. Sunil Narine was hit for two fours and three sixes in his three-over wicketless spell of 38. The other spinners on view - Varun Chakravarthy, Digvesh Rathi and Ravi Bishnoi - did complete their overs.

Bishnoi, too, was hit for six fours and two sixes. While Varun and Rathi finished with their reputations intact, going at 7.75 and 9.25 respectively, and occasionally troubled the batters with their variations, there was little turn on offer in the afternoon game.

"Firstly, there was no help for the spinners, let me clear that," Rahane said when asked why Narine's quota was not completed. "They used the longer boundary really well. Our bowlers tried as well, but again, Nicholas Pooran (87\* in 36 balls) and Mitchell Marsh (81 in 48) batted really well. In between, they took their chances, which came off really well for them. It was a lovely wicket [to bat on], we all saw that, scoring almost 500 runs [472] on this track. Hard for the bowlers, but they used the conditions and the boundary well."



# Khyber Cement Ka Zarra Zarra Dil Se Bana Hai

