

Kashmir Convener



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PM Modi to Chair First Council Meet After 'Operation Sindoor'

Operation Sindoor being positioned as "new normal" in India's anti-terror doctrine.

Sajid Raina

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair a meeting of the Union Council of Ministers on Wednesday, the first after the Pahalgam terror attack and the subsequent Operation Sindoor.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the meeting also assumes significance as the Modi 3.0 government would complete one year in office this month.

The meeting is the first after the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead, and the subsequent strikes carried out by the armed forces deep inside Pakistan to avenge the



killings of innocent civilians.

The ministers are likely to be given

details of the "Operation Sindoor", which is also expected to figure in the ruling BJP's

programmes starting next week to mark the first anniversary of the PM Modi led government in its third term.

"Besides speaking on Operation Sindoor, the Prime Minister may give an overall highlight of his governance thrust in the council meeting as the ministers prepare to communicate with people across the country during the anniversary events," said a source.

On May 7, strikes on nine terror sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir followed by its counterattack on the neighbouring country's military facilities, especially air bases, have sent a clear message to the neighbouring country that "terror won't be

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DGP Prabhat Calls for Intensified Crackdown on Terror Ecosystem

Emphasizes enhanced threat detection, real-time surveillance, and inter-agency coordination.

KC News Network

SRINAGAR : Director General of Police J&K, Nalin Prabhat on Monday directed the field officers to intensify their efforts to dismantle the terror ecosystem and ensure robust security arrangements for Eid-ul-Adha, Amarnath Yatra and other upcoming events.

While chairing a joint meeting of Police & CAPF at Police Control Room here, DGP Prabhat, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), issued directions for implementing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and also emphasized on the importance of proactive measures in mitigating risks and ensuring the safety and security of the Amarnath pilgrims. "Intensify efforts to dismantle the terror ecosystem. Ensure robust security arrangements for the upcoming events," the DGP said.

"Bolster security measures and mitigate potential risks by deploying anti-sabotage teams along the yatra routes. Enhance surveillance and threat detection capabilities by utilizing advanced



technologies and real-time monitoring," DGP Prabhat told the officers.

The meeting was attended by Spl. DGP Coordination S.J.M Gillani, ADGP Armed Anand Jain, IGP Kashmir,

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Kheer Bhawani Mela begins in Ganderbal, devotees pray for peace in Kashmir



Raja Syed Rather

GANDERBAL: The annual Kheer Bhawani Mela commenced on Monday at the revered Kheer Bhawani Temple in Tullamulla, Ganderbal, drawing hundreds of devotees

from across the country. The festival, held in honour of Goddess Ragnya Devi, marks a significant spiritual occasion for the Kashmiri Pandit community. As pilgrims began to arrive, the atmosphere

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Robust Arrangements
in Place: Secy Abid

Jahangeer Ganaie

GANDERBAL: Ahead of the annual Mela Kheer Bhawani in Ganderbal, Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr Abid Rashid Shah Monday said that all necessary arrangements have been finalised to ensure the smooth conduct of the event.

Speaking to reporters, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) he said that comprehensive health related preparations have been put in place. "The health department has deployed adequate medical staff and facilities at the site to address any

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Mercury Dips Below Normal Across J&K Hailstorm Hits South Kashmir



KC News Network

SRINAGAR: The hailstorm has once again wreaked havoc in multiple areas of south Kashmir, especially in Shopian district, while the plains continued to receive light rains on Monday, further bringing down the mercury.

According to the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the maximum temperatures across Jammu and Kashmir settled below normal on Monday. In Srinagar, the summer capital, the mercury recorded 23.5 degrees Celsius, which is 3.2 degrees Celsius below normal.

Gulmarg, a famous ski resort, recorded 6.5 degrees Celsius below normal temperatures

while Pahalgam recorded 4.0 degrees Celsius below normal temperature today. Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded 4.6 degrees Celsius below normal while Kupwara and Kokernag saw 4.5 and 4.4 degrees Celsius below normal temperature respectively, the data prepared by the Meteorological department (MeT) said.

The Jammu division also recorded below normal temperatures on Monday with the lowest recorded in Baderwah at 21.0 degrees Celsius, which was 7.8 degrees Celsius below normal. Jammu saw 2.1 degrees Celsius below normal while Katra, Banihal and Batote recorded 2.9 degrees Celsius, 3.4 degrees Celsius and 2.6 degrees Celsius below normal temperatures

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J&K to revise PMGSY proposals in line with phase IV guidelines

KC News Network

SRINAGAR : The Union Government has directed the Jammu & Kashmir administration to reassess its latest proposals under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) to ensure alignment with the parameters of phase IVth of the road connectivity programme.

A record note of the PMGSY's empowered committee, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveals that Union Government has instructed Union Territory administration/ National Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (NRIDA) to thoroughly review the current batch of proposals, along with the remaining ones, in line with the PMGSY IV norms approved by the cabinet.

The empowered committee made it clear to UT administration that in—principle approval to the proposal would be subject to strict adherence to PMGSY-IV norms. "It was further conveyed

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Congress only hope for J&K's political, economic issues: Karra



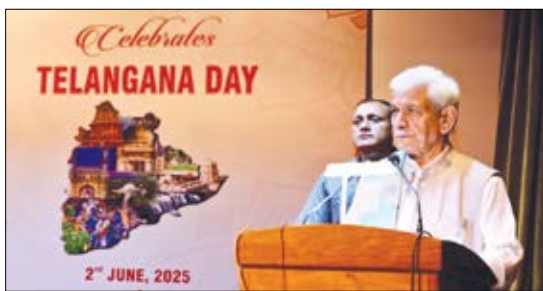
Mubashir Alam Wani

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President Tariq Hameed Karra on Monday said the Congress, under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi, was the only party capable of steering Jammu and Kashmir out of its current political and economic "crisis".

Speaking to the media here, Karra, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "Whether the issues are political or economic, only Congress under Rahul Gandhi's leadership can resolve them." He said a growing number of influential people were joining the party, including "religious and opinion makers", indicating that

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LG attends 'Telangana Formation Day' celebrations



KC News Network

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday attended the celebration of "Telangana Formation Day", hosted by Jammu Kashmir Raj Bhawan at Srinagar. The event

also observed Goa Day, which was celebrated on 30th May.

Security personnel, students and the people from Telangana and Goa living in J&K UT were the special invitees for the evening.

The Lieutenant Governor extended his felicitations and best

wishes to the people of Telangana and Goa on the occasion.

He paid homage to the prominent luminaries, revolutionaries, freedom fighters, social reformers and great personalities of Telangana and Goa and remembered their significant contribution in nation building.

"The rich cultural heritage, timeless values of the two states have strengthened the nation's unity and integrity.

May the blessed states continue to scale new heights of growth and development. I wish peace, prosperity, and well-being for

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India To Get Remaining S-400 Missile Systems By 2026, Says Russia

KC News Network

NEW DELHI: Russia is committed to delivering the remaining units of the S-400 air defence system to India by 2025-2026, the country's Deputy Chief of Mission in India, Roman Babushkin, said on Monday, highlighting that the system performed "very efficiently" during the recent India-Pakistan tensions.

Babushkin also hinted at expanding bilateral cooperation with Indian air defence and anti-drone systems.

"We heard that the S-400 performed very efficiently during the recent clashes between India and Pakistan. We have a long



history of collaboration. The air defence systems, according to what we are experiencing, the situation in Europe and here, this is one of the promising topics of our partnership in defence preparation in general," Babushkin told PTI Videos.

Babushkin confirmed that the contract for the remaining

two S-400 units is on track, with deliveries expected to be completed by 2025-26, in line with publicly announced timelines.

India signed a USD 5.43 billion deal with Russia in 2018 for five squadrons of the S-400 Triumf missile system,

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Mehbooba Seeks Reservation for KPs Meets LG for First Time Since Article 370 Move



Rehan Qayoom Mir

SRINAGAR: Former chief minister and People's Democratic Party (PDP) president, Mehbooba Mufti on Monday battled for the reservation of Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu and Kashmir, saying

it was time to remove a "blot" on Kashmir Muslims over the exodus of KPs.

Addressing a press conference here after meeting Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for the first time

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Is PDP trying to
realign with BJP, asks
NC's Tanvir Sadiq

Rehan Qayoom Mir

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) chief spokesperson and MLA Zaidi, Tanvir Sadiq on Monday asked Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) whether it's making attempts to realign with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Talking to the reporters, Sadiq, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that something is cooking within the PDP, which they have been hiding. "It is good to see Mehbooba Ji meeting

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Tourists Trickle Back to Kashmir, Defy Fear After April Attack

KC News Network

GULMARG (J-K): The tourism sector in Kashmir has started the long journey to normalcy as tourists, though in smaller numbers, are returning to the valley after the Pahalgam terror attack served a big blow to the industry. Jammu and Kashmir real estate

Groups of tourists, especially from states like Maharashtra and Gujarat, are reaching the famous tourist resorts of Gulmarg and Pahalgam, infusing hopes of a gradual turnaround in the sector.

Though in marginal numbers, tourist arrivals have led to some sort of an activity in the sector which was considered almost dead in the days following the



April 22 attack in Baisaran meadows of Pahalgam in which 25 tourists and

a local were killed.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is

leading from the forefront and is actively involved in the efforts to restore faith in the valley's tourism potential.

The chief minister has been visiting famous tourist spots, taking his administration there, engaging with the stakeholders and interacting with tourists.

Abdullah recently chaired two back-to-back meetings, "one of his council of ministers and another of the senior officers of the government," at Pahalgam and Gulmarg respectively to negate the perception of fear in the valley.

The Pahalgam attack had led to mass cancellations of bookings. Following the attack, tourists left the valley in droves, leaving trips

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PM Modi Showcases India’s Aviation Growth Story at IATA’s 81st AGM

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday addressed the 81st Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the plenary session of the World Air Transport Summit (WATS), held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

According to the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Prime Minister in his keynote address, outlined India’s vision for a sustainable, inclusive, and technologically driven future in global aviation, emphasizing that India is rapidly emerging as a key force in the convergence of space and aviation.

Welcoming global aviation leaders, Shri Modi remarked on the historic return of the IATA AGM to India after 42 years, calling it a symbol of India’s rising confidence and transformation. “India is not just a vast aviation market,” he said, “but a beacon of policy innovation and inclusive development.”

Highlighting the country’s achievements, the Prime Minister said India is now the world’s third-largest domestic aviation market. He pointed to the success of the UDAN scheme, which has enabled over 15 million first-time flyers through subsidized regional connectivity. He noted that India now handles 240 million air passengers annually, a number projected to cross 500 million by 2030.

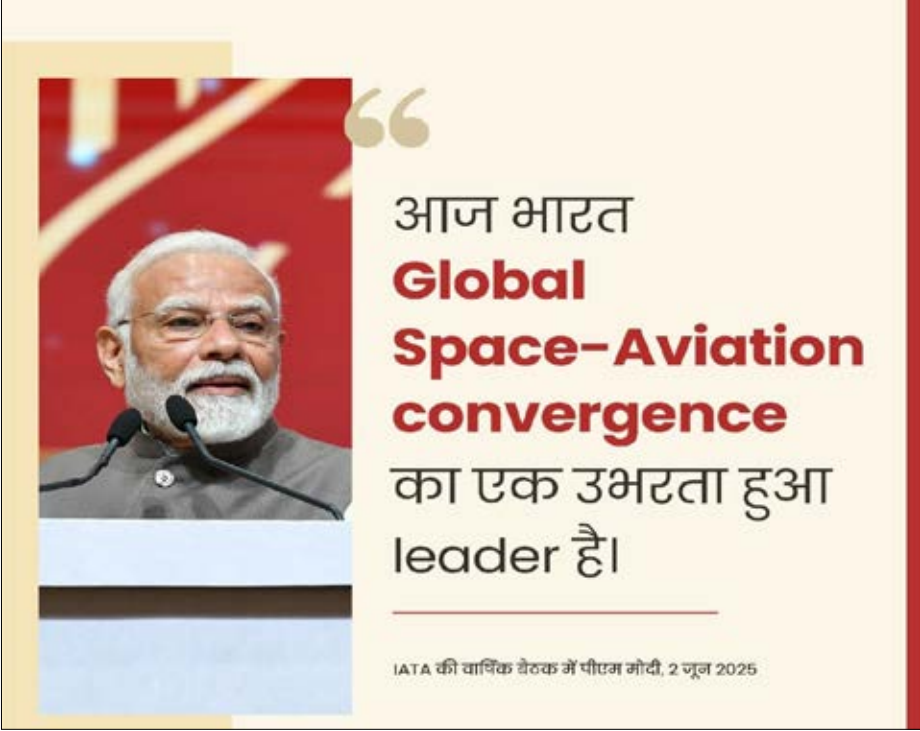
India’s airport infrastructure has seen unprecedented expansion, with the number of operational airports rising from 74 in 2014 to 162 in 2024. Shri Modi informed the gathering that Indian airlines have placed orders for over 2,000 aircraft, while air cargo volume—currently at 3.5 million metric tonnes—is expected to grow to 10 million metric tonnes by the end of the decade.

The Prime Minister stressed that these figures are not merely statistics but indicators of India’s aspirations. “We are investing heavily in building world-class infrastructure, embracing sustainable aviation fuels, and using cutting-edge digital technologies,” he said, citing the Digi Yatra app as an example of India’s leadership in digital aviation. The app enables seamless airport movement using facial recognition, eliminating the need for physical documents.

Reiterating India’s focus on sustainability, Shri Modi underlined investments in green technologies, digital infrastructure, and environmentally responsible mobility. He emphasized that India’s aviation growth is being pursued in tandem with environmental commitments, including a transition to sustainable fuels and emission reduction targets.

The Prime Minister highlighted legislative reforms to boost investor confidence in the aviation sector. He referred to the recently passed Aircraft Objects Bill and incentives offered through the GIFT City framework to attract global aircraft leasing firms. He also spoke about the new Aircraft Act that aligns Indian aviation law with international standards, simplifying compliance and creating a more business-friendly tax structure.

Modi said that India is becoming a manufacturing and maintenance hub for aviation, aiming to establish a \$4 billion MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) industry by 2030. The country has already increased its MRO facilities from 96 in 2014 to 154 today. The government has permitted 100% FDI under the automatic route, reduced GST rates, and rationalized taxes in the sector.



“India is not just an aviation market,” the Prime Minister said, “but a complete value-chain partner—from design to delivery.” He invited global players to embrace both ‘Make in India’ and ‘Design in India’, underscoring India’s goal of becoming a global leader

in aviation innovation.

Emphasizing gender inclusion, Shri Modi noted that women constitute over 15% of pilots in India—three times the global average—and 86% of cabin crew, along with a growing number of women engineers in MRO

services. “This reflects the inclusive growth model of Indian aviation,” he added.

The Prime Minister also spoke about India’s leadership in drone technology, stating that drones are being integrated into agriculture, delivery services, and women-led self-help group enterprises, contributing to social and economic inclusion.

On safety, Modi reaffirmed India’s commitment to global aviation standards, mentioning the recent ICAO audit that appreciated India’s regulatory framework. He also highlighted India’s role in adopting the Delhi Declaration at the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation.

Concluding his address, Prime Minister Modi urged global aviation stakeholders to view India as a critical partner in shaping the future of aviation—one that is safe, accessible, inclusive, and green. “We believe in Open Skies and Global Connectivity,” he stated, calling for collective efforts to create an aviation network that serves all of humanity.

The event was attended by several dignitaries, including Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, Union Minister Shri Murlidhar Mohol, IATA Board of Governors Chairman Pieter Elbers, IATA Director General Willie Walsh, and IndiGo MD Rahul Bhatia, among others.

The IATA AGM and World Air Transport Summit, being held in New Delhi from June 1–3, has brought together more than 1,600 global aviation leaders, policymakers, and media. Key focus areas include sustainability, connectivity, fuel security, and future innovations in air travel. **(PIB NEW DELHI)**

Govt Issues Guidelines for Scheme to Boost Electric Passenger Car Manufacturing in India

NEW DELHI: The Government of India has formally notified the detailed guidelines for the “Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars in India” (SPMEPCI), a landmark initiative aimed at boosting domestic electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing and attracting global investment.

According to Press Information Bureau (PIB), the scheme, notified by the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI), is a significant step towards establishing India as a global hub for automotive innovation and clean mobility solutions. It aligns with the national goals of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070, promoting sustainable development, and strengthening the country’s position as a manufacturing powerhouse.

Under this scheme, approved global EV manufacturers will be allowed to import completely built electric four-wheelers (e-4Ws) with a minimum CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight) value of USD 35,000 at a reduced customs duty of 15 percent. This concessional duty benefit will be applicable for a period of five years from the date of approval.

However, the number of vehicles imported under this facility will be capped at 8,000 units per year, and any unused annual quota can be carried forward. The total duty foregone per applicant will be limited to the lower of 6,484 crore or the actual investment made under



the scheme.

To be eligible for these incentives, applicants must commit to a minimum investment of 4,150 crore (approximately USD 500 million) within three years. There is no upper ceiling on investment. Additionally, applicants are required to commence manufacturing operations in India within three years from the date of approval and achieve at least 25 percent domestic value addition (DVA) within three years and 50 percent within five years. These DVA milestones will be assessed using the Standard Operating Procedure under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for automobiles, with certifications issued by testing agencies approved by the MHI.

The scheme outlines that only investments in new plant and machinery, research and development, utilities, and construction of buildings (capped at 10 percent of investment) will be considered. Expenditures on land

will not be counted. Investments in charging infrastructure will be permissible up to five percent of the committed investment.

Further, to ensure compliance and safeguard government interests, applicants must submit a bank guarantee equal to either the duty foregone or 4,150 crore, whichever is higher. This guarantee must remain valid throughout the scheme period.

The eligibility criteria for applying under the scheme require the applicant or its group companies to have a minimum global revenue of 10,000 crore from automotive manufacturing and a minimum global investment of 3,000 crore in fixed assets, as per their latest audited financial statements.

A group company is defined as any enterprise that directly or indirectly holds at least 26 percent voting rights in another.

The Ministry will shortly issue a Notice Inviting Applications, and interested manufacturers

will have a window of at least 120 days to apply. The application fee has been fixed at 5 lakh. The MHI reserves the right to open the application window again, if needed, until March 15, 2026.

Speaking at the press conference, Union Minister for Heavy Industries, Shri H.D. Kumaraswamy, said that the scheme reflects the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. He noted that this forward-looking policy not only aims to bring cutting-edge EV technology to India but also emphasizes building domestic capabilities, creating jobs, and reinforcing the ‘Make in India’ and ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ initiatives.

He added that the scheme provides an enabling environment for global manufacturers to establish long-term manufacturing bases in India, while simultaneously encouraging technology transfer and innovation in the electric mobility sector.

“The government’s calibrated approach through investment thresholds, domestic value addition targets, and duty concessions will ensure that India emerges as a competitive and attractive destination for electric vehicle manufacturing,” he said.

Industry experts believe that the scheme could pave the way for major global players such as Tesla, BYD, and other EV giants to enter the Indian market with manufacturing investments. **(PIB New Delhi)**

India, Japan to Strengthen Maritime Ties

Sonowal Holds Bilateral Talks with Japan’s Vice Minister in Oslo

OSLO, NORWAY: India and Japan have agreed to deepen bilateral collaboration in key sectors including shipbuilding, green ports, smart islands, and maritime training.

According to Press Information Bureau (PIB), the agreement was reached during a bilateral meeting between India’s Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, and Japan’s Vice Minister for International Affairs at the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), Terada Yoshimichi, held in Oslo, Norway.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the Nor-Shipping 2025 summit and focused on mutual interests in maritime domain development, with both leaders underscoring the strategic relevance of the Indo-Japanese partnership in the context of global sustainability and regional maritime security.

Speaking after the meeting, Sonowal said, “Relations between India and Japan are deeply rooted in shared democratic values, spiritual affinity, and civilisational ties. We are committed to advancing our maritime ties, especially under the frameworks of the Quad and the India-Japan-Australia Supply Chain Resilience Initiative.”

He added that the two countries would work closely on transformative maritime



initiatives under India’s Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.

The bilateral dialogue explored concrete areas for collaboration including port digitisation, green port initiatives, and renewable energy deployment in island territories. Sonowal invited Japanese participation in converting Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands into Smart Islands, leveraging Japan’s experience in disaster-resilient infrastructure and smart mobility systems. “These initiatives will further our shared commitment to ecological conservation and maritime security,” he said.

In shipbuilding, India extended invitations to Japan’s top shipyards—Imabari Shipbuilding, JMUC, Kanagawa Dockyard, and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries—to invest in Indian shipyards and explore joint ventures. “India’s shipbuilding

and ship repair sector has great potential. Japanese expertise can complement India’s strengths and contribute to making India a hub for maritime manufacturing,” Sonowal noted.

Vice Minister Terada welcomed the proposal and expressed Japan’s keen interest in expanding its maritime footprint in India. He noted that while Japan has traditionally collaborated with India in railway infrastructure, the scope for maritime partnership is now equally promising, particularly in shipbuilding and seafarer training.

The Indian Minister also proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Indian entities like Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Indian maritime universities, and Japanese agencies for research, skill development, and next-generation ship design.

“India has a maritime

workforce of over 1.5 lakh trained seafarers who can supplement Japan’s workforce. We propose structured training and employment partnerships with Japan,” Sonowal said.

The meeting also covered greenfield investments, including the potential entry of Japanese shipyards like Imabari Shipbuilding into Andhra Pradesh, and opportunities for co-developing ports and maritime industrial clusters as clean energy hubs. The dialogue also envisioned collaboration in developing sustainable maritime technologies, fostering R&D, and improving human resource capabilities.

Highlighting India’s focus on maritime heritage, Sonowal extended an invitation to Japan to collaborate on the National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal, Gujarat.

The project aims to be a global centre for heritage tourism, education, and research in the maritime sector. Japan’s involvement, he said, would add significant value to the initiative.

Sonowal also invited the Japanese delegation to attend the India Maritime Week 2025, to be held in Mumbai from October 27–31.

The event is expected to bring together key stakeholders from the global maritime community to promote investment, innovation, and growth.

Court Defers Defamation Case Against Rahul Gandhi

SULTANPUR (U.P.): A special court on Monday deferred the hearing in a defamation case against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as bar members refrained from work due

to a colleague’s passing.

The bar association observed it to be a non-working day owing to the death of its member and advocate Kamal Srivastava. The court, as a result, posted the hearing on July 1.

The case dates back to 2018, when BJP leader Vijay Mishra filed a defamation complaint against Mr. Gandhi, alleging that he made objectionable remarks against Amit

Shah during the Karnataka Assembly election campaign.

During the last hearing on April 28, the complainant side presented Anil Mishra, a resident of Pitambarpur Kala in Kotwali Dehat, as a witness.

Mr. Gandhi’s counsel, advocate Kashi Prasad Shukla, has already started cross-examination of the witness. The court issued a warrant against the Congress leader in December, 2023.

RSS Sympathisers ‘Infiltrated’ Professional Institutes, ‘Destroyed’ Them: Congress

New Delhi: The Congress on Monday alleged there is a systematic infiltration of the RSS into professional institutes which are being destroyed, while citing “irregularities” in the Indian Council of Historical Research which are being probed by the CVC.

Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said, “Since May 2014, there has been a systematic infiltration of the RSS into professional institutions. One such example is the Indian Council of Historical Research.” “Now these activists stand indicted by no less a body than the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) for financial misdeeds. It is a Rs 14 crore scam, which for the ICHR is a big amount,” he alleged.

Citing media reports, Ramesh alleged that at the heart of the “scam” is a RSS outfit called the Akhil Bharatiya Itihas Sankalan Yojana (ABISY).

“The ICHR is not alone. Many prestigious institutions, including top universities, are being destroyed by RSS sympathisers with extremely dubious academic credentials. We shouldn’t be surprised really since this dubiousness starts from the very top,” the Congress leader alleged. Media reports claimed the CVC is probing a Rs 14-crore “scam” in ICHR and has advised the government to act against some members of the ABISY. There was no immediate comment from either the ICHR or the ABISY. (Agencies)

Kharge asks Centre to provide funds for northeastern states grappling with floods

NEW DELHI: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday attacked the Modi government over the flood situation in the northeastern states, and hoped Prime Minister Narendra Modi will open the floodgates of his PM CARES Fund, where he claimed crores lie without any audit.

Referring to Assam, he said PM Modi had promised in 2016 to make the state flood-free but it seems the BJP’s double engine governments have betrayed Assam.

In a post on X, he noted that the northeast is reeling under devastating floods, landslides and heavy rains.

Assam, Arunachal, Manipur, Sikkim and Meghalaya are among the worst affected states, where many lives have been lost and lakhs of people have been affected, he observed.

Congress leaders and workers must do everything to provide assistance to the people, he said.

“In 2016, BJP had promised to make a ‘Flood-Free’ Assam. In 2022, Home Minister, Amit Shah repeated this promise.



“Looking at the visuals from the so-called ‘SMART CITY’ Guwahati, one is reminded how Modi ji and his double engine governments have betrayed Assam,” Kharge said in his post.

“Diversion, Distraction and Digression from basic developmental issues to emotive and polarising subjects has been the hallmark of BJP’s politics,” the Congress chief said.

He said the Modi government must release more funds to all the states of northeast, especially Assam for flood preparedness.

National Symposium Marks 60 Years of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya’s ‘Integral Humanism’

NEW DELHI: Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, on Saturday addressed a National Memorial Symposium commemorating the 60th anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya’s seminal philosophy of Integral Humanism. According to Press Information Bureau (PIB) The event, held at the NDMC Convention Centre in the capital, saw wide-ranging discussions on the relevance and application of the philosophy in contemporary India. Paying homage to the visionary thinker, Shri Chouhan said, “I bow at the feet of the revered Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Ji. The solutions to many of the crises facing the world today lie in the philosophy of Integral Humanism. It is not a complex ideology but rather the distilled essence of Indian thought and wisdom.”

He recalled how Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya had advocated for India to chart its own course and not blindly follow the West. “Where monarchies once ruled the world and were later dismantled in the name of liberty, equality, and fraternity, Pandit Deendayal Ji posed a

critical question—why must India imitate others? He offered Integral Humanism as a distinctly Indian model for building society and the state,” the Minister noted.

Speaking passionately about agriculture, Chouhan



described it as the bedrock of India’s economy. “I am not just the Agriculture Minister, I live the term ‘agriculture’. It runs through my veins. If there is any true strength in our economy, it lies in farming and our farmers,” he said. Highlighting the principles of harmony and balance in life, Chouhan emphasized that Integral Humanism teaches the value of both material and spiritual well-being. “Wealth is essential for a life of dignity, but neither its absence nor excess is desirable. This balance

is key to Pandit Deendayal Ji’s vision,” he said.

Chouhan also invoked the interconnectedness of all living beings, urging people to respect and conserve nature. “The Earth does not belong to humans alone; all creatures have equal rights to live and thrive. In that spirit, I urge every citizen to participate in the upcoming ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ (One Tree in the Name of Mother) campaign on June 5, World Environment Day,” he said. The Minister lauded India’s progress in agriculture and rural development, mentioning the recent development of two new paddy varieties that promise to increase yield by 30%, reduce water usage by 20%, and mature 20 days earlier than conventional types.

DC Bandipora Vows Inclusive Growth for Border Villages under Vibrant Villages Programme

Emphasises on-grid power, telecom, road connectivity

BANDIPORA: To ensure effective implementation of the Vibrant Village Programme Phase-II, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora Manzoor Ahmad Qadri today chaired a comprehensive review meeting here in the VC room, Mini Secretariat Bandipora.

During the meeting, the DC emphasised the need for focused and coordinated efforts by all departments to achieve the programme's objectives of sustainable development and socio-economic vibrancy in these significant villages. He urged the officers to ensure the timely submission of Village Action Plans and to take all necessary steps for the successful implementation of the programme.



Speaking on the occasion, the DC highlighted that the aim of the initiative is to upgrade infrastructure in these villages, including all-weather road connectivity, telecom connectivity, on-grid electrification, and television connectivity.

During the meeting, the officers discussed key aspects of the programme and identified priority areas for intervention in the identified border villages of the district. The meeting was informed that Divisional Level Nodal Officers and Village Level Nodal Officers have already been created to facilitate smooth and effective implementation on the ground.

On the occasion, the DC assured that the district administration is fully committed to transforming these border villages in line with the Government of India's vision of inclusive and strategic border development.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Bandipora Mohammed Maqbool Lone; ExEn KPDCI Bandipora and Manager BSNL, while the SDM Gurez, ExEn R&B Gurez, BDO Gurez, and BDO Tulail attended the meeting virtually.

Bandipora Admin Launches 26-Day Anti-Drug Campaign with Mega Marathon

BANDIPORA : In a strong show of community resolve against substance abuse, the District Administration Bandipora on Monday organized a Mega Marathon under the banner of "Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan" drawing participation from hundreds of students across different educational institutions.



The marathon marked the beginning of a 26-day-long campaign under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan in Bandipora, in line with the broader initiative being undertaken across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The marathon flagged off from Fisheries Hatchery Baapora Bandipora and culminating at DC Office Bandipora, saw overwhelming enthusiasm from students, youth and government officials—all unified in their commitment to a drug-free future.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, said, "Our collective fight against drug abuse begins with awareness and participation. Events like these not only raise consciousness but also build a shared sense of responsibility among our youth."

Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Zaffar Hussan Shawl, led the run from the front, underscoring the administration's proactive and people-centric approach to addressing the drug menace. He emphasized the crucial role of community engagement in safeguarding the youth and transforming every citizen into an agent of change.

On the occasion, participants took an anti-drug pledge, vowing to stay away from substance abuse and work towards creating awareness within their communities.

Div Com Kashmir visits Tulmulla, reviews arrangements for Mela Kheerbhawani

GANDERBAL: In preparation for the annual Mata Kheerbhawani Mela-2025, scheduled to be celebrated on June 3rd, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, today visited the revered shrine at Tulmulla to review and inspect the arrangements being made for the smooth conduct of the festival.

During the visit, Div Com took a detailed round of the temple premises and inspected various facilities established for the convenience of the devotees. These included arrangements for night stay, bedding, sanitation, hygienic toilet units, uninterrupted power and water supply, health care services and larger facilities.

He emphasized ensuring a peaceful, well-organized, and spiritually enriching experience for all attendees.

While expressing satisfaction over the arrangements in place, Div Com directed the concerned officers to further fine-tune preparations to eliminate any possible inconvenience to the pilgrims.

Appealing to devotees to participate in large numbers, Div Com encouraged people to experience the sacred ambience and spiritual essence of the Mela. He assured that all necessary facilities have been put in place to ensure a clean, safe, and comfortable environment, with round-the-clock services available throughout the duration of the festival.

Baramulla hosts multi-sports awareness drive under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

Hundreds of students participate in anti-drug campaign through sports activities

BARAMULLA: In a spirited effort to promote a drug-free society, the District Administration Baramulla today organized a large-scale multi-sports awareness drive under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

The event held on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, was jointly coordinated by the Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) and the Social Welfare Department.

The day began with a Mini Marathon from Kanispora to Government Degree College (GDC) Boys Khawaja Bagh, witnessing enthusiastic participation of students from both government and private schools across the district.

In the afternoon, a series of team sports including Volleyball, Kho-Kho, and Kabaddi were held at High School Dewanbagh. The events were inaugurated by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Baramulla, Syed Altaf Hussain Musavi, in the presence of officers from the participating departments. The sports activities reflected the vibrant spirit of the youth while reinforcing the message of a drug-free lifestyle.

Speaking on the occasion, ADC appreciated the joint efforts of the departments and the enthusiastic participation of students. He said, "Such activities are not only important for physical well-being but also for building a collective resolve to stay away from drugs. It is encouraging to see the youth taking the lead in spreading awareness."

The winners of the mini marathon were felicitated with certificates of appreciation.

Miscreants Chop Down Dozens of Apple Trees in Bandipora's Gund Jahangir Village

BANDIPORA: In a shocking incident, unknown miscreants have chopped down dozens of apple trees in orchards located in the Gund Jahangir village of north Kashmir's Bandipora district, leaving local farmers devastated.



Mohammad Abdullah Sheikh, one of the affected orchard owners, expressed deep anguish over the incident.

"I felt completely devastated when I was informed that someone had cut down my apple trees. Around 50 trees from my orchard alone have been destroyed," he said, struggling to hold back tears. He added that the damage affects orchards belonging to around 20 different owners in the village.

Another affected Owner Abdul Salam Parry said that the apple orchards are their only source of livelihood. "20 families are dependent on these trees and the chopping down of the trees has created tremendous panic among the locals," he added.

Police have already visited the site and launched an investigation. Sheikh has appealed to law enforcement to take strict action against the culprits to ensure such incidents are not repeated in the future.

Locals have appealed to the higher ups to find the culprits and compensate for the losses they have suffered. Meanwhile, the police have taken cognizance of the matter and further investigation is underway.

Culprits Must Be Brought to Justice: Altaf Bukhari

Srinagar: Apni Party President Altaf Bukhari has strongly condemned the destruction of dozens of apple trees in Gund Jahangir village of Hajin, Bandipora.

Calling the incident "heinous," Bukhari urged law enforcement agencies to swiftly identify and apprehend the miscreants behind the act.

"I have been informed that nearly 20 families have been left devastated after their orchards were targeted in the dead of night," Bukhari posted on X. "Such a shocking incident demands urgent action. The culprits must be brought to justice and given exemplary punishment under the law."

He expressed deep sympathy with the affected families and assured them of full support. (KNS)

DC Bandipora Directs Tight Vigil on Markets, Sanitation Ahead of Eid

BANDIPORA : In view of the upcoming Eid-ul-Adha celebrations, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora Manzoor Ahmad Qadri,

Hajin to launch special sanitation drives around mosques, Eidgahs, and other public spaces, and to ensure timely garbage disposal during



today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to finalise preparations across the district.

The meeting witnessed the participation of Assistant Commissioner Revenue Bandipora Shabir Ahmad wani; DPO ICDS Yaar Ali Khan, CPO Mohammad Maqbool Lone, AD FCS&CA Dr Naseer Ahmad, Tehsildar Bandipora Firdous Ahmad Qadri, DySP DAR Ahmad Shafee and District Officers from various departments. SDM Sumbal Murtaza Ahmad, SDM Gurez Mukhtar Ahmad and other concerned officers attended the meeting virtually. On the occasion, the DC emphasised seamless inter-departmental coordination to ensure a safe, clean, and hassle-free festival for the public. He urged the concerned departments to ensure uninterrupted water and power supply, especially in areas where large congregational prayers are expected.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner directed Chief Executive Officer MC Bandipora and Executive Officer MC Sumbal/

the festival.

While stressing the importance of checking overpricing, hoarding, and the sale of substandard food items, the DC urged the FCS&CA and Legal Metrology Departments to intensify market inspections. Special emphasis was placed on maintaining hygiene at temporary meat stalls, with directions to ensure proper storage and sale conditions for mutton and other perishable items.

During the review meeting, the Deputy Commissioner urged Traffic Police to enhance vigilance, deploy adequate personnel near major religious sites, and issue advisories to regulate traffic and ensure public safety.

On the occasion, the DC assured that district administration is fully geared up to facilitate a smooth Eid ul Adha festival. He appealed to the public to extend full cooperation to the authorities and celebrate the occasion in a spirit of peace, harmony, and brotherhood.

Geology & Mining Dept Seizes 12 Vehicles, Excavator Across Pulwama District

BILAL HABIB

PAMPORE: The Geology and Mining Department Pulwama a dozen vehicles and one excavator during multiple enforcement operations conducted in Lassipora, Pulwama, Pampore, Kakapora, and Tral areas on Monday.

The largest seizure occurred during a surprise night raid in Lassipora, where a team led by District Mineral Officer (DMO) Dr. Khurshed Ahmad confiscated seven dumpers and one excavator that were allegedly being used for illegal mining activities.

"Illegal extraction of minerals poses a serious threat to our environment and water bodies. We are intensifying action against violators and will not tolerate illegal mining in

any part of the district," said Dr. Khurshed Ahmad.

In a follow-up operation held during the early hours of Sunday, four additional vehicles and a tractor involved in illegal mining were seized from various locations including Pulwama town, Pampore, Kakapora, and Tral.

Officials said that the department will continue its surprise checks and strict enforcement measures in the coming days. Dr. Ahmad urged residents to act as stakeholders in environmental preservation by reporting suspicious mining activity.

The Geology and Mining Department has reiterated its resolve to curb unauthorized mineral extraction and ensure legal compliance in mineral transportation, aiming to safeguard the ecological balance of the region.



Hopes Fade as Search for Drowned Youth Enters Second Day

BILAL HABIB

Pampore: Search operations continued for the second consecutive day in the Lethpora area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district



to trace 21-year-old Fayaz Ahmad, who drowned in the Jhelum River after a boat capsized on Sunday morning.

Soon after the incident, rescue teams from the Jammu and Kashmir Police, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and Civil Administration launched a joint operation to locate and retrieve the missing youth.

Gujjar and Bakerwal Community General Secretary Choudhary Mohammad Yaseen Poswal visited the site on Monday.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Awanitpora, Mushtaq Ahmad Lone (JKAS), along with his team, has been present at the site since Sunday.

Talking to Kashmir Convener, General Secretary Gujjar and Bakerwal Community,

Choudhary Mohammad Yaseen Poswal, expressed deep sorrow over the incident, saying it is very unfortunate that a boy from a tribal family drowned in the Jhelum River while trying to cross it.

He said, "I am grateful to the District Administration of Pulwama, especially the Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, SSP Awanitpora, Additional Deputy Commissioner Awanitpora, Tehsildar Pampore, DySP, SHO, Naib Tehsildar, and the rest of the team who have been present here.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Awanitpora, Mushtaq Ahmad Lone, said soon after the incident, the district Administration Pulwama immediately directed the SDRF team to begin a rescue operation without delay.

The rescue operation is currently ongoing and is being personally monitored by the Deputy Commissioner Pulwama Dr Basharat Qayoom. "We hope the body of the missing youth is recovered soon and handed over to the family," he said.

Indian Army Neutralizes 67 Unexploded Shells in Poonch to Ensure Civilian Safety

POONCH: In a continued effort to safeguard civilian lives and property in border areas, the Indian Army has successfully demolished 67 unexploded shells across multiple villages in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. The unexploded ordnance, remnants of cross-border shelling by Pakistan, was recovered from villages including Chajla,

Jhulas, Mendhar, Mankot, and LKG.

Officials said the operation is part of a comprehensive drive to sanitize civilian-populated and agricultural zones affected by shelling. The shells, left behind after intermittent ceasefire violations, posed a grave threat to villagers, livestock, and farmland.

The Indian Army, in coordination with the local administration, conducted controlled demolitions after securing the areas and temporarily relocating residents to ensure complete safety. The operation was carried out with stringent

safety protocols to prevent any casualties or damage.

"Area sanitization and disposal operations are ongoing in all sectors affected by shelling. The Indian Army is committed not only to countering cross-border threats but also to eliminating post-conflict dangers like unexploded ordnance," said Lt Col Suneel Bartwal, PRO and Spokesperson, Ministry of Defence, Jammu.

Local residents have expressed gratitude to the Army for mitigating a long-standing risk and restoring a sense of security in the border villages.

Editorial



Lavender Bloom

In the quiet mountains of Bhaderwah, Jammu and Kashmir, something extraordinary has taken root—not just lavender, but a revolution. Once known for its scenic beauty and isolation, Bhaderwah is today the face of India's rural startup success, thanks to a bold experiment in agri-entrepreneurship led by CSIR-IIIM and championed by local youth and policymakers. Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh fittingly calls it a "Purple Revolution." Lavender cultivation, which began as a scientific intervention in aromatic farming, has evolved into a thriving economic model that supports hundreds of local entrepreneurs and generates over ₹65 lakh annually per entrepreneur on average. The numbers speak for themselves—but the story goes deeper than profit.

By turning lavender farming into a symbol of local identity, Bhaderwah has done what few small towns manage—it has carved out a national role for itself in India's economic and entrepreneurial map. This success is no accident. It stems from a confluence of vision and grassroots execution. Credit must go to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on the StartUp India and StandUp India missions, and to the local scientists, farmers, and youth who believed in lavender's potential when few others did.

The presence of 50 lavender distillation units in Bhaderwah and the expansion of supply chains to states like Maharashtra prove that even remote mountain economies can integrate seamlessly into national and global value chains. That representatives from northeastern and Himalayan states are now looking to replicate this model further underscores Bhaderwah's pioneering role.

Yet, this is about more than economics. The lavender success story challenges long-held myths—that startups are the preserve of metro cities, of tech-savvy youth with Ivy League degrees. As Dr. Singh rightly said, these mountains now echo with income, identity, and inspiration. This is a model of inclusive innovation—one that blends tradition with technology, and local knowledge with national ambition.

In a world grappling with climate change, employment stress, and rural-urban divides, Bhaderwah offers a fragrant solution. Its lavender fields remind us that the future of India is not only in skyscrapers and servers, but also in its soil.

Let Bhaderwah not be a rare exception, but the beginning of a larger movement—where every remote village and town is empowered to bloom in its own unique color.

Hazrat Shah-i-Hamdan (RA): The Founder of Kashmir's Sufi Tradition

RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR

Hazrat Amir Kabir Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (RA), often revered as the founder of Islam in Kashmir, arrived in the valley accompanied by a large group



of Sayed comrades, all of whom were amirs. As their leader, he came to be known as Amir-i-Kabir. Born on 21st October 1314 AD into a noble and pious family, both of his parents—Syed Shahabuddin and Syeda Fatima—were direct descendants of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). His father served as an administrator of Hamdan, while his maternal uncle, Syed Aliuddin Simnani, took charge of his upbringing. Under his guidance, Shah-i-Hamdan memorised the Holy Qur'an. He was later initiated into the Kubrawi order by Sheikh Sharfuddin Mazdaqani, a distinguished scholar and Sufi of the time, who became his spiritual guide and mentor in religious, educational, and spiritual disciplines.

In the early 14th century, a brutal Tatar named Zulchu invaded Kashmir, bringing devastation for eight months that led to widespread death and destruction.

Only eleven families survived in the city. After Zulchu's retreat in 1320 AD, a Buddhist from Ladakh, Rinchan Shah, became the king of Kashmir. During his reign, Syed Sharfuddin Abdul Rehman Suharwardi (RA), also known as Bulbul Shah, arrived from Turkistan.

at a location then known as Allaudin Pora, which is now the site of the Khanqah-e-Moula in Srinagar. Shah-i-Hamdan and his disciples would offer prayers at this place, and the foundation of the Khanqah was laid there. During this second visit, he remained in the valley for thirty months, travelling extensively to spread the true teachings of Islam with the help of his companions.

His third and final visit to Kashmir took place in 1384 AD. However, after spending less than a year in the valley, Shah-i-Hamdan fell seriously ill and left for Turkistan via Ladakh. The group stayed at Shey village in Leh, where they built a mosque—making it the first Muslim site of worship in Ladakh. Continuing their journey through the town of Pakhli, they arrived at Kunnar, where the local king, Khazar Shah, requested that Shah-i-Hamdan remain as his guest. However, his illness worsened, and he passed away on 19th January 1385 AD. Due to the harsh winter, he was initially buried in Swat, but, in accordance with his wishes, his body was later transferred and laid to rest at Koulab on 4th July 1385, where his entire family is also buried.

Wherever Shah-i-Hamdan travelled, he left an enduring legacy through mosques and Khanqahs. These structures were often built under the direction of his beloved son, Mir Mohammad Hamdani (RA), during and after his father's visits. Notable among them are Khanqah Faizpanah in Tral, Khanqah-i-Amirya in Pampore, Khanqah-i-Walla in Wachi, Khanqah-i-Amirya in Monghama, and the mosque at Shey in Ladakh near Leh. The most prominent among them, however, is the Khanqah-i-Moula in Srinagar, which stands not only as a revered place of worship but also as a symbol of Kashmir's six-hundred-year-old cultural and spiritual heritage.

The architecture of the Khanqah-i-Moula reflects Central Asian influence, constructed from wood, sculpted stones, and small bricks. The foundation and stone plinth were laid by Shah-i-Hamdan himself, while the construction was completed by his son Mir Mohammad Hamdani during his visit in the 8th century AH, under the reign of Sultan Sikandar. The project, which began in 1396 AD and was completed in 1399 AD, was made possible through the cooperation and generosity of Sultan Sikandar and Seh Butt. With the support of the king, Mir Mohammad Hamdani extended a wide network of Khanqahs and mosques throughout the valley, continuing the noble mission initiated by his illustrious father.

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A Mother's Journey of Patience and Faith



FIRDIOUS AHMAD MALIK

Noorabad was a quiet little village tucked between lush green meadows and whispering streams, where life moved slowly, predictably, untouched by the noise and rush of the cities. In this peaceful yet humble corner of the world lived Faiza Bibi, an elderly woman whose wrinkled face bore the dignity of years filled with silent struggle, sacrifice, and unwavering faith. Her eyes, though tired, sparkled with wisdom and a kind of strength that only pain can teach. People in the village often said her presence alone brought calm to troubled hearts.

Faiza Bibi's life had been a tapestry of trials and endurance. She had married young to Sabir Ali, a poor but honest labourer who carried bricks and stones for a living but never bent his back when it came to integrity. Their love was strong, yet life constantly tested them—with poverty that bit like winter, with illnesses that drained every last coin, and with losses that left deep scars. They had three children and barely enough income to feed them. Despite it all, Faiza Bibi never once complained. She bore each burden with dignity, never letting her children see the full weight she carried. Her strength was her patience—an unbreakable trust in the divine.

"When hardship comes, do not panic. Patience is the key to Allah's mercy," she would often say to her children and neighbours. It wasn't just a phrase to her—it was the foundation of her life. Even when her hands trembled from exhaustion and her eyes swelled from sleepless nights, she held on to that belief like a lifeline.

Then came the day that would change her life forever. Sabir Ali left for the city in search of work, as he often did. But this time, he never came back. Days turned into weeks, and weeks into unbearable silence—until a message arrived. There had been an accident. Sabir Ali had perished, but his body was never found. The news hit like a storm. It was a blow that would have shattered most people. But not Faiza Bibi. Though her heart crumbled in grief, she wiped her tears away quietly, whispering prayers instead of questions.

Relatives poured in with advice—some well-meaning, others not. "Leave the children with your brothers," one said. "You're still young. Remarry," another suggested. "Move in with extended family," many advised. But she stood firm like a mountain. "The One who made me a mother," she replied softly, "will give me the strength to fulfill my duty." And so, with trembling hands and a steadfast heart, she picked up the pieces of her life.

She learned sewing from an elderly neighbour, walked



miles to clean other people's homes, and did odd jobs, anything that would bring home a few rupees. At night, when others slept, she stayed awake in prayer—her forehead pressed to the

floor, whispering to the Creator of worlds. Her little mud house became a sanctuary of resilience, the walls silently witnessing her tears, her whispered duas, her unwavering hope.

Years passed. Her sacrifices slowly began to bear fruit. Her eldest son, a quiet and studious boy, earned a scholarship and went to study in the city. Her daughter, with a melodious voice and bright eyes, memorized the Qur'an and began teaching young girls in the village. There was pride in Faiza Bibi's eyes, but it was always wrapped in humility. Just as the light of hope returned to her home, fate struck again—this time cruelly.

Her youngest son, barely fourteen, full of laughter and mischief, suffered a sudden heart attack. The village doctor rushed over, neighbours gathered outside, but nothing could be done. He passed away before her eyes. People feared this would finally break Faiza Bibi. But what she did next stunned everyone. She fell into sujood (prostration), and whispered, "If this is Your will, Ya Allah, I am content." Her tears flowed, but they were not tears of rebellion. They were tears of acceptance, of pain surrendered with faith. Her silence echoed louder than any wail, her composure became a lesson in divine submission.

Time moved on. Her son in the city graduated with distinction. He cleared the civil service exam—an achievement that felt like a miracle for a boy who once studied under flickering lanterns, who wore patched-up uniforms and walked barefoot to school. The entire village buzzed with joy and disbelief. And then, in what seemed like a divine stroke of justice, his first posting was in Noorabad.

The day he returned, the entire village came out to see. A government vehicle pulled up near the dusty path of her home. Her son stepped out in a neatly pressed uniform, medals gleaming on his chest. He walked straight to his mother, knelt down, and kissed her feet. The crowd was silent. Some wept. Others whispered prayers. The same boy who once slept hungry had returned as an officer, a symbol of what patience and faith can accomplish.

Journalists from nearby towns came to interview Faiza Bibi. One asked her, "Did you ever feel like giving up?" She smiled gently, her eyes moist, and replied, "No. The promise of Allah to those who are patient is never broken. You must walk through the fire, but you will come out stronger, and with a light others can follow."

Her story spread like wildflowers after spring rain. People began visiting her just to sit in her presence, to listen to her words. Young girls looked up to her, and even old men sought her advice. She had no wealth, no property, but she had something greater—honour, peace, and a legacy of patience.

Faiza Bibi's life is a reminder that patience is not merely about waiting. It is about enduring without complaint, working without reward, loving without condition, and believing without proof. She didn't fight fate—but she didn't surrender to it either. She walked beside it with dignity, trusting that Allah would reward her in His own time. And in the end, she was right. For the fruit of patience, as her life proved, is always sweeter than we can ever imagine.

Author: Firdous Ahmad Malik is a student at the University of Kashmir. He can be reached

Sakeena Itoo conducts extensive tour of Beerwah Constituency

Inaugurates multiple infrastructural projects across Constituency

Also lays foundation stone of Centre of Excellence at DIET Beerwah

BEERWAH (BUDGAM): Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today conducted an extensive tour of Beerwah Constituency of district Budgam and dedicated several infrastructure projects for the public purposes. During the visit, Minister inaugurated newly constructed building of Government High School Batapora Kenihama, Atal Tinkering Lab and Information Communication Technology Lab at Government Higher Secondary School Magam, Library Block and Lecture Hall at GDC Beerwah and newly constructed Academic Block of Government Girls Higher Secondary School Beerwah.

During the visit, Minister Sakeena also laid the foundation stone of Centre for Excellence at District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) Beerwah Budgam.

During the tour to Constituency, Sakeena Itoo also inspected CHC Magam and SDH Beerwah.

She took detailed inspection of these health facilities and took stock of healthcare facilities available. She

also interacted with medical staff as well as patients and their attendants. During these visits, Minister Sakeena also interacted with public delegations and individuals at CHC Magam and DIET Beerwah.



Addressing the gathering at these locations, the Minister highlighted that the present government is focused on holistic development of Jammu and Kashmir with emphasis on healthcare facilities of world class standards as well as educational infrastructure. "Our objective is clear, to ensure that every citizen, regardless of location, has access to same opportunities and facilities", Sakeena stated. The Minister further

highlighted that the Government during the initial months has taken some significant steps for the welfare of the people. She added that the pension for old age, widow, specially abled persons and other sections has been increased.

Minister Sakeena further said that Government also took remarkable step for welfare of women folk by announcing free transport for them. She added that this unique step will significantly lead to emancipation of women across J&K.

While interacting with several public delegations and individuals on the occasion, Minister Sakeena said that this Government has been formed by the trust and vote of the people and we are determined to work for the welfare and development of common people. She assured the public delegations and individuals that their genuine issues and concerns will be redressed promptly.

MLA Beerwah, Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani; MLA Chadoora, Ali Mohd Dar; Additional Chief Secretary Higher Education, Shantmanu; Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Directors of Social Welfare, School Education, Health, Colleges, Family Welfare and Ayush, senior officers of district administration and other concerned officers also accompanied the Minister during the visit.

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He emphasized ensuring a peaceful, well-organized, and spiritually enriching experience for all attendees.

While expressing satisfaction over the

arrangements in place, Div Com directed the concerned officers to further fine-tune preparations



to eliminate any possible inconvenience to the pilgrims. Appealing to devotees to participate in large numbers, Div Com encouraged people to experience the sacred ambience and spiritual essence of the Mela. He assured that all necessary facilities have been put in place to ensure a clean, safe, and comfortable environment, with round-the-clock services available throughout the duration of the festival.

DC flags off Shri Mindhal Mata Yatra from Kishtwar

KISHTWAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rajesh Kumar Shavan today flagged off the first batch of local devotees to Shri Mindhal Mata Yatra here from the historic Gori Shankar Mandir.

The yatra is managed and organised by Aadi Shakti Devi Chandike Sewak Sanstha Doda, led by Pyar Singh Ji Maa Sevak (Chief Patron) and Prof. D. S. Manhas (President). The yatra will

proceed via Gulabgarh-Sansari-Himachal road to the holy shrine in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh.

The DC informed that full arrangements have been made for the pilgrims en-route.

He assured full cooperation for the successful culmination of the yatra and advised pilgrims to maintain cleanliness and drive carefully along the hilly terrain.

DC Kulgam reviews performance of Social Welfare, allied sectors

Urges saturation of all public welfare schemes

KULGAM : Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today convened a review meeting here to evaluate the performance of the ICDS, Social Welfare Department, OSC, DHEW, ICPS and the implementation of various government-sponsored beneficiary and pension schemes in the district.

Social Welfare Officer presented a comprehensive progress report on various welfare initiatives through a powerpoint presentation.

He informed that 32661 pension cases have been sanctioned under the Integrated Social Security Scheme under different components while the National Social Assistance programme has successfully met its set target of 4948 beneficiaries.

Additionally, he reported that under the State Marriage Assistance Scheme, 1915 cases were sanctioned financial assistance during 2024-25 and 400 new cases were approved during the current year till date.

The chair was informed that the pension payment under Integrated Social Security Scheme has increased from 29.36 Cr to 35.09 Cr while a total of 93 applications were forwarded to the Executive Director of the Rehabilitation Council seeking sanction for motorised tricycles for persons with disabilities.

Out of these, 61 have been approved, and the district has already received 28 scooters



for distribution.

Khan underscored the importance of comprehensive coverage of all eligible beneficiaries, and stressed the need for large-scale awareness campaigns.

DC directed the Social Welfare department that there should be zero pendency in marriage assistance scheme at district level besides Aadhar seeding needs to be ensured in respect of all beneficiaries at the earliest.

He emphasized the criticality of making the benefits of these welfare schemes accessible to even the most underserved communities.

Directions were also passed to ensure 100% registrations of beneficiaries besides immunization and measurement efficiency of new born babies, pregnant women in the ICDS department.

He directed the Programme Officer ICDS, to minimize the gap in the data between

poshan tracker and the recent survey done by the department regarding enrollment of beneficiaries.

Khan stressed upon the CDPOs to ensure procurement of different items as per codal formalities at different stages.

He also reviewed the functioning of the One Stop Centre, District Hub for Empowerment of Women (DHEW) and the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) in the district.

DC instructed officials to make these institutions more proactive and expand their reach to support and assist more victims effectively.

The meeting was attended by ADC Viqar Ahmed Giri; District Programme Officer ICDS, District Social Welfare Officer, all CDPOs, TSWOs, representatives of ICPS, MSK, DHEW and other officials of concerned departments.

Drug Free J&K initiative

Srinagar admin organizes series of drug de-addiction awareness progs. at Fakir Gujri, Dara & Fatehkadal

SRINAGAR: As a part of ongoing drug free Jammu and Kashmir initiative, district administration Srinagar hosted a series of drug de-addiction awareness programmes in various parts of the district to sensitize people about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

The awareness programmes were held on the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, to sensitize communities about the dangers of drug addiction and highlight Government schemes and benefits available to those affected.

Awareness programmes were held at Fakir Gujri Panchayat, Government High School Dara and Marriage Hall Fateh Kadal.

Programmes witnessed active participation from multiple departments including health, police, education, social welfare, excise and Rural Development department.

Experts from these departments delivered informative sessions, shedding light on the issues surrounding drug addiction and the support systems in place to help individuals and families.

Rural Development and Education Departments played a crucial role in the programmes, raising awareness among students about the risks and

consequences of drug addiction. Additionally, counseling sessions were conducted to support students and provide guidance on overcoming addiction. During the programmes, awareness



sessions on the risks and consequences of drug addiction were held and information regarding Government schemes and benefits for those struggling with addiction was highlighted in detail.

These programmes underscored the commitment of local authorities to address the critical issue of drug addiction and promote community well-being. By engaging with the public and providing valuable information, the programmes also aimed to empower individuals and families to make informed decisions and seek support when needed

DC Kulgam visits Mata Tripur Sundari Khanbarni Devsar, reviews arrangements for Mela Kheer Bhawani

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today visited Mata Tripur Sundari Khanbarni Devsar and reviewed arrangements put in place for celebration of Annual Kheer Bhawani Mela.

Officials from KPDC, Jal Shakti, Municipal Committee, Health, Fire & Emergency Services, CAPD, Revenue, Police and other line departments briefed the

DC about the arrangements put in place for smooth conduct of the celebrations.

DC instructed the concerned officers to synergize efforts to ensure smooth celebration of Mela Kheer Bhawani and extend all requisite facilities to the devotees.

He directed all the officers to ensure appropriate

arrangements are put in place for the smooth conduct of Mela. He also interacted with the management committee members and devotees and extended his greetings to them.

Among others, DC was accompanied by ADC Viqar Ahmed Giri; ACR, Tehsildar Devsar, EO MC Devsar, BDO, SHO Devsar and other officers.

Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan: MLA Kokernag addresses tribal farmers at Gadwail

ANANTNAG: In a significant step towards agricultural transformation and tribal empowerment, Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA)



Kokernag, Choudhary Zafar, today addressed a large gathering of tribal farmers during a day-long awareness programme held under the banner of Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan (VKSA)

at Gadwail, Kokernag.

The event was organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Anantnag, in collaboration with various departments from the

areas. Addressing the gathering, MLA emphasized the importance of scientific intervention in agriculture and reiterated the government's commitment to tribal welfare. "Empowering our tribal farmers with modern knowledge and resources is key to inclusive development. The Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan is a vital initiative to bridge the gap between traditional practices and technological advancement," he said.

The programme saw the participation of agricultural scientists, field officers, and experts from allied departments, who shared vital information and practical strategies with the farmers.

Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad Khan, Head of KVK Anantnag, provided insights into the objectives of VKSA and urged the farming community to actively engage

with the available agricultural schemes and scientific services, adding that KVK Anantnag is committed to extending its full support to the farming community, especially in tribal belts. VKSA is designed to inspire and capacitate farmers to adopt best practices for higher productivity and resilience.

Experts from line departments including Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries and Sericulture elaborated on inter-sectoral approaches to agricultural sustainability and diversification. Farmers were also informed about the benefits of integrated farming, organic agriculture and agri-entrepreneurship.

The event concluded with an interactive session where farmers shared their experiences and concerns, which were addressed by the panel of experts.

Javid Dar reviews Eid-ul-Azha arrangements for Kashmir Valley

Emphasizes market regulation, public convenience, interdepartmental coordination

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar, today chaired a high level meeting at the Civil Secretariat to review arrangements for the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha celebrations across the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and Transport, Satish Sharma and Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani.

Additional Chief Secretary Jal Shakti Department, Principal Secretary Agriculture Production, Principal Secretary Power Development Department, Commissioner Secretary Housing & Urban Development, Commissioner Secretary Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Secretary Transport, Secretary Public Works (R&B), Secretary Health & Medical Education, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, JGP Kashmir, Deputy Commissioners of Kashmir Division and heads of relevant line departments such as Sheep Husbandry, Animal Husbandry and Health besides Chief Engineers of PWD (R&B), KPDC

and PHE Kashmir along with other senior officers from civil and police administration were also present in the meeting while the outstations officers attended the meeting through video conferencing.



The meeting held a detailed discussion on several critical arrangements including identification and publicity of sale points for sacrificial animals, availability of essential commodities and door-to-door collection of animal skins and waste. It was informed that advance distribution of food grains for the month of June is underway and daily joint market inspections are being conducted to ensure quality control, price regulation,

cleanliness and fumigation in public areas.

Further, arrangements for uninterrupted power and water supply, deployment of medical teams at major congregation points such as Hazratbal Shrine, installation of waterproof tents and pandals, fire and emergency services, crowd and traffic management and designation of parking zones, were reviewed comprehensively.

The Minister directed all the Deputy Commissioners and Senior Superintendents of Police to personally monitor implementation of all necessary measures and ensure smooth, safe and peaceful celebration of Eid-ul-Azha. He stressed the need for seamless coordination among all the departments involved in public service delivery. Javid Ahmad Dar emphasized that elaborate arrangements must be made with regard to water and electricity supply, medical facilities, sanitation, fire and emergency response and public safety. He also directed that market regulation and availability of essential commodities at government-notified prices must be strictly enforced through regular inspections.

Massive Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir awareness rally held at Anantnag

ANANTNAG: To strengthen the fight against substance abuse among youth, Youth Services & Sports (YSS) Anantnag, in collaboration with the Education Department Anantnag, organized an awareness rally.

The rally was part of a broader campaign to promote healthy, active, and substance-free lifestyles

among students. Massive participation was witnessed from students, teachers, educationists, and officials representing both departments in the rally. Holding banners, placards and slogans promoting a drug-free culture, participants marched through key areas of Anantnag to raise awareness about the growing threat

of drug abuse, and the urgent need for preventive education and community involvement.

Earlier, the event commenced with motivational addresses by key officials from the Youth Services & Sports and the Education departments. Speakers emphasized that the initiative was not only about

curbing substance abuse but also about cultivating a generation of mentally strong, physically fit, and socially responsible individuals. They highlighted how sports, fitness and co-curricular engagement can play a transformative role in keeping youth away from harmful influences. A notable highlight of the

rally was the Anti-Drug Pledge, taken in unison by hundreds of students, symbolizing their commitment to leading a drug-free life and encouraging peers to do the same. The collective oath resonated with the core objectives of the campaign viz. empowerment, awareness and community action.

MYSTIC THOUGHTS

The Question of Hell and Mercy: Ibn Arabi’s Vision of the Afterlife



Dr. Muhammad Maroof Shah

Sages like Ibn Arabi are able to read the notion of afterlife which is the third (after faith in God and virtues) cornerstone of Revealed texts like the Quran and affirmations for effecting salvation/falah. To affirm life afterlife is to choose to live disciplined life (not given to senses/centrifugal passions) oriented towards the Spirit. It is to cultivate the life of mind/heart as distinguished from indulgence in ego centric pursuits and sensory pleasures. It

is not in which abode one resides, but rather, as Ibn Arabi puts it “what is accepted by the constitution and desired by the soul. [Thus, wherever] agreeableness of nature and attainment of desire are found, that is the person’s bliss.” For Ibn Arabi, in Chittick’s paraphrase, “God keeps the bitter cold of Gehenna [Jahannam] for those with hot constitutions and the fire for those with cold constitutions. They enjoy themselves in Gehenna. If they were to enter the Garden with the constitutions that they have, they would suffer chastisement, because of the Garden’s equilibrium.” For him “the transformation from ‘chastisement’ to ‘sweetness’ will begin to occur when the ‘wretched’ resign themselves to their fate, and surrender any hope of leaving Hell. At that point, the fire will become cool (as it was cooled for Abraham), and they will become happy. After this first bliss, their pains will vanish, and they will begin to find their perpetual chastisement to be sweet and pleasant.” Ibn Arabi states that the ‘People of Hellfire’ will not die since they will “find relief through the removal of pain,” and they will not live since they will not enjoy the same

takes precedence over His wrath, the possessor of this attribute would never attain to God’s mercy.

Our deepest need is to be loved and to be loved by God. Imagine one has none to love and one can’t refrain from suicide. The most intense punishment in hell is said to be God not seeing towards man. Ibn Arabi states “If God were to take people to account for error, He would take every possessor of a belief to account. Every believer has delimited his Lord with his reason and consideration and has thereby restricted Him. But nothing is worthy of God except non-delimitation.”

VII

Exclusivist and Sectarian Claims
Sectarian claims arising out of divergent claims of access to correct interpretation or final truth or singular meaning of text are brushed aside in Ibn Arabi. He offers a number of strategies to overcome our tendency to idolize particular views or interpretations. Let us note them.

Ø There is no need to wrangle over interpretations, no point



is to keep alive the sense of wonder and aspiration for perfection – beauty, justice and truth. One doesn’t postpone the question of getting reward for one’s action or posit mere belief in post dated cheques that are to be cashed posthumously. It is to live life sub specie aeternitatis. It is to experience virtue as its own reward or live under the gaze of eternity or seeing God before seeing anything or seeing God as the inner reality/essence of everything. It is to see the Real as the real face of everything. It is to abandon the self for the sake of the Self.

The deeper or comprehensive meaning of Quranic descriptions about hell as mawla – friend (Q. 57:15) – and umm – mother (Q. 101:9), as something for which we ought to be thankful in the chapter Rehman, and use of such words as azab derived from the root word abz meaning sweet thing haven’t been given due attention by mainstream Muslim scholarship. The distinction of Ibn Arabi lies in providing an alternative understanding of hell that finds deep resonance in our hearts and minds besides opening up new vistas on various verses of the Quran. Ibn Arabi declared that his life-long mission is to broadcast the Mercy centric message of Islam – he deciphered the universe’s relationship to the Breath of the All-Merciful and needed to appreciate the dimension of beauty or aesthetic point of view – so that no servant ever despairs. Let us read how he applies his ontology of mercy to non-believers and hell in light of a few statements and works of William Chittick and Muhammad Khalil.

Ibn Arabi states, “If God were to take people to account for error, He would take every possessor of a belief to account. Every believer has delimited his Lord with his reason and consideration and has thereby restricted Him. But nothing is worthy of God except non delimitation.” Quoting the verse “We do not punish until We send a Messenger” (Q. 17:15), Ibn Arabi adds that “Note that He did not say, ‘until We send forth a person.’ Hence the Message of the one who is sent must be established for the one to whom it is directed. There must be clear and manifest proofs established for each person to whom the Messenger is sent, for many a sign [yah] has within it obscurity or equivocality such that some people do not perceive what it proves. The clarity of the proof must be such that it establishes the person’s Messengerhood for each person to whom he is sent. Only then, if the person refuses it, will he be taken to account. Hence, this verse has within it a tremendous mercy, because of the diversity of human dispositions that lead to a diversity of views.” Further, Ibn Arabi cites the Quranic verse 17:15, which speaks of God only punishing those who have received a Messenger – which, “in light of the Arabic phrasing, many have argued to be a reference to punishment in this life,” and the verse 7:156, which speaks of God’s mercy encompassing all things. For Ibn Arabi the ‘People of Hellfire’ will suffer, “until they finally recognize that they are servants of God. And the chastisement of the ‘wretched’ results only from themselves as they protest and inquire about the reasons for God’s actions. Eventually, however, their ‘wretchedness’ (shaq) will cease because they will end their discord (shiq) and deviation from God.”

Given that God is just, Hell’s inhabitants “will come to appreciate their situation because it is God Himself who determined where they would reside. In the final analysis, what comes to matter

bliss enjoyed by the ‘People of Heaven’ – “a bliss that would be something in addition to the fact that He has relieved them in the abode of wretchedness.” Thus, Ibn Arabi interprets the Qur’anic statement “each party [of idolaters] rejoicing in what is theirs” (30:32) as referring to the next life. This is because such rejoicing is “not known in this life, or rather, it occurs for many but not all.”

Citing and paraphrasing The Meccan Revelations, Chittick notes that “a soul’s wretchedness derives from its refusal to submit to God’s wisdom and to accept its own nature. People suffer the fire of hell because they do not trust God and insist that the world needs to be changed to accord with their own personal desires. The wretched have chastisement only from themselves, for they are made to stand in the station of protest. They seek the reasons for God’s acts among His servants.” “Why did such and such happen?” “If such and such had been, it would have been better and more appropriate.” Explicating the Master, Chittick elaborates:

By protesting against the way things are, people dispute with the Real, who has given everything its creation. Eventually, however, their state changes and they come to realize that there is no profit in questioning God and refusing to submit to their own nature. Then the chastisement is removed from their inwardness and they achieve ease in their abode. They find an enjoyment known by none but God, for they have chosen what God has chosen for them, and at that point they come to know that their chastisement had been only from themselves.

When the denizens of hell accept their own natures, they realize that they will never leave the Fire. This makes them secure in their places, for they no longer wonder if they will be among those who, according to a hadith, had done no good whatsoever in the world but would be taken out of hell by the Most Merciful.

When they give up the thought of leaving, they become happy, so they enjoy bliss in this measure. This is the first bliss they find...Thereby they find that the chastisement is sweet, for the pains disappear, even though the chastisement remains.

When we note purgatorial function of hell – most/all its denizens become entitled to heaven/bliss after some stay – and how it is a manifestation of Divine Names of Majesty and how it is a painful realization of one’s failure to be true to oneself or divine image in man and how its nature gets changed or its chastisement turns sweet (the root word ‘azb’ for azab means sweet/tasty thing) or how it continues, at every moment, to be penetrable to divine mercy that keeps its denizens alive and enjoying certain concomitant things – analogous to relief from itching by scratching clot, as noted by al-Jili – and in heightened state of awareness removing the veil or imposed imagined separation from the Beloved, we see it is not disassociated from all pervading Divine Mercy.

Final words of Ibn Arabi regarding those who are not comfortable with God’s vast mercy:

[When you reach this understanding] you will come to know the difference between him who desires the spreading of God’s mercy among His servants – whether they be obedient or disobedient – and him who desires to take God’s mercy away from some of His servants. This second person is the one who prohibits the mercy of God that embraces all things, but he does not prohibit it to himself. Were it not for the fact that God’s mercy

in debating the truth or attempting to find the absolute, final interpretation. The temptation for privileging particular reading as the reading doesn’t arise at all in Ibn Arabi.

Ø Meaning is not lying hovering around the text that some may be chosen to have access to but is experienced or revealed to a traveler on the path. The condition is one consents to travel, to receive and not to limit, to frame, to foreclose. One’s job is to polish the mirror of the heart and then God the Guide is the Teacher. There is knowledge by presence, by virtue of dialogue, of listening to the other.

Ø Truth is not out there but knowing is being the object of knowledge. Truth is not in words but in states and stations or joyful adventure or movement of consciousness induced on contemplating these words. God is to be tasted rather than discussed and this (dis)solves the problems of interpretation for good. Ibn Arabi calls for cultivating that higher perception he calls the unveiling (kashf).

Ø Ibn Arabi says the Author of the Quran intends every meaning to be understood by every reader, and reminds us that human authors cannot have the same intention. Meaning closure postmodernists are so concerned about never happens. The real meaning is with God the Transcendent and as such only an object of speculation but what is important to note is that all meanings we talk about do participate in that divine meaning as all things/experiences speak of the Beloved and are portals to the Infinite. It has been aptly noted that polysemy, for him, results not from infinity of contexts but because of multiplicity of souls or addresses. All this implies that fundamentalism and theological imperialism have no warrant.

Ibn Arabi thinks that the sacred text contains inexhaustible riches of meaning which can’t be deciphered through a single reading or even multiple readings. In fact, for him, there can be no final reading, no final rest with inherently unique, changing, ever unfolding never-repeatable creation of God.. About Truth he has written in the vein of Hafiz:

She has confused all the learned of Islam/Everyone who has studied the Psalms,/Every Jewish Rabbi,/Every Christian priest.

So the question of whose interpretation is to be chosen – Islam has/is scores, if not hundreds, of schools of jurisprudence, theology, Sufism, exegeses – mayn’t present itself in this either or/ all or none format. Isn’t Truth alone the absolute and thus all interpretations human and thus not absolute? Who can say he doesn’t need to qualify his claim with “God knows better” or can claim to have known Truth in all its infinite faces? To know the truth is to be silenced by the Other, to perfect the faculty of attention. Isn’t God “attention without distraction” as Simone Weil would put it?

Ø The clash between doctrines may be seen, with Whitehead, as an opportunity and not a disaster. As inherently diverse humans, our responses to God, our ways of expressing faith and belief can’t be but diverse. Our unique egos call for unique responses. As many souls, so many paths, runs a Sufi adage. And God judges us according to our view of Him, according to a prophetic tradition. Who can impose his view as the only true one? To think we know the truth and ours is the only (or final) meaning that God intended is to claim omniscience or infallibility.

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“The fire will become cool (as it was cooled for Abraham), and they will become happy. After this first bliss, their pains will vanish.”
— Ibn Arabi



“God keeps the bitter cold of Gehenna for those with hot constitutions and the fire for those with cold constitutions... If they were to enter the Garden, they would suffer chastisement.”
— Paraphrased by William Chittick



Continued From P1...

PM Modi to

tolerated" anymore.
PM Modi in his recent speeches has affirmed that "Operation Sindoor" has marked India's "new normal" in punishing terror acts linked to Pakistan and vowed to go after terrorists and their sponsors with equal ferocity in case of any future terror incidents on the Indian soil.
The Council of Ministers, which generally meets in a few months, had met regularly after the Pahalgam terror attack—(KNO)

DGP Prabhat

IGP POS PHQ J&K, IG CRPF Srinagar, IG CRPF KOS, IG BSF, all range DIs G of Kashmir Zone, DIG Pers, DIG Traffic Kashmir, DIG IR Kashmir, DIG AP Kashmir, DIG SSB, DIG ITBP, all district SSSP of Kashmir Zone and other senior officers.
The participating officers, as per KNO, briefed the chair regarding the proposed security arrangements for the conduct of Amarnath Yatra-2025 and the upcoming Eid-UI-Adha emphasizing the significance of effective coordination among the various forces.
The meeting concluded with a resolve to ensure the highest level of preparedness and coordination for the smooth and successful conduct of all the events—(KNO)

J&K to revise

that in-principle approval for the current batch would be strict adherence to these norms," reads record of the empowered committee meeting held in New Delhi on April 25 under chairmanship of secretary, Rural Development Department.
The meeting was attended by representatives of Union Government and J&K Government.
As per details, J&K government has proposed 346 road proposals with a financial outlay of Rs 4402. 20 crore for the financial year 2025-26
During the EC meeting, the Centre directed that all habitations proposed in the current batch have to be verified to ensure that they are strictly meeting the norms of PMGSY-IV.
"NRIDA has to ensure this after field verification and through other means," reads the minutes of the meeting.
The UT was asked to ensure uniformity in selection of roads and only the most important roads, which are at the top of priority list to be taken up first.
"Before sanctioning of roads, the UT will enter into MoU with the ministry for providing adequate post Defects Liability Period (DLP) maintenance funds," the record note states—(KNO)

Me'rcury Dips

respectively.Amidst the dip in mercury, the hailstorm continued to wreak havoc in multiple areas of south Kashmir, causing extensive losses to the farmers.
Besides, the light rains lashed the plains of Kashmir this afternoon, bringing down the mercury further.
As per the Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, a spell of light to moderate rain and thundershower is expected at many places till Tuesday.
"Generally dry weather is expected from June 03 to 08," he said, adding that a brief spell of rain and showers towards late afternoon at isolated places can't be ruled out.
Ahmad said the weather would remain generally dry from June 09 to 10.
Moreover, the MeT in its advisory said that intense showers at a few places may generate localised flash floods—(KNO)

Robust Arrangements

medical emergency, Ambulances, mobile medical units, and first-aid centers are fully equipped and operational," he said.
He also appreciated collaborative efforts being made by various stakeholders. "Kashmiri Pandits, secretariat employees, and several NGOs have been playing a commendable role in ensuring the success of the Mela. Their contribution is crucial in facilitating a peaceful and spiritually enriching experience for the devotees," he added.
The Mela Kheer Bhawani, celebrated annually at the Mata Kheer Bhawani temple in Tullamulla, attracts thousands of Kashmiri Pandit pilgrims from across the country.

Kheer Bhawani

was one of devotion and hope. Security arrangements and facilities put in place by the local administration were widely appreciated by attendees.
"We are delighted to be here. The arrangements are excellent, and the atmosphere is peaceful. We want to visit Kashmir, and we pray for peace in the valley," Suresh Bhat, a devotee from Jammu, said while speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).
Another pilgrim, Anjali Kaul, who returned to the valley after several years, remarked, "Hindus and Muslims are one. We hope for peace and harmony across the region."
Ravi Raina, visiting from Delhi, added, "This temple is a symbol of our roots. Coming here fills us with hope. We want peace to prevail so that people of all faiths can live together as they once did."
The Kheer Bhawani Mela continues to serve as a powerful reminder of Kashmir's syncretic past, where communities came together in celebration and prayer. The festival will culminate on Tuesday with major rituals and offerings.
Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, SSP Traffic Rural Kashmir, R P Singh, and the District Administration Ganderbal, including Deputy Commissioner Jatin Kishore and SSP Khalil Poswal, visited the Kheer Bhawani temple to review the security and other arrangements for devotees.
Locals have set up stalls for devotees, offering a range of items for Puja, highlighting the deep-rooted cultural and communal harmony between the Hindu and Muslim communities.
The district administration in Ganderbal has established help desks to ensure that devotees receive

necessary assistance and face no inconvenience during the annual Kheer Bhawani Mela—(KNO)

Congress only

Congress was becoming a "trend" in the region. Responding to questions on the BJP-led government's recent infrastructure inaugurations in J&K, Karra termed them as 'ribbon-cutting ceremonies' for projects originally initiated by the UPA government. "Whatever progress you see today in Jammu and Kashmir, the foundation of it was laid by the Congress party," he said.
On the recent push for foreign outreach, the JKPC Chief alleged that the party was using MPs as "diversion tactics". "Thousands of crores have been spent on PR exercises abroad," he claimed.
Referring to the recent Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people, including a Kashmiri youth, were killed, Karra alleged a serious security lapse on the part of the government. If the BJP claims to have ended terrorism and restored peace post-Article 370 abrogation, how did terrorists manage to travel over 300 km to Baisaran, he asked.

He questioned the failure to apprehend the perpetrators and criticised the government's response despite prior intelligence inputs. "Why were no preventive steps taken?" he said, demanding a special session or all-party meeting to answer these questions.
The J&K Congress Chief also raised serious concerns about India's foreign policy under the Modi government, citing the ceasefire following Indo-Pak clashes and alleged third-party intervention. He said that if reports of the US prompting the ceasefire were true, what happened to the Simla Agreement and India's long-held stance of bilateralism?
Karra raised questions over External Affairs Minister S.Jaishankar's public admission that Pakistan was informed ahead of certain military actions. "If true, is this not treason?" he asked—(KNO)

LG attends

all their citizens," the Lieutenant Governor said.
The Lieutenant Governor, in his address, paid tributes to the civilians killed by Pakistan-Sponsored Terrorists in Pahalgam.
He saluted the indomitable courage and valour of Indian Armed Forces for scripting a historic victory saga of 'Operation Sindoor' and avenging Pahalgam terror attack.
"Amidst all our diversity resides the unity we call Indianness. This very spirit constantly inspires us to create a self-reliant and developed India. With unwavering commitment, we must ignite the flames of patriotism across all communities, and unite the society to shape a powerful future of our country," the Lieutenant Governor said—(KNO)

India To Get

a state-of-the-art air defence platform capable of engaging multiple aerial threats at long ranges. Three squadrons have already been delivered.
On the potential expansion of defence collaboration, Babushkin expressed openness to further dialogue.
"We are open for promotion of this partnership for the discussion of the expansion of dialogue on air defence systems," he said, noting the strategic importance of such cooperation in the current global security environment.
Commenting on the growing threat of drones, particularly in light of their extensive use during the India-Pakistan clash, the deputy chief of mission highlighted Russia's experience in countering such challenges.
"We are facing this threat for several years already, and I think that our systems are being modernised constantly. I think it would be a joint interest from both sides how to counter this threat and lead to some other cooperation," he said, adding that anti-drone systems are already part of the ongoing India-Russia defence dialogue.

Babushkin also provided an update on a possible visit by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to India.
"The exact dates are not yet finalised, but it can happen anytime soon. We expect this month," he said. (PTI)
Mehbooba Seeks

after the abrogation of Article 370 on August 05, 2019, Mehbooba, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said she, along with the party leader Mehboob Beg, met the LG and raised multiple demands.

The demands, according to her, include political empowerment of Kashmiri Pandits, release of detainees in view of Eid and incorporating locals for the smooth conduct of Amarnath Yatra.
"Kashmiri Pandits need to be empowered politically, for which the reservation needs to be ensured for them. In this way, we can ensure real integration," the PDP chief said, adding that she told the Lieutenant Governor to convey to the Centre to ensure reservation for KPs instead of nominations for them.

Mufti said the return of Kashmiri Pandits is not merely a demographic or administrative concern but stands as a matter of historical justice, reconciliation and the restoration of Kashmir's pluralistic ethos.
"Reintegration must be both materially grounded and socially sustainable, requiring a multi-tiered and inclusive approach," she said in her letter addressed to LG, a copy of which has also been sent to Union Home Minister Amit Shah and J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.
The former CM further said the return of KPs cannot be possible without empowering the community. "It is time to work jointly to remove the blot on Kashmiri Muslims over their exodus from the valley," she stressed.

Mehbooba said she discussed the conduct of the Amarnath Yatra and demanded incorporating locals in the process, who, she said, have always assisted in ensuring the smooth annual pilgrimage.
Mufti added that the release of Kashmiris was also her demand. "I demanded that those having no serious charges should be released in view of the Eid and those languishing in different jails should

be brought back," she said.
Replying to a query, the PDP president accused Chief Minister Omar Abdullah of weakening the elected government himself.
Citing the Waqf Bill, she said the CM, instead of discussing the grave issue, preferred to welcome the Union Minister in Tulip Garden. "Still, I raised these demands with Omar Sahab as well. Let's see what the government can do," she said—(KNO)

Is PDP trying to

Lieutenant Governor. But she needs to answer people whether the doors of LG were closed for the past five years?" he asked.
"I don't understand why all of a sudden the political parties have started meeting the Lieutenant Governor. Yesterday the Apni Party met him and today the PDP rushed to Raj Bhavan. Are there any back-channel talks going on? Is she going to join hands with BJP again?" he said.
"She should reveal why she didn't take all these steps related to the welfare of Kashmiri Pandits during her tenure. Whatever has been done for the KPs so far was only taken forward during the tenure of Omar Abdullah. We are committed to the return of KPs. We expect the restoration of statehood soon and take measures to ensure a sense of security among them for their return," Sadiq added.

Pertinently, PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti along with the senior party leader Mehboob Beigh met the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for the first time after the abrogation of Article 370 where she presented a letter with multiple to him.
Also, he said that strict directions have been passed by the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah regarding the assessment of losses to the tourism sector, adding that the issue of assistance will be pursued with Government of India for a package to the affected tourism stakeholders—(KNO)

Tourists Trickle

midway, while confirmed bookings were also cancelled and there was a lack of interest in visiting Kashmir.
But now the clouds of fear are making way for the sunshine of positivity as queries about bookings are on the rise day by day.
"People have started coming back. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's meetings and visits (to Pahalgam and Gulmarg) have sent a positive message that the destinations are open. It has led to improvement in tourism," Asif Burza, a hotelier with properties in Srinagar, Pahalgam and Gulmarg, said.
OHe said after cancellations in bookings, tourists were now doing re-bookings. Jammu and Kashmir real estate

"People are showing interest again, they are not giving up on Kashmir. They want to come back... sending a message that the incidents that happened are not going to stop us," Burza said.
He said several delegations were coming to Kashmir and many companies had approached them for holding their board and other meetings in Pahalgam — taking a cue from the chief minister.
The hotelier said fear is giving way to optimism, and expressed hope of a turnaround sooner than later.
Afsa Malik, a tourist from Gandhinagar, Gujarat, said she sees no fear in Kashmir and appealed to people across the country to visit the valley.
"This is the first time we have been to Kashmir. There is no atmosphere of fear; there is security. There are security forces deployed everywhere. Everyone should come here," she told PTI.

Malik, who is in the valley with her family in a group of 17 people, said Kashmir is a beautiful place and their experience so far has been really good.
—"We have been in Kashmir for few days and are enjoying a lot. We have been to Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Pahalgam, and Srinagar...visited Dal Lake. We appeal to everyone to come here," she added.

Another tourist from Gujarat, Mohammad Aftab, said the atmosphere in the Kashmir valley is unlike the perception about the place right now.
"We are enjoying the beauty. This is unparalleled and we had not seen anything like this before. We have come here with our little children, a group of seven families. The atmosphere is much better than what we had heard. We are feeling like we had seen nothing before this," Aftab said.
"We did not feel any fear, there is security and the locals are giving us so much love and warmth. Hotels have good facilities. The beauty is unmatched," he added.

Aftab said they had some fear before they arrived in the valley, but the videos put up by other tourists gave them courage. Jammu and Kashmir real estate
"We want to tell everyone that such things (Pahalgam attack) will not happen again in (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi's rule. We want everyone to come here," the tourist said.
There is a collaborative effort from the local and national tour operators, especially from Maharashtra and Gujarat, to promote Kashmir as a safe and secure destination.

A group of tour operators from Maharashtra are on a familiarisation tour to the valley to dispel the negative perception and to attract tourists. The efforts are leading to a change in perception and hope of a turnaround.

Popular tourism destinations like Pahalgam, Gulmarg and Sonamarg are witnessing tourist footfalls, with the numbers increasing with each passing day. Tourist groups, and families from different parts of the country can be seen enjoying their time at the popular spots.
The stakeholders hope the turnaround come sooner than the later as the Kashmir's battered economy and the perception of peace largely hinge on the sector. (PTI)

Govt likely to complete smart meters installation by next year

Riyaz Bhat
SRINAGAR: The government is likely to complete the process of installing smart meters by March-2026 in Jammu division and August-2026 in Kashmir region respectively.

An official informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that more than 6.5 Lakh consumers have been upgraded to prepaid smart metering.
"The DISCOMs are implementing the centrally sponsored schemes (CSS) viz. PMDP and RDSS for installation of smart metering projects in J&K," the official said.
It also said that "The projects under PMDP stand completed, whereas, meter installation under RDSS is under execution, which is likely to be completed by 31.03.2026 in Jammu and by August 2026 in Kashmir region."
Furthermore, the official added that "As a part of the PMDP initiative, more than 6.50 lac consumers have already been upgraded to prepaid smart metering in J&K."
"Under RDSS, it is anticipated that approximately 14.48 lac consumer prepaid smart meters shall be installed," the official said.
About the tariff and charges, the official further said, "The DISCOMs charge the electricity bills as per the tariff issued by the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC)."
"The electricity charges for rural and Urban areas are the same as per Tariff Order. The unmetered consumers are billed on flat rate basis which is determined on sanctioned or agreement load as per the slabs applicable to flat rate i.e. unmetered consumers," the official said—(KNO)

Dr Jitendra Launches India's First AI Based ' Large Language Model' For Indian Languages

NEWDELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh, today launched 'Bharat Gen', India's first-of-its-kind, indigenously developed, Artificial Intelligence (AI) based, government-funded Multimodal "Large Language Model" (LLM) for Indian languages, at the prestigious "Bharat Gen Summit"—India's largest Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and LLM summit and hackathon.
Developed under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) and implemented through TIH Foundation for IoT and IoE at IIT Bombay, BharatGen aims to revolutionize AI development across India's linguistic and cultural spectrum. The initiative is supported

by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and brings together a robust consortium of leading academic institutions, experts, and innovators.
Speaking at the Summit, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Minister of State for Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, described BharatGen as a "national mission to create AI that is ethical, inclusive, multilingual, and deeply rooted in Indian values and ethos." The platform integrates text, speech, and image modalities, offering seamless AI solutions in 22 Indian languages.
"This initiative will empower critical sectors such as healthcare, education, agriculture, and governance, delivering region-specific AI solutions that understand and serve every Indian," said Dr. Singh.
Recalling a success story from his own constituency, Dr. Jitendra Singh spoke about AI-powered telemedicine services where an AI doctor communicates fluently in the patient's native language. "It not only builds trust but has a placebo-like psychological effect, enabling better care in remote regions connected with superspecialty hospitals across India," he noted.
Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized that BharatGen aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "India's Techade"—not just for innovation but for inclusion. He hailed India's AI progress as a global benchmark, including CPGRAMS, now studied by several countries as a model grievance redressal system.
The Minister reiterated that Anusandhan NRF will further boost India's R&D and innovation ecosystem, and highlighted the ongoing transformation through flagship schemes like PM MUDRA Yojana, PM SVANidhi, and PM Vishwakarma Yojana, which uplift street vendors, artisans, and micro-entrepreneurs. Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the transformative role of Generative AI in grassroots governance, citing the integration of multilingual feedback systems into platforms like CPGRAMS to enhance citizen engagement and grievance redressal. He underscored the inclusive vision of NEP 2020, which promotes interdisciplinary learning by enabling students to combine technical and humanities disciplines, thus enhancing their employability and innovation potential. Dr. Jitendra Singh celebrated the success of over 3,000 Agri-tech StartUps, particularly those pioneering initiatives like lavender cultivation in Jammu & Kashmir, as evidence that innovation thrives beyond metros and IT sectors. The summit also witnessed a significant MoU exchange ceremony aimed at deepening collaboration across government departments and research hubs.

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that Electricity Agreement bearing Consumer ID No: 0216010014831, which is Registered in the name of Mir Abdullah Awan, S/O Akbar Ali. Now i want to apply for Change this Electricity Agreement in the name of Noor Hussain Awan Gojer , S/O Mir Abdullah Awan Gojer, in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Assistant Executive Engineer Electricity Sub Division Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this, after that no objection will be accepted .

**Noor Hussain Awan Gojar .
S/O. mir Abdullah Awan Gojer .
R/O Kudara Bandipora, District**

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that the DOB of my Daughter has been Mistakenly Mentioned in her School Records as: 07-11-2012, while as her actual and correct DOB is: 07-09-2012. Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the principal Idariya Kousaria Trust Checkreshipora Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted. Azad Hussain Khan.

**F/O Fiza Azad .
R/O Checkreshipora, Bandipora, District Bandipora, jammu and**

Before The Honble Court of Principal District Judge at Bandipora.

*In the case of:
Mohammad Sultan Wani S/o Gulam Qadir Wani R/o Nadihal (caveator)
VS
Public at large (Non-caveator)
In the matter of:
Caveat application under section 148 A CPC
May it please your Honour.*

- 1. The caveator apprehends that the non-caveator may file a suit with respect to property in the form of land under khasra no 301, 301 min possession of caveators, and non-caveators are trying to enter into beak forcefully with muscle power.*
- 2. That in case the non caveator file any suit before this court the caveators be given an opportunity of being heard before passing any exparte interim order.*
- 3. That the caveat has been served to non caveator through registered post and postal receipt is annexed herewith. In the premises it is therefore most humbly prayed that the caveators be given an opportunity of being heard before passing any exparte order.*

**Caveator through counsel
Mudasir Qasim Mir**

Root: 'Guilt' at letting down Buttler is driving ODI resurgence

Joe Root says guilt at not being able to support Jos Buttler during his captaincy is driving the 34-year-old to continue in limited-overs cricket under Harry Brook.

On Sunday, Root became England's leading ODI runscore, a feat capped with a career-best 166 not out to chase down a target of 309 in the second ODI against West Indies in Cardiff, sealing a series win in the process. It follows his ascension to the top of the English Test charts last October, when he moved beyond Sir Alastair Cook's tally of 12,742 in the first Test of the Pakistan tour.

Upon reaching 42, Root passed the previous highest of 6,957 achieved by Eoin Morgan. As impressive as Morgan's runscoring exploits were, his captaincy was legacy-defining, overseeing a white-ball revolution that sent England to the top of rankings, capped off by winning the 50-over World Cup in 2019.

Root, England's top-scorer at that tournament with 556 runs, was a vital cog in Morgan's machine. However, with priorities shifting, particularly in the final years of his own Test captaincy, he found himself playing less and less 50-over cricket. Even without the Test captaincy during Buttler's tenure, Root ended up playing just 25 of a possible 47 ODIs.

That included the dismal 2023 World Cup campaign, and an equally poor Champions Trophy earlier this year, which ended in Buttler's resignation. Those tournaments sandwiched a 2024 in which Root played no white-ball cricket for his country.

Now, with eight ODIs under his belt in 2025,



I played a huge amount of cricket with Jos and almost felt guilty that I wasn't there for him throughout a lot of his tenure," Root said.

and an 18th hundred in the bag, he is back to being at one with the format. And he admits his renewed drive comes from wanting to support Brook in the way he felt he had not with Buttler.

"I played a huge amount of cricket with Jos and almost felt guilty that I wasn't there for him throughout a lot of his tenure," Root said.

"And now that there's more chances and more opportunities to play ODI cricket, I want to be involved in that. I want play as much as I can for England and, if I'm going make the team better, then absolutely want to be there

and involved in, in trying to do that.

"Whether that's helping in and around practice with the younger players as a senior bat, and sharing and expressing my experience with them to try and speed up their processes and their learnings. But also out on the field, I feel like I've still got a lot to give and there's a lot more runs in there. Hopefully knocks like that show that.

"Hopefully, this can be a team that is quite consistent and sticks together for a long period of time and we can start building something as a group together. It's what we did really well leading up to that 2019 World Cup. I don't think that counts for nothing."

Naturally, Brook was full of praise for Root, whose unbeaten 166 eclipsed the 146 for 7 that the rest of the team (plus extras) managed between them. It confirmed a first series victory as captain for the 26-year-old, achieved ahead of Tuesday's third and final ODI at the Kia Oval. It also eases qualifying automatically for 2027's ODI World Cup. Root was similarly full of praise for his new skipper, particularly his work in the field to restrict West Indies to 308 all out. However, he could not resist a familiar jibe at his Yorkshire teammate's expense.

"He's still an idiot," joked Root. "As much as he's an idiot - and I can say that because I've known him forever - he's very cricket intelligent. He might not always be the most intelligent away from cricket, but he understands the game exceptionally well and that's why he's so consistent as a batter. I think that's what will make him a really good leader as well.

(espnricinfo)

Root, England's top-scorer at that tournament with 556 runs, was a vital cog in Morgan's machine. However, with priorities shifting, particularly in the final years of his own Test captaincy, he found himself playing less and less 50-over cricket. Even without the Test captaincy during Buttler's tenure, Root ended up playing just 25 of a possible 47 ODIs.

Kohli's aggression, Hardik's resilience inspiring young TT player Ankur

An ardent fan of Virat Kohli and Hardik Pandya, rising Indian paddler Ankur Bhattacharjee once aspired to be a cricketer before shifting to table tennis, but his love for cricket still remains. The 18-year-old is big admirer of Kohli's aggression and Hardik's mental strength and wants to imbibe those qualities into his game.

"There is a lot of aggression in my game, so I admire Virat Kohli sir's aggressive attitude. I also love Hardik Pandya sir's mental strength. I follow both a lot and try to bring their qualities into my game," Ankur told PTI.

Despite turning pro in table tennis, his love for cricket still remains and he doesn't miss a single India match.

But after taking up table tennis, his only goal was to fulfil his parents' dream.

"I love cricket a lot and try not to miss a single India match. I wanted to be a cricketer but my father and mother both were table tennis players and they are my personal coach too," Ankur said.

"My mother pressured me by saying everyone plays cricket, you play table tennis. Then I started playing and I loved it.

"Both my father (Angshuman Bhattacharjee) and mother (Kuntali Bhattacharjee) were national level players."

Ankur is currently participating in the sixth season of the Ultimate Table Tennis League for Kolkata Thunder Blades.

"This year I feel our team is stronger than last year. My form is also better than last year, so I feel we can win the title this year," he said.

"UTT is a big platform for youngsters, I feel more such tournaments like UTT should happen. Like last year before playing UTT my India ranking was out of 10, but now I am India ranking 2 in singles.

"I have just returned after playing World Championships and had a decent performance there."

Ankur had already stamped his authority at the junior level, having won the under-19 boys singles title at the Youth National Championships for three years in a row. He has also won three consecutive bronze medals at the Junior Asian Championships.

"I played 6 tournaments at youth level this year and won all of them. This is my first year at senior level and till now I feel I am performing well but I need to take this to the next level," he said.

Just like any other athlete, Ankur's target is to finish on the podium in big international tournaments in future. (PTI)

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Glenn Maxwell Retires From Odi Cricket, Available For T20 World Cup

Glenn Maxwell, the architect of arguably the greatest ODI innings ever played, has announced his retirement from the 50-over international format effective immediately but he will remain available for T20 internationals and looks set to continue until next year's T20 World Cup.

Maxwell, 36, joins fellow two-time ODI World Cup winner Steven Smith in ODI retirement after Australia's semi-final exit from the Champions Trophy earlier this year. Maxwell has not formally retired from Test cricket yet but is unlikely to be selected to play red-ball cricket again.

Maxwell announced his retirement in a long-form interview on the Final Word Podcast on Monday and revealed that the physical toll of ODI cricket had become too much on the back of his broken leg in 2022, having pulled up sore after matches during the recent Champions Trophy.

"I felt like I was letting the team down a little bit with how body was reacting to the conditions," Maxwell said. "I had a good chat with [Australia chair of selectors] George Bailey and I asked him what his thoughts were going forward.

one-day cricket in 2011, off just 19 balls. It was a record that stood until 2023 when Jake Fraser-McGurk broke it on the way to the fastest List A century of all-time.

But it was a portent of things to come for his ODI career. Besides Andre Russell, no player in the history of ODI cricket has a higher strike-rate than Maxwell's 126.70, and of the players with more than 2000 runs no one strikes at better than 117.05.

Maxwell maintained that strike-rate whilst averaging 33.81 as a finisher and scored four centuries including his stunning 201 not out against Afghanistan in Mumbai during the 2023 World Cup, which was the first double century by an Australian in an ODI and the first by any player in a chase. It was also the first double-century by any non-opener and he did it from No. 6 after Australia had slumped to 91 for 7 chasing 292.

"I'm extremely fortunate that I was able to have my moment," Maxwell said of his greatest innings. "Everything that you've worked hard for, the peak of your powers, being able to put



it in front of the world to see and it's almost like saying, this is the best of me, you can either take it or leave it, but this is all I've got."

Maxwell earlier posted the fastest ODI World Cup century, off just 40 balls, against Netherlands in Delhi in the same tournament. He also owns the fourth fastest ODI World Cup century off 51 balls which he made in the 2015 World Cup against Sri Lanka in Sydney.

Maxwell's other ODI century came in a successful chase at Old Trafford against England in the Covid affected 2020 series when he and Alex Carey combined to pull off a remarkable pursuit of 303 after Australia has slumped to 73 for 5.

"I think that was probably one of my favorite memories," Maxwell said. "Being out there with Alex Carey, he had had a bit of a tough start to his innings, but once he started to get the get the ball in the middle about a few times, it was great fun out there. And to be a part of his first one-day hundred out there, and to play a huge role in winning that series with everything that went on over the [previous] few months, not playing cricket for a long time, and having everyone in a bio-secure bubble and doing quarantine non-stop, it just made it all worth it."

Beyond his centuries he played a multitude of other vital innings at key times in ODI cricket. In his second last ODI innings he made 32 not out off 15 balls as Australia chased a Champions Trophy record of 352. He made an unbeaten 44 in the 2015 World Cup quarter-final against Pakistan after taking two key wickets with the ball.

(espnricinfo)