

Kashmir Convener



Inherited Truth,
Courage From Nehru:
Rahul Gandhi

P/02



SC To Hear On Apr
23 Plea For Grant Of
Uniform Compensation To
Victims Of Hate Crime

P/02



Will Win Battle On
Waqf issue, ED
Action Will Not
Frighten Us: Kharage

P/02

Centre-J&K Govt ties key to Development: CM Omar Abdullah

● Jointly inaugurates multi-storeyed parking facility with Dr Jitendra at Kathua

KC News Network

KATHUA: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today reiterated that the progress and development of Jammu and Kashmir lies in cooperation between the J&K Government and the Central Government.

The Chief Minister made these remarks while jointly inaugurating a new multi-storeyed Municipal Parking Complex in Kathua, alongside Union Minister of State Dr. Jitendra Singh and local representatives.

The event was also attended by the Chairperson of the District Development Council, MLAs of Kathua, Jaserota, Hiranagar and Bani constituencies, Commissioner Secretary of Housing & Urban Development, Deputy Commissioner Kathua and other



senior officials.

Addressing a large public gathering

following the inauguration, the Chief Minister said, "From here, I want to convey

to the people of Jammu and Kashmir that the progress of Jammu and Kashmir lies in the fact that the J&K government and the central government work together for the better future of Jammu and Kashmir."

He emphasized that providing essential services such as clean drinking water, electricity, better roads, healthcare, and education remains the foremost responsibility of his government.

"I assure the people of Jammu and Kashmir that we will continue to work in collaboration with the Central Government to ensure a better future for our citizens," he added. Highlighting the importance of continuity in governance, Omar Abdullah stated, "My priority

>>>SEE ON P-7

Ensure Industrial growth is environmentally sustainable: LG Sinha

KC News Network

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today interacted with members of YPO-Global One, an international network of leaders and CEOs in business in Srinagar.

In his keynote address, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the strategic, multi-faceted approach for holistic development of J&K over the last five years including economic growth, sustainability,

that the tourism potential of Jammu and Kashmir can be tapped," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Sharing the progressive policies and initiatives of the government for promoting startup culture and women entrepreneurship in J&K, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the positive outcomes of new Startup Policy which was launched in February 2024.

"So far more than 1030 startups have become operational in which 380 startups are led by the



and seamless implementation of social welfare schemes.

"Our aim is to achieve faster, sustainable and inclusive economic growth. A strategic, multi-faceted approach was adopted to tap the industrial potential of Jammu and Kashmir so as to strike the right balance between economic growth, sustainability and social development," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor shared the insights into J&K's evolving industrial landscape and the emerging opportunities in the sector.

"I want the industrial growth to benefit all the citizens of Jammu Kashmir. This is my resolve. My second resolve is to ensure that Industrial growth is environmentally sustainable.

One of our objectives is to make J&K a leader in innovation to attract investments in research, IT and ITES.

We have analysed locally available skillset and natural resources in order to promote the relevant sectors as per our advantage.

For the industrial growth of Jammu Kashmir, we have focused on sectors which are the strength of the region. For example, the Tourism Sector has witnessed massive increase in tourist influx.

There is immense potential in this sector for unexplored destinations, film tourism, entertainment sector, hotels and resorts and theme parks. Since we have given industry status to tourism, I am sure

daughters of Jammu Kashmir. I consider this a great achievement in restoring the pride of Nari Shakti," he further added.

The Lieutenant Governor said, the initiatives taken by the government in the past few years have doubled the export of handloom and handicrafts and horticulture products are reaching to the global market. He said, today, Jammu Kashmir has no competition in handicraft, handloom and horticulture products.

During the interaction, the Lieutenant Governor addressed the queries from YPO members on J&K's Industrial growth.

"I think Jammu Kashmir has many factors such as economic stability, skilled labour, raw material, better incentives, enabling and safe business environment, high productivity, high potential of value addition, strong infrastructure, transparency and high level of innovation, which makes it an attractive investment destination.

Urban transformation has provided a high standard of living in almost all the cities of Jammu Kashmir. Public safety, strong healthcare system, higher education, low expense burden, high productivity, composite culture, all these systems are perfectly suitable for the operations of multinational companies in the J&K UT," the Lieutenant Governor said.

>>>SEE ON P-7

Conflict entrepreneurs won't be allowed to raise their heads again: LG

Rehan Qayoom Mir

SRINAGAR: Asking Pakistan to stop exporting violence, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said that separatism and terrorism have no future in J&K.

Talking to reporters after addressing a Sufi Conference "Noor-e-Sama" here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said,

"It (Pakistan) is struggling with its internal problems. It is not even able to take care of civil rights. It should



stop exporting terrorism."

He extended his felicitations to the Sufi Scholars, members of Sufi Score Limited, Save Youth Save Future Foundation and everyone associated with organizing a Sufi Conference "Noor-e-Sama" in Srinagar.

He said that "conflict entrepreneurs" won't be allowed to raise their heads again in Jammu and Kashmir again.

"The conflict entrepreneurs joined hands with our neighbour three decades ago and promoted terrorism and hatred for their own benefits. Their hands are smeared with the blood of innocents."

>>>SEE ON P-7

J&K Marriage Assistance Scheme becomes saviour for underprivileged families

● Around 15 thousand cases sanctioned during last fiscal

KC News Network

SRINAGAR: In a significant initiative aimed at handholding the economically weaker sections of the society by extending assistance vis-à-vis marrying-off their daughters, J&K Government's Marriage Assistance Scheme has turned out to be a blessing for underprivileged families.

This social assistance scheme, implemented by Department of Social Welfare was launched with the objective of providing support for the marriage to those families who are not able to conduct it due to their poor financial condition.

As far as the success of this scheme is concerned, a total number of 14965 cases have been sanctioned in Kashmir division during the year 2024-25 alone with financial assistance granted to beneficiaries amounting to Rs.74,82,50,000.



Among these, the residents of Baramulla District have turned out to be most aware of the scheme, with 2472 beneficiaries availing the benefits of the scheme involving assistance of Rs. 12,36,00,000 followed by Anantnag District with 2293 cases worth Rs. 11,46,50,000.

Ganderbal District has figured at the last among all districts in Kashmir division, with only 592 cases registered during 2024-25 and

Rs.2,96,00,000 amount sanctioned to the beneficiaries.

Under this scheme, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) or Priority Household (PPH) Ration Card Holder families are eligible to apply for financial assistance for marriage.

The financial assistance under the J&K Marriage Assistance Scheme for poor girls from for the Antyodaya Anna Yojana

>>>SEE ON P-7

JKRLM engages OMPLIS, Kudumbashree NRO to bolster institutional support

KC NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: In a significant stride towards strengthening the Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission

(JKRLM), Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, chaired a high level meeting with representatives of renowned national organizations, Kudumbashree National Resource Organization (NRO) and Organisation for Management of Poverty and Livelihood Improvement Society (OMPLIS).

The agenda centered around leveraging national expertise for institutional support, training and capacity building of Self Help Groups (SHGs) across the Union Territory.

The meeting besides Principal Secretary, APD; Principal Secretary, Finance; Secretary, RDD; Secretary, Cooperatives; MD, JKRLM was attended by other concerned officers of the department.

The Chief Secretary acknowledged the transformative role of both the organisations in their respective geographies and invited them to extend their human resources and technical know-how to the UT. He emphasized the need for robust training of JKRLM staff and a strategic realignment of the mission to

fully realize its potential in empowering women and alleviating poverty across the rural areas of the UT.

A detailed presentation by OMPLIS shed light on their impactful journey since inception in 1995, outlining how the organization has enabled thousands of women to break free from poverty. Their model, deeply rooted in financial empowerment and collective savings, has generated Rs 73 crore in savings and earned Rs 58

>>>SEE ON P-7

Heavy Downpour, Snowfall Bring Chill Back To Kashmir

>>> Wet spell to continue till Monday <<<

Rehan Qayoom Mir

SRINAGAR : Jammu and Kashmir witnessed intermittent but heavy rainfall since last night bringing the mercury down across the Valley.

The higher reaches experienced fresh snowfall while the hailstorm continued to wreak havoc for the second straight day in South Kashmir.

The local Meteorological department (MeT) had issued



yellow and orange alerts for the day, thereby warning of light to moderate snowfall and rains in Jammu and Kashmir. As per the reports received

by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the upper reaches of Jammu and Kashmir

>>>SEE ON P-7

Div Com Kashmir assesses restoration of essential services

SRINAGAR: Respond immediately to distress calls if any, monitor the emergent situation on ground following incessant rains, gusty winds & hailstorm, and activate control rooms for effective assessment & response, directed Divisional

>>>SEE ON P-7

Mughal, Sinthan, SSG roads closed due to snow

Rehan Qayoom Mir

SRINAGAR : Passenger vehicles plied from both sides on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NHW) on Saturday, while heavy motor vehicles (HMs) were also allowed from Jammu towards Srinagar. Officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO)

>>>SEE ON P-7

Severe Hailstorm, Lightning and Thunderstorms Ravage Kashmir's Fruit Industry

► Fruit Growers Demand Crop Insurance

Jahangeer Ganaie

SRINAGAR: A sudden and severe hailstorm has devastated Kashmir's prized fruit industry, causing extensive damage across the Valley.

On Friday evening, intense hail storms accompanied by lightning, thunderstorms,

and strong winds wreaked havoc in several districts, destroying fruit-laden trees and crops. The worst affected areas include Shopian, Pulwama, Kulgam, Anantnag, Budgam, Baramulla, and Kupwara, where apple, cherry, pear, and plum orchards suffered significant losses.

>>>SEE ON P-7

ACB files twin cases in Hokersar dredging, illegal building permission by LAWDA

KC News Network

SRINAGAR: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Saturday said it filed two separate cases against three officials.

Addressing a news conference here, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) ACB, Javid Hassan Bhat, said, "Three officials



including two Executive Engineers and the then AEE of Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal have been taken into the custody for questioning."

He said that the ACB P/S Srinagar has registered an FIR yesterday following a joint surprise check (JSC No. 17/2020) conducted to enquire into the allegations of irregularities and professional misconduct committed during the dredging of the HokerSar Wetland at Narbal.

"The enquiry conducted has uncovered serious lapses on the part of public officials

and a private contractor company, M/S Reach Dredging Limited. The findings reveal that tenders were invited under NIT No.01 of 2018-19 dated July 7, 2018, for the work and construction of a channel across HokerSar Wetland. The work was allotted in favour of M/S REACH Dredging Ltd. for Rs. 2055.565 lacs by Chief Engineer Irrigation

and Flood Control Kashmir with the Provision that no material shall be dumped within the periphery of HokerSar Wetland. Despite major works being executed based on altered parameters through a Letter of Intent (LOI), the work was awarded based on original advertised quantities and costs, with no clarity on dumping sites or the disposal of excavated material," he said.

The findings of the enquiry also revealed that significant variations in transportation leads (ranging from 8 km to 18 km) were clubbed together, allowing undue payments for transportation of excavated material, most of which was allegedly not disposed off as per the NIT. The manipulation of the specifications of work and quantities resulted in financial loss amounting to Rs. 2.29 crores (approx.), to the State Exchequer, excluding royalty

>>>SEE ON P-7

Karra Hints at NC-Congress Delhi Huddle

Raja Syed Rather

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President Tariq Hamid Karra on Saturday indicated that Congress and National Conference leaders may soon meet in New Delhi to strategize for strengthening their political alliance in the Union Territory.



Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) about his recent meeting with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Karra clarified that the visit - which included Congress MP and J&K in-charge Sayeed Naseer Hussain and CLP leader G.A. Mir - was purely a "courtesy call" and unrelated to cabinet expansion rumors.

"We are considering a Delhi meeting between Congress and NC leadership soon," Karra said. "The agenda will focus solely on consolidating our

>>>SEE ON P-7

Will Win Battle On Waqf issue, ED Action Will Not Frighten Us: Kharge

NCW team meets riot-affected people in Betbona, Dhulian in Bengal’s Murshidabad

NEW DELHI: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday said the party will not be daunted by the Enforcement Directorate's action against its leaders and also asserted that it will win the battle against the BJP-led central government on the Waqf (Amendment) Act.

Addressing a meeting of party general secretaries and in-charges here, Kharge said the Supreme Court has given importance to the points raised by the Congress and other opposition parties on the Act and alleged that the government had raked the 'Waqf by user' issue deliberately to create a dispute over such properties.

He said the Congress party brought together the entire opposition against the government's Waqf (Amendment) Bill.

"The Supreme Court is hearing this case right now, we are confident that we will win this battle too," he said, adding, "I am happy that the Supreme Court has given importance to the points raised by the Congress and other opposition parties." He accused the BJP and the central government of misleading people on the issue of Waqf.

"Especially the issue of 'Waqf by user' has been deliberately brought up by the government to put Waqf properties into dispute," he alleged.

He said former party chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi were named in the Enforcement Directorate chargesheet and National Herald properties in Delhi, Lucknow and Mumbai were attached with a "spirit of vendetta".



"You must have noticed how, as part of a big conspiracy, the names of CPP Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi have been put in the charge sheet in the National Herald case. But no matter whose name they put, we are not going to be afraid," Kharge said.

"Just two or three days before that, the properties of National Herald in Delhi, Lucknow and Mumbai were attached. There is no doubt that all this is being done out of a spirit of vendetta," he said.

Asserting that 'Young Indian' is a 'not for profit' company, Kharge said this means that no one can take or transfer the shares, properties or profit of AJL.

"The BJP people are misleading people by lying. We have to tell the truth to the

public," he said.

The Enforcement Directorate filed the chargesheet against Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and others before a special court here in the National Herald case, accusing them of laundering Rs 988 crore.

The agency has alleged that a "criminal conspiracy" was carried out by Congress leaders to "usurp" properties worth Rs 2,000 crore of its public company Associated Journals Limited (AJL) by transferring 99 per cent shares to their private company named Young Indian for just Rs 50 lakh, a firm where Sonia and Rahul Gandhi are the majority shareholders.

"It cannot be a mere coincidence that on one hand our AICC session is being held in Ahmedabad and immediately after that such a big action of ED is taken," Kharge said.

"I would like to remind you here that when the Congress plenary session was held in Raipur under my leadership, Modi ji got our leaders raided by using ED and CBI to make it a failure. His intention was to prevent the session from taking place. Still, it took place," he said.

Before the Lok Sabha elections, "our accounts were closed, yet the public doubled our numbers in the Lok Sabha", Kharge said, asserting that "our fight did not weaken".

Congress general secretaries K C Venugopal, Jairam Ramesh and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra among others attended the meeting at the Congress' Indira Bhawan office here.

Referring to the Ahmedabad AICC session on April 8-9, Kharge said leaders have to take the message of the resolution passed there to every district, division, block and booth.

"You can understand the seriousness of our decisions from the fact that on 15-16 April, Rahul Gandhi ji called a meeting regarding the election of district presidents in Gujarat.

He communicated with the observers and instructed how the district presidents are to be selected," he said.

Kharge said there are many burning issues before the country, which the party has to keep raising continuously.

"We have to continue working in a planned manner," the Congress president said.

KOLKATA: A delegation of the National Commission for Women (NCW), led by its chairman Vijaya Rahatkar, met the riot-affected people in West Bengal's Murshidabad district on Saturday and assured them that all steps would be taken by the Centre to ensure their safety in future.

The affected women narrated their plight during the violent days and demanded that permanent BSF camps be set up in select areas of the district and an NIA probe into the recent communal clashes, which claimed three lives.

Rahatkar said, "I am dumbfounded by the agony these women are having to suffer. What they went through during the violence is beyond imagination."

The NCW chief told the victims that there was "no cause for worry" as the Centre was beside them. "We have come here to see your plight. Please don't worry. The country and the commission are beside you all. Don't feel that you are alone," Rahatkar told the victims at Betbona village. During the visit to the village by the NCW members, the riot-affected women broke down before them. The villagers were seen holding placards that displayed messages - 'We don't want Lakshmir Bhandar, we want BSF camp. We want security.' 'We are under attack,' read another placard.

NCW member Archana Majumdar told reporters that the commission would report to Union Home Minister Amit Shah and convey the demand of the riot-affected women for setting up BSF camps there.

BJP MLA Sreerupa Mitra Chaudhury, who was

accompanying the NCW team, told PTI Videos, "This is my constituency, Dakshin Malda. I have been contesting from here for the last 12 years, and what I have seen this time is unprecedented. I had never seen violence on such a scale here in the last 12 years."

The NCW team also visited the Dhulian area



of the Murshidabad district, which witnessed violence on a massive scale during protests against amendments to the Waqf Act on April 11 and 12. The NCW team had also visited a relief camp in Malda district on Friday and met those displaced by the Murshidabad riots.

The commission had assessed the condition of women affected by the recent communal violence in parts of the state.

"From what we've seen so far, the situation is extremely distressing. We can feel their pain and suffering," the NCW chief said.

The NCW had earlier taken suo motu cognisance of the violence that broke out in Shamsherganj, Suti, Dhulian, and Jangipur areas of Murshidabad on April 11 and 12.

SC To Hear On Apr 23 Plea For Grant Of Uniform Compensation To Victims Of Hate Crime

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on April 23 a plea seeking uniformity in granting compensation to the victims of hate crime and mob lynching.

The apex court had in April 2023 sought responses from the Centre, states and Union Territories (UTs) on the petition filed by 'Indian Muslim for Progress and Reforms' (IMPARG).

It had asked the Centre, states and UTs to apprise the court of the steps taken for formulating a scheme for providing relief to the families of victims of mob lynching, as directed by the top court in the 2018 verdict in Tehseen Poonawala case.

According to the cause list of April 23 uploaded on the top court's website, a bench of Justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih is slated to hear the matter.

During the hearing before the top court in April 2023, the



petitioner's counsel had said some states had framed schemes pursuant to the 2018 verdict but there was no uniformity, while many states still did not have any such scheme.

It said the petitioner also prays for an order directing the states and UTs to provide just, fair and reasonable compensation to the victims of hate crime and mob lynching following the scheme framed by them in compliance with the apex court's 2018

direction.

The petition flagged the alleged "whimsical, discriminatory and arbitrary approach" adopted by the states in the grant of ex-gratia to the victims of hate crime and mob lynching and the "meagre" compensation provided to them.

The plea said the compensation awarded by the states in most cases depended on extraneous factors like "media coverage, political imperatives and

the victim's religious identity".

"It is seen that the trend of awarding compensation to the victims of hate crime/ mob lynching is decided based on the religious affiliation of the victims. In some cases, where the victims belong to other religious denominations, huge compensation is awarded for their losses, while in other cases where the victim belongs to a minority community, the compensation is woefully inadequate," it claimed. (PTI)

The plea said the petitioner was praying for an order or direction to bring in uniformity in the grant of compensation to the victims of hate crimes and mob lynching as the present practice of granting ex-gratia amounts by various states was discriminatory and contrary to the provisions of Articles 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution.

Inherited Truth, Courage From Nehru: Rahul

NEW DELHI: Jawaharlal Nehru's greatest legacy was giving Indians the courage to resist oppression and claim freedom, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said on Saturday and added he inherited "truth and courage" from his great-grandfather — the country's first prime minister.

In a free-wheeling conversation with party leader Sandeep Dikshit that was posted on the former Congress chief's X handle and YouTube channel, Gandhi talks about his pursuit of truth and his willingness to stand by it no matter what the cost.

"Nehru didn't teach us politics — he taught us to confront fear and stand for the truth. He gave Indians the courage to resist oppression and ultimately claim freedom," the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said in the post on X.

"His greatest legacy lies in his relentless pursuit of truth — a principle that shaped everything he stood for," he added.

The video has been uploaded on Gandhi's YouTube channel with the caption "Truth and Courage - What I Inherited from Nehru".

"This one's personal. In this podcast-style conversation with Sandeep Dikshit, I speak about what drives me — the pursuit of truth — and how that pursuit is inspired



by my great-grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru. He wasn't just a politician. He was a seeker, a thinker, someone who walked into danger with a smile and came out stronger," Gandhi wrote in the video description.

"His greatest legacy lies in his relentless pursuit of truth — a principle that shaped everything he stood for. He didn't teach us politics — he taught us to confront fear and stand for the truth. That need to seek, to question, to stay rooted in curiosity — it runs in my blood," the former Congress chief added.

Gandhi said his grandmother — former prime minister Indira Gandhi — told him stories of how Nehru nearly fell into a glacier in the mountains he loved, how animals were always part of the family, or how they never

missed an hour of exercise.

"My mother still watches birds in the garden. I do judo. These aren't just hobbies — they're windows into who we are. We observe. We stay connected to the world around us. And what we carry most deeply is the instinct to face challenges with quiet strength," he wrote.

"That's what Gandhi, Nehru, Ambedkar, Patel, and Bose were really teaching: how to befriend fear. Not socialism, not politics — just courage. Gandhi stood up to an empire with nothing but truth. Nehru gave Indians the courage to resist oppression and ultimately claim freedom. Any great human endeavour — science, art, resistance — it all begins with confronting fear. And if you're committed to non-violence, then truth is your only weapon. No matter what was done to them, they didn't budge from it. That's what made them great leaders," he noted.

Whether he is speaking to Bill Gates or Chetram Mochi, he meets them with the same curiosity, Gandhi said.

"Because real leadership isn't about control. It's about compassion. And in today's India — where truth is inconvenient — I've made my choice. I'll stand for it. No matter the cost," he wrote.

VHP holds country-wide protests against Murshidabad violence, demands President’s Rule in Bengal

NEW DELHI/KOLKATA: The Vishva Hindu Parishad on Saturday staged protests in different parts of the country against the recent communal violence in West Bengal's Murshidabad over the amendments made to the Waqf law, demanding immediate imposition of President's Rule in the state.

The protests were held in

police blocked their entry and detained Hindus so that they don't present their case before the two bodies.

"President's Rule is the only solution to keep the Hindu society safe (in West Bengal) because the state government has failed to maintain law and order due to its politics of Muslim appeasement." In Noida, the VHP took

as protests against reservation eventually went on to target Hindus. But we will not tolerate such Bangladeshi mindset in our country," Bansal said.

The VHP demands immediate imposition of President's Rule in West Bengal, fencing of borders in the state, adequate compensation to the victims of violence in Murshidabad, and safety of Hindus, he said.

"The VHP also demands that land grabbing in the name of Waqf be immediately stopped and a high-level inquiry be ordered into the properties acquired in the name of Waqf," Bansal said.

"We also demand that authorities identify the Bangladeshi-Rohingya infiltrators in West Bengal and drive them out (of the country). Strictest action should be taken against the perpetrators of violence in Murshidabad," he said, adding that the VHP will hold similar protests across Delhi and Punjab on Monday.

Speaking to PTI Videos, Bansal claimed that Hindus are being compelled to flee their homes in Murshidabad where a father-son duo was brutally murdered only because they made idols.

"We wonder from where such hatred against Hindus comes. The chief minister there invites 'jihad' forces for meetings but doesn't utter a word on the atrocities against Hindus. We condemn the way Hindus are being targeted in the name of Waqf," the VHP spokesperson told PTI Videos.



Murshidabad, Delhi and Noida, among other places, with VHP members claiming a complete breakdown of law and order in the Mamata Banerjee-ruled state where clashes claimed at least three lives last week.

In Delhi's Nangloi Chowk, Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) general secretary Bajrang Bagda led a protest condemning the violence in West Bengal.

Accusing the Trinamool Congress government of orchestrating the violence in Murshidabad, Bagda claimed, "When members of the National Human Rights Commission and the National Commission for Women reached Murshidabad,

out a rally led by its national spokesperson Vinod Bansal, raising slogans against the Trinamool Congress government in Bengal.

"Protests were held at multiple locations across the country, barring Punjab, because the Trinamool Congress is carrying out a cycle of oppression and repression of Hindus in connivance with Bangladeshi-Rohingya infiltrators," Bansal told PTI.

"The recent incident of violence in Murshidabad was only a 'gruesome form' of the ongoing oppression (of Hindus) in Bengal under Trinamool's watch. "In Bangladesh, what began

JEE (Main) Second Edition: 24 Candidates Secure 100 NTA Score; 110 Cases Of Unfair Means Detected

NEW DELHI: Twenty-four candidates secured a perfect 100 in the engineering entrance JEE (Main), the results of which were announced by the National Testing Agency on Saturday.

Mayawati says Centre-state disputes over delimitation, NEP affects national interest

LUCKNOW: Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Saturday said it is "natural" that disputes between states and the Centre over the delimitation, national education policy "for political gains" hurts the people and the nation.

Good governance is that which takes the entire country along as per the Constitution," the former UP chief minister said.

In a post on X in Hindi, she said, "It is natural that public and national interest is hit by the use of disputes between the states and the Centre for political gains regarding census and re-allocation of Lok Sabha seats on its basis, the new education policy and the imposition of language, etc."

Mayawati said the government should instead pay attention to how children studying in government schools, especially those from the oppressed groups and are poor, Dalit, tribal or from the backward class, can progress in IT and skilled fields without acquiring knowledge of English.

"Hatred towards language is inappropriate," she posted.

The central government and southern states are engaged in a tussle over delimitation exercise scheduled for next year. The Tamil Nadu government and the Centre are also clashing over the issue of the implementation of the National Education Policy, and the debate around the "imposition of Hindi" linked to it. The NEP and language imposition debate has recently emerged even in Maharashtra where the BJP government has decided to make Hindi a mandatory third language for students of Classes 1 to 5 in Marathi and English-medium schools across the state, in a departure from the practice of studying two languages.

Seven toppers are from Rajasthan, three each from Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra; two each from Delhi, West Bengal and Gujarat; and one each from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

Two of the toppers are women.

While 21 top-scoring candidates are from the General category, the list includes one candidate each from the Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and the Other Backward Classes (OBC) categories. The examination was conducted in 13 languages — Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu.

The second edition of JEE (Main) was conducted at

531 unique examination centres in 300 cities, including 15 outside India in Manama (Bahrain), Doha City (Qatar), Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Dubai (United Arab Emirates), Muscat (Oman), Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Singapore, Kuwait City (Kuwait), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Kathmandu (Nepal), West Java (Indonesia), Washington (US), Lagos (Nigeria) and Munich (Germany).

In the first edition, the NTA scores of 39 candidates were not declared as they were found to have indulged in unfair practices. During the second edition, 110 candidates were found to be involved in unfair means, including forgery of documents related to the examination, and consequently, their results were not declared.

India’s first prototype fast-breeder reactor to be commissioned by September 2026

NEW DELHI: India's first prototype fast-breeder reactor in Tamil Nadu's Kalpakkam is expected to be commissioned next year, nearly two years after it got the go-ahead from the nuclear regulator, officials have said.

The commissioning of the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) will mark the second stage of India's three-stage nuclear programme that aims to recycle spent fuel to reduce the inventory of radioactive waste.

The PFBR being developed in Kalpakkam is the first-of-its-kind nuclear reactor to use plutonium-based mixed oxide as fuel and liquid sodium as coolant. It will also utilise the spent fuel of Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors, which form the mainstay of nuclear power in India at present.

While the state-run Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) operates nuclear power plants in the country, the PFBR in Kalpakkam is being developed by the Bharatiya

Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam (BHAVINI).

"BHAVINI's 500 MW PFBR is in the advanced stage of

Prime Minister Narendra Modi witnessed the commencement of core loading in the nuclear reactor in March last year.



integrated commissioning, with expected first criticality by 2025-26." Department of Atomic Energy officials recently told the parliamentary standing committee on science and technology.

They had told the committee that the first criticality of the PFBR was expected to be achieved in March and the plant would be completed by September 2026.

Last July, the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) granted permission for loading of fuel, first approach to criticality and conducting low-power physics experiments for the PFBR.

PFBRs are critical for India's nuclear programme as the spent fuel from these reactors will be used to power the thorium-based reactors that form the third stage of the closed fuel cycle.

DC Bandipora Stresses Importance of Youth Involvement in Job Creation, Entrepreneurship Development

BANDIPORA: For effective and efficient implementation of MISSION YUVA and as part of the training and capacity-building initiative under Mission YUVA, a day-long orientation and training program was conducted today for Yuva DOOTs at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri emphasized the importance of empowering youth at the grassroots to foster entrepreneurship and promote self-employment opportunities. He stressed its basic objective of guiding potential entrepreneurs and urged the YUVA DOOTs to approach the task with dedication.

The training aimed to help assigned Yuva DOOTs understand their roles and responsibilities and how these DOOTs can effectively support and guide aspiring entrepreneurs in the district and to equip Yuva DOOTs with the necessary skills and knowledge to connect with and sup-

port potential entrepreneurs in their respective panchayats.



Speaking at the event, DC highlighted the importance of empowering youth at the grassroots level. He said that the main objective of Mission YUVA is to identify potential entrepre-

neurs and support the government in job creation. "This mission shows youth the right path and helps them grow in the field they're passionate about," he said.

He also urged the Yuva DOOTs to attend the training sincerely and implement the knowledge in the field with dedication. He stressed that good coordination among banks, EDI, Employment, and Industries departments is crucial for the successful execution of the mission.

DC shared that a detailed baseline survey was recently carried out by investigators and supervisors to identify potential entrepreneurs across the district. "The survey gave us a better understanding of the youth's aspirations. Now that we know who to focus on, it's easier to guide

and support them in the right direction so they can become valuable contributors to society," he added.

During the session, Project Manager, District Industries Centre (DIC) Bandipora presented a PowerPoint presentation explaining the operational guidelines and the application process under Mission YUVA.

The training featured interactive sessions that encouraged open discussions, enabling the Yuva DOOTs to ask questions, clarify doubts, and share valuable suggestions. With a clear action plan and comprehensive orientation, the DOOTs are now equipped to begin outreach in their respective areas and actively support entrepreneurship development under Mission YUVA.

Among others, the event was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Zaffar Husson Shawl; Assistant Labour Commissioner Bandipora; LDM Bandipora and other concerned officials.

Bandipora Police Attach Property of Notorious Drug Peddler Under NDPS Act

BANDIPORA: In a major crackdown on drug trafficking, the Bandipora Police have attached property worth over 13.62 lakh belonging to a notorious drug peddler under Section 68-F of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985.

The attached assets include a single-storey residential house measuring 696.69 square feet in Mir Mohallah, Kaloosa, and a Maruti Suzuki Alto K10 vehicle bearing registration number JK15B 6467.



According to police, the properties are owned by Nazir Ahmad Bhat, son of Abdul Khaliq Bhat, a resident of Kaloosa. He is an accused in FIR No. 20/2025, registered under Sections 8/20 of the NDPS Act at Police Station Bandipora.

Authorities have issued a stern public notice prohibiting any transaction or third-party interest in the said property. "No one shall purchase, lease, or otherwise deal with the attached property. The owner is also barred from selling or transferring it in any manner," the police stated.

This action is part of the Bandipora Police's intensified efforts to curb the drug menace by targeting the economic base of those involved in narcotic smuggling.

Officials reiterated their commitment to continue cracking down on drug trafficking networks and disrupting the financial support structures of offenders to ensure a drug-free society.

Usman Majid Demands Probe into Alleged Scam at Bandipora's Drug De-Addiction Centre, OSC and Senior Citizens' Home

BANDIPORA: Former Minister and ex-MLA Bandipora, Usman Majid, has demanded a high-level probe into alleged large-scale irregularities and corruption at key social welfare institutions in Bandipora, including the Drug De-Addiction Centre (DDAC), One-Stop Centre (OSC), and Senior Citizens' Home (SrCH).

In a statement issued to Kashmir Convener on Thursday, Majid raised serious concerns over reports suggesting that these centres, meant to serve vulnerable sections of society, are being mismanaged and allegedly controlled by an informal nexus of government officials and local contractors. He alleged that the Jammu and Kashmir Students Welfare Mission (JKSWM), the designated implementing agency for these centres, is at the heart of a "web of corruption and exploitation."

Quoting internal sources and public feedback, Majid claimed that the DDAC, OSC, and SrCH are not functioning under officially appointed staff but are instead being run by individuals with close ties to senior officials. "Many of those employed have been recruited on the basis of favoritism, lacking the necessary qualifications and accountability," he alleged, adding that some have continued in their roles for over three years without any formal review.

He further accused the implementing agency of misappropriating funds allocated by the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. "Instead of being used for rehabilitation, support, and senior care, the funds appear to have been diverted for personal gains," Majid said.

Citing credible accounts, he also claimed that the staff often remain absent from their duties, only appearing during ministry visits to project a false image of active operations. "This manipulation is a betrayal of public trust and a gross misuse of central welfare schemes," he said.

Calling for swift action, Majid urged the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and other relevant authorities to initiate a thorough investigation into the matter. "This is not just administrative failure, it is exploitation of the most vulnerable. The guilty must be identified and punished to uphold transparency, accountability, and public faith," he said.

He concluded by stating that it is imperative to restore credibility to institutions that are meant to serve those battling addiction, gender violence, and old age challenges. "These are not just centres; they are lifelines for many. Any negligence or corruption here amounts to playing with human lives," he said.

JKRETTF President Calls on MLA Hilal Akbar Lone

BANDIPORA: In an effort to highlight and address key challenges faced by the education sector in Bandipora district, the District President of Jammu and Kashmir Rehbar-e-Taleem Teachers Forum (JKRETTF) Muntazir Muneer, met MLA Sonawari, Advocate Hilal Akbar Lone.

During the meeting, Muneer raised several pressing issues concerning both teaching and non-teaching staff across the district. He flagged critical gaps such as staff shortages, poor infrastructure in schools, pending General Provident (GP) fund cases, and the long-pending transition of teachers from TG-3 to TG-2 categories. He stressed the urgent need for policy-level interventions to uplift the standard of education in the region.

A major highlight of the discussion was the plight of AAYAS working in various schools. Muneer underlined their crucial contribution to the daily functioning and student well-being in government schools and urged the legislator to push for their regularization and continued engagement in the system.

Responding to the concerns, MLA Hilal Akbar Lone assured his full support and promised to take up the issues with the concerned authorities. He emphasized his commitment to strengthening the education system and pledged to raise these matters at appropriate forums for timely redressal.

The meeting concluded on a hopeful note, with both sides expressing optimism that the concerns raised will translate into meaningful action on the ground.

Indian Army Brings Mobile Connectivity to Siachen, DBO Galwan Valley

JAMMU: Indian Army has facilitated mobile connectivity across some of the most inaccessible regions of Ladakh, including forward posts in Eastern Ladakh, Western Ladakh, and the Siachen Glacier that is seen as a landmark initia-



tive aimed at bridging the digital divide and uplifting remote border communities.

For the first time ever, troops stationed in extremely high-altitude areas such as Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO), Galwan, Demchok, Chumar, Batalik, Dras, and the Siachen Glacier now have access to reliable 4G and 5G connectivity. This development has significantly boosted the morale of soldiers deployed at altitudes above 18,000 feet, allowing them to stay in touch with their families despite harsh and isolated conditions.

An official spokesperson said this achievement is the result of a collaborative effort under the Whole-of-Government approach. The Indian Army, utilizing its existing Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) infrastructure, partnered with Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) and the Union

Territory Administration of Ladakh.

He said the Fire and Fury Corps played a pivotal role in facilitating this synergy, enabling the installation of several mobile towers—including four critical ones in Ladakh and Kargil districts—on Army infrastructure. The initiative goes beyond improving troop welfare; it is a significant nation-building effort that is reshaping the lives of residents in "First Villages"—the last inhabited settlements along the border.

Spokesperson said the far-reaching impact includes Bridging the digital divide, Boosting local economies, Promoting border tourism, Improving access to healthcare and emergency services, Facilitating educational opportunities, Strengthening local commerce, Preserving indigenous culture and traditions and Curbing outward migration from remote villages

Among the most remarkable achievements is the successful installation of a 5G tower on the Siachen Glacier—the highest battlefield in the world—underscoring India's technological capability and commitment to inclusive growth.

The initiative has been met with widespread appreciation from local residents, who now see mobile connectivity not just as a service, but as a transformative lifeline that fosters dignity, development, and opportunity.

This visionary effort by the Indian Army reinforces its role not just as defenders of the nation's borders, but as key drivers of development and integration. It exemplifies the spirit of Viksit Bharat – India@2047, where no region is left behind in the journey towards progress.

MLA Bandipora Activates Emergency Helplines Amid Severe Weather Alert

BANDIPORA: In response to the continuous rainfall and the forecast of a severe thunderstorm across Bandipora district, the office of the MLA Bandipora Nizamudin Bhat has activated emergency helplines to support residents during the period of adverse weather conditions.

The weather department has warned of lightning, strong winds, and possible hailstorms, prompting swift action from the local legislator's office. A public notice issued today urged residents to stay indoors and remain vigilant, assuring that dedicated helplines are in place to address any emergencies that may arise due to the weather.

The emergency helpline numbers—7006197461 and 7889716511—will remain active throughout the duration of the weather alert.

"The safety of our people is our utmost priority. These helplines will help us stay connected and offer timely assistance if needed," the official statement from the MLA's office read.

Locals have welcomed the move and expressed appreciation for the timely intervention amid growing concerns about damage to



property and power disruptions caused by inclement weather.

Meanwhile The district administration and local representatives continue to monitor the situation closely.

Fresh Snowfall: Gurez Road Closed, Schools Closed in Gurez, Tulail Valley

Bandipora || Weather conditions disrupted life across Kashmir on Saturday. Higher reaches witnessed snowfall and plains experienced rainfall, leading to a decrease in day temperatures.

Reports said snowfall was recorded in several higher-altitude areas of North Kashmir, including Tulail and Gurez in Bandipora district. Snow accumulation led to the closure of roads

and authorities suspended school classes as a precaution.

The Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Gurez ordered the suspension of classes up to the 8th standard in Tulail and up to the 5th standard in Gurez Tehsil, citing student safety during snowfall and poor weather conditions.

The Gurez-Bandipora road has been closed for vehicular traffic following snowfall, officials confirmed.

Classwork at the primary level was suspended in Bandipora and up to the middle level in Gurez due to rain and snowfall.

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, said the administration is prepared to deal with the weather situation.

JKAP 8th Battalion Conducts Road March to Boost Operational Readiness

MIRAN SAHIB, JAMMU : The Jammu and Kashmir Armed Police (JKAP) 8th Battalion conducted a 10-kilometre road march today, aimed at enhancing physical fitness, endurance, and team coordination among its



personnel. The march commenced from the JKAP-8th Bn. campus, passed through Tanda, and concluded at the battalion headquarters.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers and jawans, who maintained high discipline and coordination throughout the march. The exercise was designed to ensure the operational preparedness of the

force in handling any emergency or law and order situation.

Speaking on the occasion, Sh. Suram Singh (JKPS), SSP Commandant of JKAP-8th Bn., lauded the dedication and resilience of the personnel. He stressed the importance of physical fitness in police duties, particularly in ensuring public safety and maintaining law and order.

"The road march not only builds physical strength but also instills teamwork and boosts morale," SSP Singh said, adding that such activities reinforce the force's commitment to public service.

Residents along the route witnessed the disciplined movement of the personnel, which also served as a confidence-building measure, reinforcing the community's trust in the security forces.

The march concluded with a brief interaction session at the headquarters. Sh. Bhupinder Singh (Dy SP) and Sh. SI Hans Raj, Lines Officer, were also present on the occasion and appreciated the efforts of the participants.

The JKAP 8th Battalion reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining peace and security in the region, emphasizing that regular physical drills are essential to remain mission-ready.

Indian Army Organizes Awareness Lecture on BBBP at Budhal

RAJOURI: In a continued effort to empower communities and promote gender equality, the Indian Army organised an awareness lecture on the Government of India's flagship initiative "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" in the remote region of Budhal, district Rajouri.



The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, community leaders, and local residents. The session focused on spreading awareness about the importance of protecting and educating the girl child, with emphasis on both social responsibilities and the legal rights associated with women's welfare.

Army officials interacted with attendees, underlining the pivotal role of girls in society and the need to eliminate gender-based discrimination. Informational pamphlets and educational materials detailing various government schemes for the girl child were distributed during the session.

This initiative is part of the Indian Army's ongoing efforts to support national missions and contribute to the socio-economic upliftment of remote and underserved regions of Jammu & Kashmir. The event not only educated the public but also reinforced the Army's commitment to social development, harmony, and inclusive growth.

Local residents expressed deep appreciation for the Army's initiative in addressing such crucial issues and hoped for more such engagements in the future.

Editorial

Shores Of Vigilance

In a remarkable demonstration of vigilance and coordination, the Indian Coast Guard, in partnership with the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad, dealt a major blow to the narcotics trade with the seizure of over 300 kg of methamphetamine, valued at approximately ₹1,800 crore. Conducted over the night of April 12 and 13, this operation not only underscores the growing threat posed by drug smuggling along India's maritime borders but also highlights the critical role of inter-agency collaboration in national security.

The operation unfolded near the International Maritime Boundary Line, a zone that has increasingly become a hotbed for illicit transshipment activities. Upon receiving credible intelligence from the Gujarat ATS, an ICG vessel altered its course while on patrol and managed to intercept the suspect boat. Though the traffickers succeeded in crossing the maritime boundary to evade capture, the swift response of the Coast Guard ensured the recovery of the dumped contraband under challenging night-time conditions at sea.

While the suspects may have slipped away, the mission was far from a failure. The retrieval of such a large quantity of narcotics not only prevents its circulation within our borders but sends a strong message to those who seek to exploit our maritime vulnerabilities. This interception is a part of a larger pattern—13 successful joint operations in recent years—that speaks volumes about the increasing synergy between central and state enforcement agencies. Such coordination is vital in an age when criminal networks grow more sophisticated and transnational in nature.

However, the incident also calls for a renewed focus on maritime surveillance, particularly near sensitive boundary areas. With traffickers clearly testing the limits of our enforcement capabilities, it becomes imperative to invest in better technology, faster vessels, and deeper cooperation with international agencies. The sea is vast, but our resolve must be deeper.

The nation owes a debt of gratitude to the personnel who executed this mission. Their courage and commitment, often under-recognized, are pivotal in keeping the country secure from invisible yet grave threats. As India continues to rise on the global stage, safeguarding our maritime frontiers from such nefarious activities will be as important as securing our borders on land. The recent success is a step in the right direction—but the journey is far from over.

Shardapeeth: Cradle of Knowledge, Devotion, and Dharma

Dr Raja Langer

In 1947 when Bharat got Independence, the total area Jammu and Kashmir had was 2,22,236 sq. kms, out of which half the area was grabbed by China and Pakistan together. Bharat was left with only 1,02,387 sq. kms of area. Gilgit, Bajarat, Baltistan, Chillas, Hajjipura etc. are under direct control of Pakistan whereas Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Chhamb, Kotli, etc. are self-controlled but they fall under the jurisdiction of Pakistan.

Along the border of PoK near Muzaffarabad there flows a river Krishan-Ganga. This is the same river in which elixir (Amrit) extracted from the churning of the ocean (Samudra Manthan) was kept safe from Asuras.

Afterwards Lord Brahma established the temple of Maa Sharda on the bank of the river Krishan-Ganga. Sharda is a Sanskrit and Kashmiri name of goddess Saraswati; the goddess of knowledge. The temple is otherwise known as Shardapeeth, which means the seat of goddess Sharda.

The Sharda Shastranam Stotra is a canticle depicting Goddess Sharda as: Goddess Sharda is "Sheeladevi" (A Goddess in stone) she sits on a stone seat and has a pleasant smiling face. Her form and appearance resemble those of Goddess Parvati (wife of Lord Shiva). She holds a sword in one hand, her eyes are glowing and radiant like the Sun, the Moon and the god Fire.

From the day Maa Sharda presided at Shardapeeth, the entire Kashmiri community worshipped and sang praises of the Goddess. People of Kashmir are so blessed by Maa Sharda, even the writer of "Ashtang Yoga" and "Ashtang Hridhya", VAGBHAT was born there. Most of Advaitik scriptures such as, Neelam Puran, Chrk samhita, Shiv Puran, Shiv sutra, Vigyan Bhairavi, prativigyahridhyam, Spandkanika, Tantraloka, Kalhan's Rajatarangini, Sarang Dev's Sangeet-ratnakar etc. were also written on the soil of Shardapeeth where it is believed that the seed of knowledge was hidden by Maa Sharda herself. Ram Katha written at Shardapeeth (in Kashmir) has a vivid and direct mention of Makkareshwar Mahadev.

Kashmir is a place where age-old tradition and clan of Shavdarshan and Shavites originated. "Kashyapmir" aka Kashmir means the Land of "kashyap Rishi" the ascetic. Kashmir was a significant center of learning of medicine, Astronomy, astrology, methodology, jurisprudence, Architecture, painting, and craft etc. for erudite and scholars.

An ancient volume "Shakti Sangam Tantra" has a stray reference to "Sharda complex". The volume

describes Kashmir as a Land from Sharda Complex to "Saffron mountain" Keshara Parbat extending up to 50 yojana.

Sharda peeth is situated at about 140 kms from the city of Srinagar in Kashmir. For thousands of years, a massive religious congregation was held at Shardapeeth on every Bhadrapad Shuklapaksh



ashtami, where scholars, siddhas, sanyasis, yogis and devotees would come to pay their obeisance to their favorite Goddess, Maa Sharda. That's the reason why Ashtami of Bhadrapad month is celebrated and called as Sharda ashtami.

Hue-en-tsang, the famous Chinese traveller, who travelled to Kashmir in 632 A.D. in his travelogue, gave an account of his experiences of meetings and discussions with the scholars, pandits, gram-marians, and yogis at Shardapeeth, who he claims were exceptionally brilliant. He thought that all those special people were endowed with perspicacious wits and acumen and are geniuses in the real sense of the term.

There is a narrative, regarding Goddess Sharda in Hindu scriptures that when pandits refused to baptize (the sacred thread ceremony) "Shandli" because he was born to a lower caste couple (untouchables). Dismayed, Shandli visited Maharishi Vashishta (the teacher of Lord Rama), who advised him to pay his obeisance to Maa Sharda at the very Sharda temple on the banks of river Krishan-Ganga. On his arrival, Maa Sharda not only blessed the child with brilliance and acumen but also consecrated and re-christened him as Rishi Shandilya. Today, Shandilya gotra is found in all caste of Hindus.

Even Adiguru Shankaracharya was blessed by the goddess on his arrival at Shardapeeth. Maa Sharda appeared before him, blessed him and encouraged him on his path to re-establish Vedic Sanatan Dharma.

Shardapeeth had four doors facing four directions. The southern door was always closed and none of the scholars or spiritualists could ever enter from the south door. It was "Adi Shankaracharya", who opened the door from the south and entered

the center. He defeated all the scholars there and won the highest hierarchical position of "Acharya".

Even after "Adi Shankaracharya" many scholars visited Shardapeeth and used it as a learning ground. Swami Ramanujacharya, wrote his commentary and criticism on Brahma Sutra, sitting at peeth. Rishi Panini also wrote his "Ashtahrighya" here.

Shardapeeth once housed the Sharda University, one of the country's oldest universities, with over 5000 scholars and a library. The University had evolved its own script, known as "Sharda".

The Ethical Importance of Shankaracharya at Shardapeeth

What the various incarnations of Shri Vishnu did in establishment of dharma or morality, the same was expected of Shankaracharyas, the incarnations of Bhagwan Shankar, seated on various monasteries (Mathas & Peethas). Dharma is the protector of both humanity and nature. It's established for the protection only, but adrift Dharma stranded in dogmas becomes ruinous. God and great men incarnate from time to time to give direction to common people. For such establishment of Dharma only, Shankaracharya Swami Amritanand ji has manifested in Sarvagya Peeth of Jammu and Kashmir.

Now, the question arises as to what is the utility of Shankaracharya in the modern age? This question becomes more important in the background that Adi Shankaracharya established four Mathas headed by Shankaracharyas to institute and protect Vedic dharma. But with the passage of time these Mathas (Monasteries) aberrated from its basic objectives and thus lost their impact in society. Establishment devoid of objective and direction can never be venerable and it's not thus exemplary and is never followed.

The position of Shankaracharya was not for personal benefits. Its objective was to induce the path of Dharma and inspire about Vedic Sanatan values in the minds of common people. This needed profound fearlessness, courage, sacrifice and hard work. One imbued with such values only could carry and complete this mission. On the contrary, the worldly effects and ego overpowered and the values like sacrifice, hard work and selflessness deteriorated. Four Mathas established on four corners could not make that impact and were unable to achieve its objective. The power struggle left the public disappointed and the following got very limited.

Now, the so called saints and Mahatmas have no effect in the society because they themselves don't follow those values which they preach. The pain of

their dual character compels the public to simply ignore them. There's a distorted image of Dharma in society but to remove the misconception through rightful arguments didn't seem to be the motive of these Mathas. But by nature, whatever be the drawbacks, forces emerge to remove those drawbacks. Nature and society just tend to resist change.

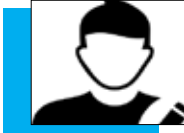
To remain intact and unchanging is momentary by nature and not permanent. On the basis of this natural law of an over changing world, "Amritanand ji", an embodiment of courage, sacrifice and austerity was persuaded by learned council to glorify the honorable responsibility. The council was learned but the Guru was young.

After all, Adi Shankaracharya, Ram Krishana, Vivekananda, all filled with profound consciousness, were all young. Only such youth power can justify this honorable responsibility. Where death is pervading under the shadow of terrorism, there Swami Amritanand ji's expedition in Kashmir as a Sanyasi proves that he is all knowledgeable in real sense. Soul is immortal, I am Brahman. This feeling is the only knowledge. This generates fearlessness. Such fearlessness was exhibited by Adi Shankara in Badrikashram and Gomukh. It seems as if same Great Soul is governing the whole objective again.

Sarvagya Peeth is the base of all Peethas. It is the seed. Just as Aatma, the soul is the root cause of the body and its actions, similarly, Sarvagya peeth is the root of all Mathas. Adi Shankara laid the foundation of all Mathas from here only to establish Vedic Sanatan Dharma. This is that central force of all Peethas from where governance of all Peethas was planned. The geographical situation of Jammu & Kashmir, its social fabric, and the threshold of foreign aggressors including Malechchas witnessed the greatest downfall of Eternal Hindu philosophy during these ages. Hundreds of Hindu temples were demolished. Hindus were terrorized, forcibly made to relinquish their faith and at last made to displace their motherland. Lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits are still living in refugee camps and those still living in Kashmir are forced to part with their belief and faith. Hindu faith didn't witness a downfall of such severity even in the time of Adi Shankaracharya. In the preview of the upsurge of terrorism and downfall of Dharma values Sarvagya Sharda Peeth, land of Aryavart is eagerly waiting for the emergence of His Holiness Shankaracharya, which has been fulfilled by Swami Amritanand ji.

(Article was published by The Daily Excelsior in Year 2023. The author is Consultant Urologist Superspeciality hospital, GMC Jammu.)

From Closed Doors to Open Tabs



Dr. Satyawan Saurabh

The things that happen inside the house are no longer inside the house. There was a time when whatever happened inside the walls was buried inside the walls. But now the walls are also connected to Wi-Fi, and relationships are based

cameras and come "live" and declare themselves victims. Tremors in the voice, tears in the eyes, and pain in the words—everything is so real that the viewer gets emotionally invested in it in a moment.

But the question is, is he seeing the whole face of reality, or just half of it?

Take today's example—first the 'Sutta Aali' episode dominated social media, and now the 'Mukka Wali' case. In both, one side first came on social media to garner sympathy. People rushed in support, trolling began, and accusations were hurled. But when the other side came forward after some time, the same sympathizers were

without investigating—just by the speed of it going viral. 'Who came to live first' has become more important than 'who is right.'

Relationships have now become a part of reels and ratings.

When a rift in a relationship is made public, it affects not just the relationship but the society as well. It is becoming a perversion where personal pain becomes public entertainment. And it is fueled by the hunger for views, likes, and followers. There was a time when people would do anything

screens than support.

In this digital age, relationships are no longer driven by communication but by content. Instead of talking to their partner, people post 'indirect' things on social media. If there is a fight, then the story is "There is a limit to tolerating everything." And then there is a flood of likes, comments, and shares, which puts more nails in the torn fabric of that relationship. Is there any way to get out of this 'digital drama'? Of course there is. But we have to start. Before making any fight or dispute public, talk to your closest person in private. Communication

tion of trust is strengthened by dialogue, not by tamasha. Coming live every time and crying may get sympathy, but relationships are not saved. And when the other side comes forward, then not only the relationship but also the trust dies—of that person and that society, which was

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Take today's example—first the 'Sutta Aali' episode dominated social media, and now the 'Mukka Wali' case. In both, one side first came on social media to garner sympathy. People rushed in support, trolling began, and accusations were hurled. But when the other side came forward after some time, the same sympathizers were seen standing at the crossroads. Some were annoyed, some became silent, and some folded their hands—"We" did not know the whole thing."

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on data packs. Facebook Live, Insta Story, and YouTube vlogs on every small thing—these have now become the new age relationship-resolution platform. If there is a small fight, people turn on the camera and start crying in front of the "audience." And no one has any idea how much truth is there behind that crying face—because the other side of the story often comes out of season or never comes at all.

Live crying and a flood of sympathy

Nowadays, there is no tolerance in relationships; there is scripting. As soon as a spark of quarrel or discord arises, people turn on their

seen standing at the crossroads. Some were annoyed, some became silent, and some folded their hands—"We" did not know the whole thing."

Social media: The new court of justice?

Now the question arises: is social media a court where one-sided evidence can be presented and the other party can be punished without being heard? Have all of us users become judges now? And if yes, then where is the system of appeal in our court?

The problem is that nowadays people have become judgmental, not judges. They judge any issue without thinking, without understanding,

to save their relationships—today people ruin their own relationships for likes and shares. More than the media, the media mentality is to blame.

This is not just an issue of 'media trial.' The real problem is the mindset that declares oneself a victim the moment the camera is on and turns the audience into the jury. This 'half-truth politics' is no longer confined to politics—it has now entered our homes. People are channeling their anger and grief into scripted content, not words. And the audience, too, instead of actually helping, remains a spectator—clapping from the other side of the screen.

Relationships are more dependent on

is the first solution to every problem. If the matter is serious, then seek help from family, friends, or a therapist. Do not expect justice from the world by making videos on Instagram or YouTube. If you are watching someone's video or post, do not make a one-sided decision. Every story has two sides, and sometimes the truth lies somewhere in between the two. Every relationship is a world in itself. Do not expose it in the public square. One day the same world can stand against you.

Today, when every person is roaming around with media in his hand, then he is the biggest responsible person too. It is easy to turn on the camera but difficult to show the truth honestly. Relationships are built on trust, and the founda-

Author is a TV panelist

Ram Katha Returns to Kashmir After Decades, LG Sinha Joins Morari Bapu at Dal Lake

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha attended the inaugural ceremony of Ram Katha, at Srinagar, by Puiya Morari Bapu.

The Lieutenant Governor said, the sacred Ram Katha has the universal language and Prabhu Shri Ram's message of righteousness, compassion, justice and duty resonates across culture and sects.

"Ram Katha has undeniably shaped societies, offering moral guidance, shared narratives, and a sense of unity for billions over centuries. Lord Ram's blessings have illuminated paths for humanity and Ram Katha by Morari Bapu across the world have united people, and inspired wisdom," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that the Ram Katha will continue to guide us in building a better society.

"Ram Katha powerfully emphasizes

the society to ensure equity and equal opportunity," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor spoke on the lifelong campaigns of Puiya Morari

through the core principles of truth, love, compassion and universal brotherhood.

Morari Bapu is a renowned exponent of the Ram Charit Manas and has been reciting Ram Kathas for over fifty years throughout the world.

The Lieutenant Governor also extended his felicitations to the Shri Arun Kumar Saraf and Shri Kaushalesh Nandan Prasad Sinha - Trustees of Bhartiya Lok Kalyan Trust and everyone associated for organising the first Ram Katha in the valley after many decades. Devotees and people from all walks of life gathered at the banks of Dal Lake in large number for the auspicious inaugural ceremony of the 9-day long Ram Katha Shivir.



ethical and moral values. Lord Ram's life values hold immense power for

Bapu ji dedicated to awakening society and spreading the teachings of Shri Ram

RNAF Launches New Digital Learning, Women's Skill Centres in Pulwama



Pulwama: The Rouble Nagi Art Foundation (RNAF) has marked a significant milestone in its mission to empower underprivileged communities in Jammu & Kashmir UT with the inauguration of Computer Madrasa Learning Centre and Women's Skill Centre.

The Computer Madrasa Learning Centre, located at the Markazi Roma Reshi Centre in Rahmoo, was officially inaugurated on Saturday. This marks RNAF's second such centre in the region, following the success of the first, established in 2024 in South Kashmir.

Equipped with modern computer systems and structured digital literacy modules, the centre aims to serve more than 650 children, introducing them to essential computer skills and digital tools. This initiative is a key part of RNAF's effort to bridge the digital divide in remote areas and better prepare young learners for academic and professional opportunities in an increasingly digital world.

"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world. Our aim is to bring technology to the grassroots, especially in regions where children have limited access," said Rouble Nagi, Founder of RNAF. "With this centre, we hope to ignite curiosity, creativity, and confidence in every child who walks in."

Further strengthening its grassroots impact, RNAF also announced the opening of a new Women's Skill Centre in Zagigam, Pulwama. The centre offers skill-based training in tailoring, embroidery, handicrafts, and entrepreneurship—tools designed to help local women gain financial independence and a greater voice in their communities.

"True empowerment begins with education and opportunity. Through our skill centres, we aim to provide both," said Rouble Nagi. "Every woman trained here is a step forward in creating a stronger, self-reliant society."

To complement this initiative, RNAF has launched Studio Saksham, an e-commerce platform that enables women to market and sell their handcrafted products to a broader audience, linking local craftsmanship with national demand.

With more than five operational centres across Kashmir, RNAF continues to blend art, education, and livelihood training to create sustainable, community-led development. From children's digital literacy to women's empowerment, the foundation is actively reshaping the socio-economic landscape of the region.

RNAF's latest efforts underscore its unwavering commitment to inclusive growth, education, and empowerment—bringing lasting change to some of India's most underserved areas.

Anantnag UTRC Identifies Four Undertrials for Release in Quarterly Review

ANANTNAG: The second quarterly meeting of the Undertrial Review Committee (UTRC) was convened today at the District Court Complex, Anantnag under the chairmanship of Tahir Khurshid Raina, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Anantnag/ Principal District & Sessions Judge, Anantnag.

The meeting was convened in accordance with the directives of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and the guidelines issued by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), with the objective of reviewing cases of undertrial prisoners falling within the defined 16 categories of eligible inmates.

Following a detailed examination, four undertrial prisoners were identified as eligible for legal intervention and release under the prescribed framework.

The Committee undertook a comprehensive case-by-case review, assessing aspects such as duration of detention, bail eligibility, legal provisions, and availability of sureties. Pursuant to these deliberations, directions were issued to the concerned authorities for expeditious action in the identified cases.

The Chairman DLSA Anantnag underscored the importance of the UTRC as a vital constitutional mechanism aimed at safeguarding the rights of undertrial prisoners. He emphasized that the Committee's work transcends procedural formality and embodies a commitment to justice and human dignity.

Additionally, the meeting addressed various concerns pertaining to the conditions and challenges faced by inmates in the District and Subsidiary Jails.

These issues were discussed in detail with the respective stakeholders, and appropriate measures for their redressal were proposed.



SUNDAY | 20 APR 2025

DC Srinagar chairs comprehensive meeting of Revenue Officers

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today chaired a meeting of Officers here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office to review the functioning and progress of revenue related matters.

At the outset, DC took a detailed review of Revenue sector with special focus on scanning and digitalization of massavis and other revenue related record of all villages of the District.

The meeting was appraised that out of 137 revenue villages, data regarding 79 revenue villages has been forwarded to Administrative Department while the data regarding remaining villages will be forwarded after completion of the Scanning and Digitalization process.

On the occasion, the DC directed to constitute Tehsil level Committee to ensure that scanning and digitalization of massavis is completed within a period of 15 days.

Similarly, RDSLR, Central was directed to provide all logistic support for scanning and digitalization of the left out villages.

The DC also asked the Revenue Officers to monitor the process of revenue related activities in respective jurisdiction on periodical basis so that people do not face any inconvenience while



availing revenue related services.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioners of Srinagar, SDM East, SDM West, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, all Tehsildars and other senior functionaries of the Revenue Department of the District.

JKRLM Partners with OMPLIS and Kudumbashree NRO to Empower Rural Women

JAMMU: In a significant stride towards strengthening the Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, chaired a high level meeting with representatives of renowned national organizations, Kudumbashree National Resource Organization (NRO) and Organisation for Management of Poverty and Livelihood Improvement Society (OMPLIS).

The agenda centered around leveraging national expertise for institutional support, training and capacity building of Self Help Groups (SHGs) across the Union Territory.

The Chief Secretary acknowledged the transformative role of both the organisations in their respective geographies and invited them to extend their human resources and technical know-how to the UT. He emphasized the need for robust training of JKRLM staff and a strategic realignment of the mission to fully realize its potential in empowering women and alleviating poverty across the rural areas of the UT.

A detailed presentation by OMPLIS shed light on their impactful journey since inception in 1995, outlining how the organization has enabled thousands of women to break free from poverty. Their model, deeply rooted

in financial empowerment and collective savings, has generated Rs 73 crore in savings and earned Rs 58 crore in interest for SHG members. Notably, loans amounting Rs 478 crore, along with Rs 4.18 crore as Community



Investment Funds (CIF) and Rs 15.28 crore as soft loans, have uplifted over 6,500 families.

In a landmark decision, OMPLIS agreed to adopt one block each in Jammu and Kashmir on a pilot basis. The initiative will support the training programs for the field staff, strengthen Cluster Model Training Centres (CMTCs) and provide mentorship to SHG members to channel their livelihoods towards high impact outcomes.

Kudumbashree NRO, known for its

pioneering community-led models across 22 States and UTs, presented a tailored plan to support JKRLM through scalable, market-linked initiatives. Their proposal emphasized on establishing Community-



Based Marketing Aggregator Models to bridge SHGs with mainstream markets and e-commerce platforms besides extending support for branding, packaging and digital marketing of farm and non-farm products made by these SHGs.

They further proposed setting up of community-run food service enterprises, inspired by their India Food Court model, to integrate rural livelihoods with tourism and hospitality sectors in J&K.

DIC Pulwama conducts Outreach programme on Udyam Registration

PULWAMA: District Industries Centre (DIC), Pulwama, conducted an awareness-cum-outreach programme on Udyam Registration under the RAMP (Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance) programme today at Circuit House, Pulwama.

The programme was chaired by General Manager, DIC Pulwama, and Officers from various line departments including Lead District Manager, Pulwama; District Coordinator, CSC, Pulwama, as well as representative JKTPO (SPOC)-JK, Functional Managers and other officials from DIC Pulwama were present in the programme.

A total of 115 beneficiaries from across the sectors, PM Vishwakarma, PMEGP and Industrial unit holders registered with DIC Pulwama attended the programme.

In his inaugural address, General Manager, DIC, Pulwama sensitized participants and stakeholders about the significance of the MSME sector in the economy of Jammu & Kashmir, emphasizing

the vital role of Udyam Registration in enabling businesses and industrial establishments to grow in collaboration with the government and its flagship schemes.

The process flow and benefits of Udyam Registration were explained to the participants through a detailed PowerPoint presentation that underscored RAMP's role in strengthening the resilience, innovation, and sustainability of MSMEs. Key focus areas included access to financial support, technology upgradation and capacity building initiatives under the RAMP framework. The event included a Q&A segment wherein entrepreneurs raised queries about documentation, sector-specific incentives, and challenges in navigating the Udyam portal. On the occasion, Lead District Manager Pulwama, representative JKTPO (SPOC)-JK, District Coordinator and CSC Pulwama also interacted with the participants, highlighting the benefits of registration.

2nd National Lok Adalat on May 10 in Srinagar

SRINAGAR: District Legal Services Authority Srinagar is going to hold 2nd National Lok Adalat of the year 2025 at District Court Complex Srinagar on 10 May, 2025 for the pre-Litigation and post Litigation Cases. As such, it is notified that all concerned parties/ advocates who desire

to get their cases/ disputes/ claims settled through this 2nd National Lok Adalat may approach District Legal Services Authority Srinagar/ concerned courts by or before 01 May, 2025, so that their cases/ claims/ disputes can be settled amicably through this National Lok Adalat.

Javed Rana interacts with tribal leaders at Panchayat Bhavan

JAMMU: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today held detailed interaction with prominent citizens of tribal community from different districts at Panchayat Bhavan, Jammu.

The meeting was convened to get firsthand appraisal of issues faced by the Tribals from Jammu, Udhampur, Reasi, Kathua and other areas.

The tribal community leaders highlighted the pressing issues faced by them and sought intervention of the Minister for resolution.

The Minister gave a patient hearing to the issues raised by the delegations and individuals and assured them that the same will be given due prominence for redressal.

Locals raised the issue of absence of lack of educational facilities for the tribal people, issues of water shortage in his area and demanded sustainable solution for water supply, issue of improving educational facilities for tribals saying that we need to lay more stress on

education, issues pertaining to her constituency and submitted memorandum of demands and the issue of basic health facilities

should be submitted to the tribal department.

Regarding the easing of tribal movement, Rana said that



in the tribal areas.

Rana assured the participants that the government is fully committed to the overall development of tribal population, prioritizing their welfare. He emphasized that the rights of tribals, as guaranteed under the Constitution, shall be enforced and protected.

Rana reaffirmed that improving the lives of Scheduled Tribes (ST), Scheduled Castes (SC) and other downtrodden sections of society is top priority of the government led by Omar Abdullah.

He also sought details from the concerned officers about the landless families in the district and said the same

the government will provide facility at all routes and ease the process for permission during migration.

He said that the government is particular about the development of tribal routes and significant steps have been taken in this regard.

He said that UT CAPEX and district CAPEX budget will be finalised only after holding consultation with the tribal people so that aspirations and developmental needs of the tribal people are reflected.

Rana said that Forest Rights Act will be implemented in totality while giving due prominence to grazing rights and community benefits.

Registration for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2025 Service Providers begins at Jammu

JAMMU: The Labour Department has initiated the registration process for Service Providers associated with the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2025. A helpdesk-cum-registration counter has been set up at the Office of the Assistant Labour Commissioner, Labour Sarai, Dogra Hall, Jammu, to facilitate the registration process.

Commissioner Jammu, Rupali Jasrotia, has urged all ponywallas,



palkiwallas, pithus and hawkers intending to take part in the upcoming yatra to get their registration completed at the

earliest.

Registration can be done free of charge, upon identity verification. This move aims to ensure a seamless and well-coordinated pilgrimage experience for all stakeholders.

The department has emphasised timely registration to avoid any inconvenience and to support smooth operational planning for the annual yatra.

DC Anantnag takes review of District Red Cross Society, Health Schemes

ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Syeed Fakhruddin Hamid, who is also the Chairman of the District Red Cross Society Anantnag, today convened an important meeting with key stakeholders to review the overall functioning of the District Red Cross Society.

Speaking during the meeting, DC acknowledged the importance of the Red Cross Society as a humanitarian organisation which actively supports the district's welfare activities. He stressed upon the officers, volunteers, and civil society members to actively contribute to the Red Cross Society, not just in terms of financial support but also through voluntary service and public engagement.

Hamid further directed health and allied departments to conduct regular Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities including physical camps and outreach activities, particularly in the remote areas to improve the functioning and delivery of welfare schemes particularly the beneficiary oriented ones.

He also called for regular monitoring of schemes so that there is accountability at all levels of health governance within the district.

Other decisions taken in the meeting pertained to inter-departmental coordination, intensifying enrollment of beneficiaries under schemes, enhancement of outreach services in remote areas and improvement of quality of health services. Earlier, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Anantnag delivered a detailed presentation, showcasing the range of activities carried out under the aegis of the Red Cross Society in the district. The presentation emphasized the crucial role the Society plays in reaching out to the vulnerable groups including the elderly, differently-abled, widows, and economically weaker sections, particularly during emergencies. CMO also highlighted the positive impact of health awareness programs, mobile medical units & blood donation drives. He also gave a detailed review of the various beneficiary oriented schemes including Centrally Sponsored ones.

Nasha Mukh J&K Abhiyan: Distt admin Pulwama intensifies IEC campaign

PULWAMA: As part of its intensified Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign under the UT-wide flagship initiative Nasha Mukh Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, the District Administration Pulwama in collaboration with the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), J&K, today organised a mega awareness programme at Town Hall Pulwama.

This event marked one of the five major programmes conducted today across various municipal areas of the district.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from officials of Social Welfare, Health, Urban Local Bodies and other departments, along with representatives from Women Self Help Groups (SHGs), members of civil society, social workers and the general public.

During the event, a panel of experts and resource persons from multiple departments conducted interactive sessions, sensitising attendees about the alarming consequences of drug abuse.

Medical professionals from the Health Department highlighted the root causes of addiction, including depression, peer pressure, curiosity, family trauma and feelings of

inferiority. They stressed the importance of timely intervention, emotional support and rehabilitation in combating the crisis. Resource persons from the Social Welfare Department provided detailed



insights into the district's strategic action plan to curb drug addiction.

One of the major highlights of the event was a cultural performance presented by the Department of Information & Public Relations, J&K. The creative skit, themed on drug abuse prevention, powerfully portrayed the devastating impact of addiction on families and communities. The performance called upon society to stand united and take collective responsibility to eliminate the menace from its roots.

It was informed that 346 awareness programmes have been scheduled at the Panchayat

level, 88 of which have already been conducted. Additionally, 69 programmes have been planned in municipal areas, with 20 completed so far. To extend this initiative to students, 179 programmes have



been scheduled in educational institutions.

During the session, public was urged to make use of the services available at various Drug De-Addiction Centres operating in the district and to encourage affected individuals to seek professional help without stigma. Speakers at the events reiterated the need for a community-driven approach to effectively tackle the growing challenge of substance abuse. Through discussions, interactive sessions and expert talks, participants were encouraged to act as agents of change within their localities.

From Roots to Renaissance: Culture in India’s 2047 Vision



S.SAHMAD

The Ministry of Culture aims to make India's cultural sector a key pillar of the Viksit Bharat vision—an India that is economically advanced, socially cohesive, and globally respected for its cultural leadership, by leveraging its rich heritage, promoting inclusive participation, and driving innovation.

The vision is built on a 5-pillar strategy to ensure that arts are integrated into India's larger developmental agenda. This comprehensive approach will contribute significantly to the creation of a prosperous, inclusive, and culturally empowered society, thus making India a proud and globally influential nation by 2047. The strategic five pillars are as under:

1. Preservation of Bharat's 10,000+ Years of Cultural Heritage: This pillar is dedicated to safeguarding and conserving India's vast and diverse cultural legacy. By preserving historical sites, indigenous arts, and traditional practices, the Ministry aims to ensure that future generations can engage with and learn from the country's past. This focus on preservation will serve as the foundation for the development of India's cultural industries.
2. Democratize Access and Participation: One of the primary goals is to overcome barriers to access and participation in the cultural sector. The Ministry is committed to making arts and cultural activities more inclusive, ensuring that all citizens, irrespective of their social and economic backgrounds, can engage with and contribute to cultural development. This will encourage "Jan Bhagidhari" or people's participation, which is crucial for the vibrant cultural landscape envisioned in the Viksit Bharat 2047 framework.
3. Leverage Technology in Arts and Culture: Innovation and technology will play a significant role in both the preservation and promotion of India's cultural heritage. Through digital platforms, virtual exhibitions, and interactive technologies, the Ministry aims to enhance access to Bharat's cultural content globally, driving innovation in the ways heritage is experienced and shared. The integration of technology will also streamline the preservation process and offer new tools for creative expression in the arts.
4. Promote Culture & Creative Economy: The vision emphasizes the need to establish India as a global leader in the cultural and creative economy. By leveraging India's diverse & rich cultural wealth, Ministry of Culture seeks to expand the creative economy around built heritage and the cultural and creative industries—such as performing arts, visual arts, architecture and design, fairs and festivals, crafts, fashion and culinary heritage, into major drivers of economic growth. This will not only create jobs and boost local economies but also establish arts and culture as significant contributors to India's soft power on the global stage.

5. Position Bharat as a Global Cultural Power (Vishwabandhu): India's arts and culture will be pivotal in strengthening its position as a "Vishwabandhu," or global friend. The Ministry aims to use culture as a diplomatic tool for building global partnerships and enhancing India's soft power. Focused efforts will be made to project India's cultural narrative worldwide, fostering greater international recognition and influence. By doing so, India will maximize its impact on global cultural discourse and emerge as a leading cultural force.

The vision is supported by an activity roadmap, a responsibility matrix and an action plan. These frameworks provide detailed timelines, specific targets, and clear divisions of responsibility for each action point. By aligning the efforts of the Ministry of Culture's various organizations with this unified vision, India's cultural sector will be better positioned to contribute to the economic and social development goals set for 2047.

As part of the Viksit Bharat Vision 2047, the strategy adopted by Ministry of Culture to integrate technology and digital platforms to enhance global outreach of India's cultural and heritage sites, includes, leveraging technology in preservation and restoration of cultural assets, developing a digital repository for Bharat's tangible and intangible heritage, transforming visitor engagement at cultural institutions, integrating technology to enhance operational efficiency across Ministry of Culture organizations and addressing regulatory challenges to make Bharat a pioneer in tech-laws.

The Ministry of Culture is consistently taking innovative steps and aligning the existing schemes towards the achievement of Viksit Bharat 2047 Vision. The latest such initiative is the establishment of 20 Kalagams across the country to replicate the success of Kalagram established by the Ministry of Culture at Prayagraj during the Mahakumbh Mela- 2025. These Kalagrams will serve as vibrant cultural spaces, creating opportunities for artists, craftsmen, performing artists, fostering cultural exchange and promoting age old traditions of Kala, Sanskriti and Parampara while acting as hubs of Creative Economy.

Cultural Diplomacy for Global Branding as Part of Vikshit Bharat Ministry of Culture implements the "Global Engagement Scheme" to promote India's rich cultural heritage internationally and enhance India's global image. The key Scheme objectives include strengthening cultural ties with foreign nations, promoting bilateral cultural contacts, projecting India's cultural identity on the world stage and encouraging inbound tourism.

The Global Engagement Scheme is administered through Indian Missions abroad to achieve its objective through following components:

I. Festival of India- The artists practicing Indian art forms, are given the opportunity to perform abroad under the banner of 'Festival of India'. The artists from diverse cultural fields such as Folk Art including Folk Music, Folk Dance, Folk Theatre & Puppetry, Classical and Traditional Dance, Experimental/ Contemporary Dance, Classical/Semi Classical Music, Theatre etc.

perform in the "Festivals of India" abroad.

II. Grant in aid to Indo Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies: Grant in aid is released to Indo Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies actively functioning in foreign countries through our Indian Missions with the object of fostering closer friendship and cultural contacts between India and foreign country concerned.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), an autonomous organization under the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), promotes Indian culture worldwide through Missions / Posts and its Cultural Centres abroad. Activities conducted by them include inter-alia, teaching of Yoga, Dance, Music (vocal and instrumental), Sanskrit and Hindi; organising/supporting Conferences/ Seminars/ Workshops in different fields of Indian culture; supporting Chairs of Indian Studies in foreign universities; gifting of busts/statues of Mahatma Gandhi and other national icons, exchanging visual arts exhibitions, celebrating International Day of Yoga and Indian festivals, hosting visitors under various Visitors Programmes (Academic/ Distinguished / Important/ Gen.Next Democracy Network); and sponsoring scholarships to foreign students under different scholarship schemes. ICCR has also concluded MoUs with various State Governments to

ing components:

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promote their culture abroad and to facilitate cultural exchanges with foreign countries. ICCR also hosts incoming foreign cultural troupes to enable Indians to discover various foreign cultures.

In addition to this, India actively engages in multilateral platforms all over the world to collaborate with other nations on a range of global issues and strengthen its position on the world stage. Since 2020 India has engaged in following activities to showcase and promote Indian culture.

- During India's BRICS Presidency Ministry of Culture hosted BRICS Culture Senior Officers' Meeting and VI BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting virtually in July 2021;
- During India's Presidency of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Ministry of Culture hosted the Conference on Shared Buddhist Heritage of SCO Member States under India's presidency in March, 2023.
- Ministry of Culture hosted the 20th SCO Culture Ministers' Meeting under India's presidency in April, 2023.
- Ministry of Culture hosted the 1st India-Central Asia Culture Ministers Meeting (CMM) in April 2023 to enhance bilateral cultural relations;
- During India's G20 Presidency, Ministry of Culture hosted G20 Culture Working Group Meeting (CWG) & Culture Minister's Meeting (CMM) in 2023 in Khajuraho, Bhubaneswar, Hampi and Varanasi;
- The G20 Culture Working Group came out with an Outcome Document titled the 'Kashi Culture Pathway' which advocated for advancing "culture as a standalone goal" in the post-2030 development agenda. This was further unanimously endorsed in the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration marked a historic milestone.

Various collaborative international cultural projects were undertaken by Ministry of Culture to showcase Indian culture to the participants from G20 countries- Four Global Thematic Webinars; Exhibitions - Re(ad)dress: Return of Treasures in Khajuraho; Sustain: The Craft Idiom, in Bhubaneswar; Woven Narratives, in Hampi; G20 Art Project - Together We Art; G20 Anthology of Poetry - Under the Same Sky and Culture Unites All Campaign; G20 Orchestra- Sur Vasudha. The Exhibitions G20 Digital Museum (Culture Corridor) and Exhibition- Routes and Roots were organized on the sidelines of G20 Leaders' Summit in New Delhi.

India is member state of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and is a part of several important cultural conventions of UNESCO such as 1972 Convention on World Heritage, 2003 Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), Memory of the World (MOW) Programme. India is also a member of Inter-Governmental Organizations like International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) among others.

Promotion of Culture as Soft Power

The Ministry of Culture implements the "Global Engagement Scheme" to promote India's rich cultural heritage internationally and enhance India's global image.

The key Scheme objective include strengthening cultural ties with foreign nations, promoting bilateral cultural contacts, projecting India's cultural identity on the world stage and encouraging inbound tourism.

The Global Engagement Scheme is administered through Indian Missions abroad to achieve its objective through follow-

Ministry of Culture uses various Digital Media and social media platforms for promotion of Indian Culture.

The ICCR, MEA has developed (i) AIMS (Activity Information Management System) Portal to centralize and streamline its global operations, facilitating seamless coordination between ICCR, Indian Cultural Centres and Indian missions/posts worldwide; (ii) A2A (Admission 2 Alumni) Portal for simplifying the application and admission process for foreign students aspiring to study in India; and (iii) Gyan Setu application aiming to streamline and to automate the release of scholarship dues to students and universities. ICCR effectively leverages social media to amplify India's soft power and promote cultural diplomacy on a global scale. ICCR also manages the official website of ICCR, which serves as a one-stop destination for all information related to ICCR's activities and initiatives.

ICCR launched an online platform "Universalization of Traditional Indian Knowledge Systems (UTIKS)" for short but specialized courses on Traditional Indian Knowledge as a single window source of an introductory knowledge on Indian culture, ancient Indian texts ranging from the Vedas & the Upanishads, a wide range of spiritual, philosophical, scientific, technical and artistic source to the uninitiated as well as help introduce Indian culture in a nuanced manner to those who already have basic understanding but would look for a deeper appreciation of diverse Indian traditions.

Cultural Exchange Programmes

The Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) is signed with other countries to promote and strengthen bilateral cultural relations. For implementation of the signed CEPs, various bodies of Ministry of Culture collaborate with their respective counterparts in foreign countries through diplomatic channels. The details of Cultural Exchange programme signed since January 2020 till date are at Annexure-I. The details of outcomes/ activities undertaken under CEPs by organisations of Ministry of Culture are at Annexure-II. No specific funds are allocated for CEPs. The funds, as may be required, are utilized by the organizations from their own budgetary resources.

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Ministry of Culture has valid CEPs with 88 countries and CEPs with 102 countries are under negotiation. From 2024 to till date CEPs with 12 countries have been signed.

Continued From P1...

Centre-J&K Govt

is to complete the projects already underway and to maintain the ongoing momentum of development.”

He also acknowledged the announcement of a major project by Dr. Jitendra Singh in memory of former Union Minister Arun Jaitley. “I assure the people of Jammu and Kashmir that my government will extend full support to the Union Government to realise this vision. We will build such world-class infrastructure that one day, instead of watching IPL matches on TV, people will watch them live in Jammu and Kashmir.”

Urging citizens to make use of the newly inaugurated facility, he said, “Please use this parking complex—it ensures your vehicle stays clean and safe. Let’s all benefit from this modern infrastructure.”

Ensure Industrial

The Lieutenant Governor said that under the leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a transformative era, fostering peace and inclusive development.

“We don’t believe in buying peace but establishing peace. J&K Police and security forces are on job. Soon we will completely eliminate terrorism and its entire ecosystem. With the ongoing efforts, I believe the Jammu region is on track to fully regain peace within the next six months,” he said.

Vikramaditya Singh, former Legislator, Members of YPO - Global One and Industry leaders were present on the occasion.

J&K Marriage

(AAY) ration card holder families is Rs.75,000 while for Priority Household (PHH) ration card holders the assistance being provided amounts to Rs 50,000.

This is a DBT Scheme through which the amount of financial assistance is directly transferred in the bank account of the beneficiary, ensuring that economically weaker sections receive support for marriage expenses in a smooth manner.

Girl beneficiaries whose age is 18 years or more with minimum qualification of 8th Pass or Equivalent are eligible to apply.

Eligible girls can apply for assistance at least one month before the date of marriage.

Documents including Date of Birth Certificate, AAY or PHH Ration Card, Adhaar Card and Education Qualification Certificate are needed at the time of applying for financial assistance under the said scheme.

Eligible beneficiaries can apply through Online Application Form available on Jansugam Portal. The intending beneficiaries can also reach the Jammu and Kashmir Social Welfare Department on its Helpline Number:- 0191-2542759 and Helpdesk Email :-socialwelfare.adm@gmail.com for further details about the scheme.

Conflict entrepreneurs

LG Sinha said, “These conflict entrepreneurs were running a big business of terror and violence and had turned people of Kashmir into cannon fodder.”

He said that during the past few years security forces have worked hard to wipe out terror and conflict entrepreneurs from the scene. “Some conflict entrepreneurs are again trying to raise their head. I assure everyone that they won’t be allowed to succeed in their nefarious designs. They will be crushed,” he added.

LG Sinha, as per KNO, asked people to ensure that the “conflict profiteers” are ousted from the society and they should be punished for “corroborating with the enemies.” “I urge the people, especially the young generation to identify and isolate the divisive elements and ensure that such conflict profiteers have no place in the society,” he said.

“I am happy that youth of Jammu and Kashmir have understood the conspiracies that were hatched against the people by the neighbouring country and by these conflict profiteers. Youth have rejected them and are giving them a befitting reply,” LG Sinha said.

Terming Sufism as the most powerful force for peace and harmony in society, LG Sinha said, “Sufism means a way of life. It is a bond of love with the whole and a loving relationship with God. Sufism is the ultimate art of removing divisions and bringing hearts closer.”

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that the ultimate aim of Sufism is to foster the awakening in the society and promote compassion and interconnectedness. “Sufism emphasises inner purification, love, and deep relationship with the divine. The journey on this path has the potential to unite people across backgrounds,” he said.

He called for connecting the youth influencers with the campaign to propagate Sufism and establishing a mentorship program where Sufi scholars guide young people, the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor spoke on the influence of Sufism in bridging social divides, and promoting peace and harmony within the communities. “Since many centuries Sufism has acted as a bulwark against extremist ideology and Sufism’s narrative has been popular in countering extremist propaganda,” he added.

“Sufi teachings completely reject any kind of violence, and discrimination. The Sufi teaching is a counterforce to extremist ideology and its mystical traditions through poetry, music and other creative expressions will strengthen counter-radicalisation efforts,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

LG Sinha also recalled the invaluable contribution of saints from Jammu Kashmir in strengthening the bond of love, brotherhood, unity and harmony.

The Lieutenant Governor also emphasized on a multi-pronged strategy to promote Sufi literature and Sufi education, and make Sufism popular among the youth to counter radical ideology. Sufi teachings, music, poetry should be conveyed to the youth through videos, podcasts and social media campaigns, he added.

Captivating performances by the Sufi Artists celebrating Jammu Kashmir’s rich Sufi culture and traditions, remained one of the highlights of the event.

Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh; Rajiv Agarwal from Sufi Score Limited; Wajahat Farooq Bhat, Chairman, Save Youth Save Future Foundation, senior officials, Sufi scholars, members of Sufi Score and Save Youth Save Future Foundation, and people from all walks of life were present

JKRLM engages

crore in interest for SHG members. Notably, loans amounting Rs 478 crore, along with Rs 4.18 crore as Community Investment Funds (CIF) and Rs 15.28 crore as soft loans, have uplifted over 6,500 families.

In a landmark decision, OMPLIS agreed to adopt one block each in Jammu and Kashmir on a pilot basis. The initiative will support the training programs for the field staff, strengthen Cluster Model Training Centres (CMTCs) and provide mentorship to SHG members to channel their livelihoods towards high impact outcomes.

Kudumbashree NRO, known for its pioneering community-led models across 22 States and UTs, presented a tailored plan to support JKRLM through scalable, market-linked initiatives. Their proposal emphasized on establishing Community-Based Marketing Aggregator Models to bridge SHGs with mainstream markets and e-commerce platforms besides extending support for branding, packaging and digital marketing of farm and non-farm products made by these SHGs.

They further proposed setting up of community-run food service enterprises, inspired by their India Food Court model, to integrate rural livelihoods with tourism and hospitality sectors in J&K.

The overall implementation strategy involves cloud-based, three-tier monitoring system to track outcomes and ensure accountability besides developing 20 model enterprises in the first year and creating a comprehensive operational manual with localized training modules for JKRLM staff and cadres.

The proposals by both the organizations received an encouraging response from the Chief Secretary, who underlined the UT Government’s commitment towards building resilient, self-sustained rural communities through structured collaboration and innovation rooted in empowerment, enterprise and experience-driven transformation of this livelihood mission across the UT.

Karra Hints

alliance and planning future strategies in accordance with the public mandate. Cabinet inclusion isn’t part of these discussions.”

The Congress leader reiterated his party’s firm stance on statehood restoration, stating: “Our primary demand remains unchanged - without statehood, there can be no meaningful governance. This position is non-negotiable.”

Karra said that joining the cabinet wasn’t contemplated during their meeting with the Chief Minister. “The purpose was twofold: to welcome Naseer Hussain Sahib on his first J&K visit after assuming charge, and to reaffirm our alliance commitment,” he said.

The Congress leader claimed that his party would continue being a responsible ally while vigorously pursuing its core political objectives. “Our approach remains principled and issue-based. We’re committed to securing Jammu and Kashmir’s constitutional rights through political engagement,” Karra said

ACB files

and minor mineral costs and further damage to the ecology of the wetland, he said.

The SSP added that public servants namely Siraj-Ud-Din Shah and Ghulam Ahmad Beigh, the then Executive Engineers Flood Spill Chanal Division of Narbal and Irfan Ahmad Reshi, the then AEE Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal among others, colluded with the contractor company M/S Reach Dredging Limited thereby caused huge loss of funds to the State Exchequer and defeated the purpose for which the dredging in the wetland was initiated.

“Based on these findings the FIR No. 07/2025 under sections 5(1)(d)r/w 5(2) of the J&K Prevention of Corruption Act and section 120-B/RPC has been registered and investigation set into motion,” he said, adding that the trio have been taken into the custody and said that the further remand is being sought.

Sharing details of the second case, the SSP said that case pertains to the illegal building permissions by the then Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA).

The SSP, said the ACB Srinagar has initiated legal action following a verification (SLK-12/2017) prompted by a complaint from the Intizamia Committee of Masjid Shareef, Gagribal Boulevard.

The complaint alleged that illegal construction activities by one Ifitikhar Sadiq, S/o Rafiq Sadiq, a resident of Gagribal, who is accused of constructing multi-storey hostel buildings on approximately 12 kanals of custodian land at Gagribal, Srinagar, he said, adding that the verification revealed a criminal conspiracy involving officials from the Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA), Town Planning Organization, and Custodian Department.

“It was found that Ifitikhar Sadiq received permission to construct five hostel structures in violation of J&K Building By-Laws of 2011, particularly regarding the minimum land requirement of 3 kanals per hostel for 50 students. Despite initial permission (NOCs) for only three structures, subsequent permissions were issued for two more in gross violation of regulations. The construction deviated significantly from approved plans, resulting in structures resembling resorts rather than hostels,” he said.

The case highlights abuse of official positions by several officials, including those from LAWDA and the Custodian Evacuee Property Department, who allegedly colluded with Ifitikhar Sadiq for personal financial gains, Javid Hassan Bhat said, adding that based on these findings, a case under FIR number 08/2025 has been registered at Police Station ACB Srinagar and further investigation has been taken up.

Asked about the delay in cases, the SSP said it is the outcome of the delayed complaints and the procedures that are being followed to collect the details. “While collecting details from the departments, we are being informed that the records have got devastated in the 2014 floods,” he said, adding that in such a situation, the delays occur, but the ACB has been keeping close vigil on the activities of the officials and departments to act against the corruption and other related things

Heavy Downpour

including Sithan Top, Tulail and other areas experienced fresh snowfall.

The plains including Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, were lashed by the intermittent heavy rainfall. The hailstorm, however, continued to wreak havoc in multiple areas of Kulgam and Shopian districts of southern Kashmir, causing extensive damage to the fruit growers and orchardists.

Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad told KNO that the moderate rain with intense showers accompanied with moderate to severe thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds are expected at many places of J&K till midnight.

He also advised people to stay indoors, safe shelters & stay away from water bodies, loose structures & landslide prone areas.

The fresh spell of rains have once again recharged the water bodies including the lifeline of Kashmir—river Jhelum, which was flowing below normal maximum of times in the past six months.

According to KNO, the MeT has issued yellow alerts for the next two days till April 21, 2025.

As per the forecast, the weatherman has stated that light to moderate rain and snow (higher reaches) is expected at most places while there is a possibility of moderate to heavy rain and snow at isolated to scattered places till 20th late evening.

On 21st April, he said that the weather would remain generally cloudy with possibility of light rain and thunder at scattered places, adding that from April 22 to 28, the weather would remain generally dry with cloudiness towards April 25.

In its advisory, the MeT department has stated that all concerned are advised to plan accordingly & follow administration and traffic advisory.

The farmers have been advised to suspend farm operations till 21st April, it reads, adding that there is a possibility of moderate to heavy rain and snow over isolated to scattered places of J&K during 19 April.

There is a possibility of landslides, mudslides and shooting stones at vulnerable places, the advisory reads and appealed people to stay inside and safe places during thunder and lightning.

Div Com Kashmir

Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri to Deputy Commissioners & officers while chairing an emergency meeting, here today.

Div Com convened an emergency meeting in view of relentless rains to assess the overall situation and the damages caused to crops and structures by winds & hailstorm.

Taking the cognizance of various reports of damage to crops in Shopian district by hailstorm, and other minor damages to structures by wind in other places, Div Com directed concerned Deputy Commissioners to immediately provide relief to the affected persons following proper guidelines.

At the outset, the Irrigation & Flood Control Department shared the data of water level in different water channels & tributaries of Jhelum and dispelled any imminent threat of flood in the valley.

However, to address water logging issues in the city, Bidhuri instructed SMC for deployment & operation of dewatering pumps wherever required.

Amanjeet Singh Condoles Demise of Allama Aga Syed Baqir Al Safvi Najafi

SRINAGAR: Prominent Sikh youth leader Amanjeet Singh on Saturday expressed deep sorrow over the passing of esteemed religious scholar Allama Aga Syed Baqir Al Safvi Najafi, calling it a “tremendous loss for Kashmir.” In a heartfelt condolence message, Singh said, “The passing of Allama Aga Syed Baqir Al Safvi Najafi marks the end of an era. He will always be remembered for his profound contributions as a distinguished religious scholar and revered leader. His teachings and wisdom will continue to inspire and guide people for generations to come.”

Arshid Rather: The Driving Force Behind Kabaddi’s Resurgence in Jammu & Kashmir.

Senior national player and NIS-certified coach Arshid Rather has emerged as a pivotal figure in the resurgence of Kabaddi in Jammu and Kashmir, playing a transformative role in developing the sport and inspiring a new generation of athletes across the region.

Currently serving as a fitness trainer with the Jammu & Kashmir Police, Arshid combines athletic excellence with a deep commitment to nurturing local talent. His guidance has significantly enhanced the physical conditioning, technical skills, and tactical awareness of Kabaddi players throughout the Valley.

In 2022, Arshid made a notable impact during the Special Yuva Kabaddi Series held at MA Stadium in Jammu. His influence grew further in 2024 when he played a key role in the Summer Kabaddi Camp in Srinagar. Collaborating closely with Chief Coach Anil Sharma & Assistant Coach Firdous Rather, Arshid focused on refining athletes’ core competencies while promoting a disciplined and

While reviewing the supply of essential services, he also directed CE KPDCI for immediate restoration of affected lines & repairation of transformers.

He also reviewed availability of essentials including food grains, LPG and Oil in the valley for the convenience of the general public.

To ensure safety of passengers, Div Com directed Traffic Police to issue advisory regarding traffic movement on hazardous or risky roads especially Gurez road, Mughal road, Sinthan Top, Razdan Top and other roads & passes so no one remains stranded.

Div Com also directed Health Department for smooth functioning of hospitals & other healthcare institutions to render uninterrupted medical services and treatment to patients.

Meanwhile, Director IMD informed meeting of the gradual improvement from late mid-night to afternoon tomorrow.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner SMC, Deputy Commissioners, SSPs, Directors of IMD, Health, Tourism, FCS&CA, VC LCMA, ULB, officers of various departments including Agriculture, Horticulture, School Education, Traffic, Transport, KPDCI, I&FC, PHE, PWD etc.

Mughal, Sinthan,

that traffic is being managed in a regulated manner at Mehad, Cafeteria, and Ramban due to a single-lane stretch of around 150 to 200 metres.

“Commuters have been advised to maintain lane discipline and avoid overtaking or driving in the wrong lane, which could cause congestion. They must be patient, especially when traffic is moving from the opposite direction,” he said.

Passengers have also been advised to undertake travel on the Jammu-Srinagar highway during daylight hours and avoid unnecessary halts between Ramban and Banihal due to the risk of landslides or shooting stones, the official said.

Meanwhile, the Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri (SSG) road, Mughal Road, and Sinthan Road remained closed due to snow accumulation. Traffic on these routes will be permitted only after clearance from road maintenance agencies, the official said.

With intense showers, thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds forecast in many parts of Jammu and Kashmir, people have been advised to stay indoors or in safe shelters and avoid venturing near water bodies, unstable structures and landslide-prone areas, the official added

Severe Hailstorm,

Farmers reported that the violent weather not only stripped fruits prematurely but also broke branches and uprooted entire trees in some areas. Locals described the hailstones as unusually large and destructive, wiping out delicate blossoms and immature fruits within minutes.

“Our orchards were full of hope. Now everything is destroyed,” said Ghulam Nabi, an orchard owner from Shopian. Many farmers estimate losses in lakhs and fear a devastating blow to their seasonal income.

Kashmir’s horticulture sector, particularly its world-renowned apple industry, forms the backbone of the region’s economy. Any damage to this sector creates ripple effects across Jammu and Kashmir.

Officials from the Horticulture and Revenue Departments have begun assessing the damage, with preliminary reports indicating substantial losses. On Saturday, additional hail storms were reported in Tral area of Pulwama district.

Bashir Ahmad Bashir, President of the Fruit Growers Association Kashmir, told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that orchard owners across Shopian, Kulgam, Bandipora, Baramulla, Ganderbal,

Budgam, Pulwama and other districts have suffered irreparable damage from the April 18 natural disaster.

“This extreme weather has severely impacted Kashmir’s fruit industry, a pillar of our economy. While we cannot control the weather, the absence of a crop insurance scheme compounds our suffering,” Bashir said. “The hailstorm has dashed all hopes for our growers, with ripple effects throughout the horticulture supply chain. These losses represent a major economic setback for the entire region.”

The Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Union has repeatedly appealed to the government to implement a crop insurance scheme for the horticulture sector.

“It’s unfortunate that despite government announcements, no crop insurance scheme has been implemented here,” Bashir added. “The situation is especially dire for marginal growers, whose livelihoods depend entirely on orchard income.”

The Union has consistently urged authorities to establish protection measures against natural disasters like hailstorms, gusty winds, and heavy rains.

“Without crop insurance, poor and marginal growers bear the full burden of these losses. Ninety percent of Kashmir’s fruit growers are small-scale operators who rely completely on orchard income. When disasters strike, they face extreme hardship.”

The Union demands immediate implementation of a crop insurance scheme for Jammu and Kashmir’s horticulture sector. They have also requested that SKUAST and Horticulture Department officials assess the recent damage and announce a comprehensive compensation package for affected orchards

PM Modi To Visit Saudi Arabia Next Week

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pay a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia beginning Tuesday with focus on further expanding bilateral cooperation in several key areas including energy, trade and defence.

A number of agreements will be inked between the two sides following talks between Modi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud.

The visit will provide an opportunity to build on the already strong strategic partnership between the two countries. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said at a media briefing.

There will an effort to infuse a strategic dimension to the India-Saudi Arabia energy cooperation, he said.

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that Electricity Agreement Bearing Consumer ID No: 0216020007086, which is Registered in the name of Jan Mohammad Watwani, S/O Sonaullah Watwani, Now i want to apply for change this Electricity Agreement in the name of Ghulam Mohd Watwani, S/O Sonaullah Watwani, in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Assistant Executive Engineer Electricity Sub Division Kaloosa Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

Ghulam Mohd Watwani.
S/O Sonaullah Watwani.
R/O Alooosa, Tehsil Alooosa District Bandipora, Jammu and Kashmir, Pin code: 193502.

NOTICE

Inadvertently the name of my daughter has been wrongly mentioned as Suzab Sayaf in her Adhar card bearing number 883193310989 while her actual name is Amarah Gul. Now i want to rectify the same. Anybody having objection in this regard may file the same before the concerned office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained thereafter.

Mohmad Sayaf Mir
F/O Amarah Gul
R/O Khenusa Bandipora

NOTICE

Inadvertently the name of my son has been wrongly mentioned as Sadat in his Adhar card bearing number 303476266926 while his actual name is Muhammad Saadat Mir. Now i want to rectify the same. Anybody having objection in this regard may file the same before the concerned office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained thereafter.

Mohmad Sayaf Mir
F/O Muhammad Saadat Mir
R/O Khenusa Bandipora



professional training environment. The camp—organized by the J&K Amateur Kabaddi Association in partnership with the J&K Sports Council under the My Youth My Pride initiative—was hailed as a major success. Participants showed marked improvement, a testament to the high-quality coaching provided.

Arshid’s contributions extend well beyond the training ground. He plays an active role in talent identification and athlete development, particularly through

his involvement in the Yuva Kabaddi Series selection process. His keen eye for potential & dedication to mentoring young athletes have paved the way for many to compete at the national level.

Most recently, Arshid has taken the initiative to organize the committee for the Kathua Kabaddi League, further cementing his role as a leading force behind the sport’s growth & grassroots expansion in Jammu & Kashmir.

Not a typical Chinnaswamy wicket, and we're slow on learning as well: Hazlewood

Royal Challengers Bengaluru pacer Josh Hazlewood said an atypical Chinnaswamy pitch and the batsmen's inability to put learnings from previous matches into practice contributed to his team's third straight defeat at home.

The Royal Challengers succumbed to Punjab Kings by five wickets in a 14-over-a-team match on Friday night after losing against Gujarat Titans and Delhi Capitals here earlier.

"Yeah, I think it's not a typical Chinnaswamy wicket. Obviously the bounce has always been there, but it's in past years, it's probably been more consistent," said Hazlewood in the post-match press conference.

It may be recalled that RCB mentor Dinesh Karthik too was not satisfied with the 22-yard strip on offer here and wanted to have a talk with the local curator after their defeat against the Capitals.

Hazlewood said the lack of a strong power play segment added to RCB's woes.

"Yeah, it's obviously three (defeats) in a row now at home. It's just we've probably been a bit slow on the learnings from the first two games and didn't put that into practice as well as we could have, probably in those first probably six to eight overs, obviously, with the score the way it was," he added.

However, the New South Welshman was confident in his team's ability to buck the frustrating trend at the earliest.

"But we'll dive into this game and, you know, probably more so when we get back to Bangalore and really go through in detail and with a fine tooth comb and come up with a

few ideas of where we can learn and improve.

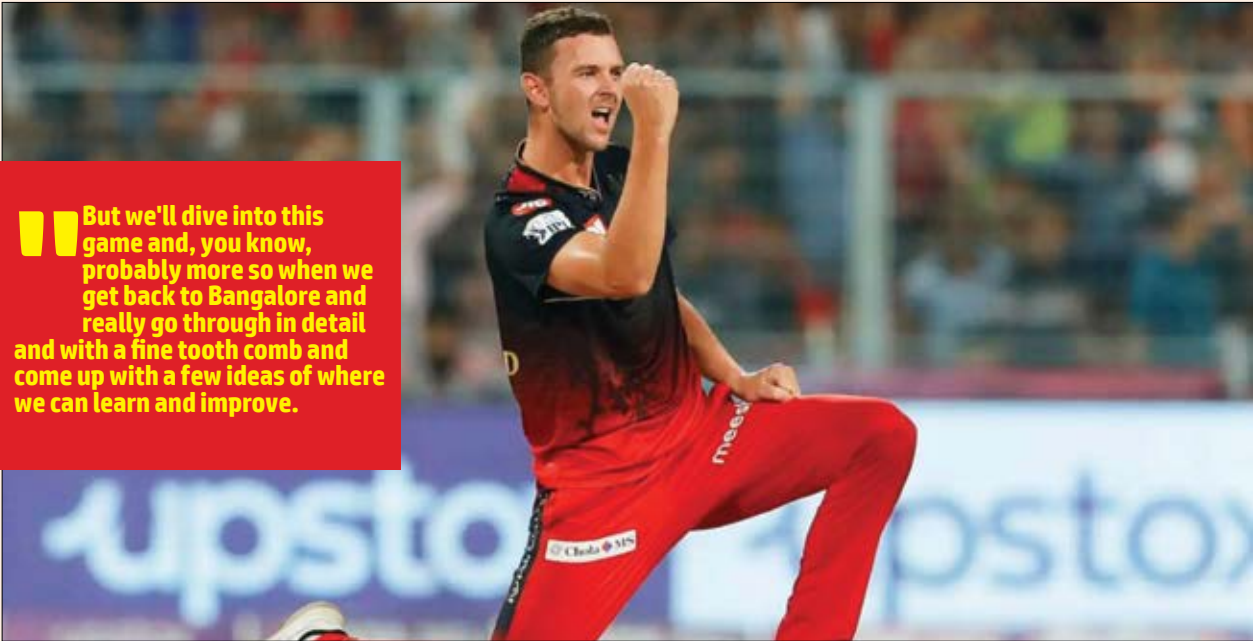
"I think the bowling definitely improved from the last two outings. So sort of we're slowly getting there, but probably not quick enough," he said.

here it was a batter on the other team going big and getting a partnership and scoring big late in the game.

"So if we can have our top five, top six doing the batting for the 20 overs, I think that'll go

the balance of the game decisively in favour of PBKS in the chase of 96 after the tourists were at a slightly tricky 53 for four.

"Nehal is a very good player. He has been playing in the IPL for the last 2-3 years. He does



"Nehal is a very good player. He has been playing in the IPL for the last 2-3 years. He does well domestically as well. Recently, when we won the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, he played very well in the knockouts. As a senior, I feel very proud," said Brar.

He is one of the best bowlers in IPL: Iyer on Chahal

BENGALURU: Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer has called Yuzvendra Chahal "one of the best bowlers" in the Indian Premier League and said he has asked the seasoned leg-spinner to always look for wickets instead of worrying over leaking runs during a "personal chat."

After a subdued start to the this edition of the T20 tournament, the Punjab Kings spinner has found his rhythm and took the wickets of Rajat Patidar and Jitesh Sharma in PKBS' five-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bengaluru



here on Friday.

"Personally I had a chat with Chahal. I told him you are a match winner and you need to get us wickets as much as possible. You don't need to be safe in your approach and he has got the capability of bouncing back. That's what we appreciate of him as a leggie," Iyer said.

"He is one of the best bowlers in the IPL, probably the best bowler in the IPL so far. You to back that all the time," he said after the win over RCB.

Punjab Kings produced an inch-perfect bowling effort to restrict RCB to 95 for nine in a rain-curtailed 14 overs-a-side match at the Chinnaswami Stadium.

In reply, PBKS competed the chase in 12.1 overs with Nehal Wadhara making a match-winning 19-ball 33.

The Player of the Match award, however, went to RCB's Tim David who proved to be their lone-ranger in an otherwise forgettable batting display, with a blazing 50 off 26 balls.

"As they say variety is the spice of life. We are able to experience all kinds of games over here. It is a great challenge," Iyer said.

"There was no thinking to be honest. I was making instinctive moves and obviously we were getting wickets. I didn't want the new batsman to come in and settle straightaway," the skipper said of his decisions on the field.

Asked to bat first, RCB lost wickets at regular intervals with the likes of Arshdeep Singh, Chahal, Marco Jansen and Harpreet Brar doing the bulk of the damage for the visiting team.



Khyber Cement Ka Zarra Zarra Dil Se Bana Hai

