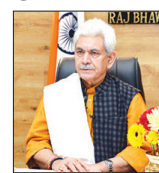


Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

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Education is the most powerful instrument of change ever placed in human hands. It redirects the course of a life. It reshapes the destiny of families. And when the youth embrace it fully, it rewrites the future of a nation from the ground up.

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Ideas In Classroom Must Impact World: LG

Addresses 21st Convocation Of University Of Kashmir



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday addressed the 21st Convocation of University of Kashmir. The convocation ceremony was graced by Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan. The Lieutenant Governor extended his best wishes to all graduating students for a prosperous future. He exhorted them to set a clear path for their future - 'One purpose. One priority - Country first'. "Always remember when you build the country, the country builds you back. Nations don't rise only from resources. They rise from educated people and when the nation rises, so do you," he said. The Lieutenant Governor said that the convocation at the University of Kashmir is

a vivid proof of generational metamorphosis, fulfilled aspirations, and youth's unwavering faith embodied in modern education. "The knowledge earned in University of Kashmir isn't merely skills but it is holistic personality growth. Education builds self-confidence, equips for meaningful lives and it molds responsible citizens, linking personal success to collective good. Education is the most powerful instrument of change ever placed in human hands. It redirects the course of a life. It reshapes the destiny of families. And when the youth embrace it fully, it rewrites the future of a nation from the ground up," he said. The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that the ideas in the classroom must impact the world. He called

"Yah Hum Sabka Kashmir Hai": Vice-President At Kashmir University Convocation Urges Youth To Embrace Innovation, Adapt To Changing World

GMK NEWS NETWORK

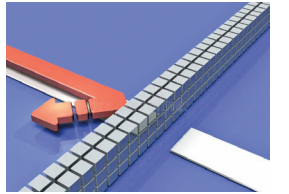
SRINAGAR: Vice-President of India, C. P. Radhakrishnan, Thursday addressed the 21st Convocation Ceremony of the University of Kashmir as chief guest, marking his first-ever visit to the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir as the Vice-President of India. Congratulating the graduating students, the Vice-President observed that while universities may be known for infrastructure and academic excellence, their true legacy is reflected in the character and contributions of their graduates. He lauded the University of Kashmir, established in 1948, for its proud legacy and expanding academic footprint. He commended the University's NAAC A++ Grade, 34th rank in the NIRF University category, over 7,700 research publications since 2019 and pio-



neering initiatives such as the National Himalayan Ice-Core Laboratory, which underline its growing global presence. The Vice-President

expressed special happiness over three significant aspects of the convocation: that the Minister for Higher Education is a woman, the Vice-Chancellor of the University is a woman, and that a majority of gold medal recipients were women. He described this as a powerful reflection of women's empowerment and progress in Jammu & Kashmir. Addressing the students, he noted that they are graduating in a rapidly changing world and reminded them that "change is the only constant." He urged them to continuously adapt, equip themselves with new skills, and embrace innovation. Emphasising that India is emerging as an innovator of technology, he encouraged the youth to pursue Swadeshi innovations aligned with national priorities and contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047. Highlighting development initiatives under leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in the region, including the expansion of Srinagar International Airport

SED Keeps TET Order In Abeyance



RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: School Education Department on Thursday kept its order of Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) in abeyance till further orders. SED Secretary in an order said, "The Government order regarding the designation of JKBOSE/State School Standards Authority (SSSA) as nodal agency for conducting TET is hereby kept in abeyance, till further orders." Earlier, in the previous order the department has said that in exercise of the powers vested in the Government and in compliance with the directions of the Supreme Court of India, JKBOSE, State School Standards Authority (SSSA) is designated as Nodal Agency for conducting TET for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, with immediate effect. "The JKBOSE, SSSA shall take immediate necessary steps for operationalization of the TET examination framework in accordance with the Action Plan formulated in the meeting held in October-2025," reads the previous order.

VP Enjoys Shikara Ride On Dal Lake In Srinagar

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Thursday enjoyed a shikara

ride on the iconic Dal Lake, describing the experience as a glimpse of Srinagar's timeless charm and natural beauty. Radhakrishnan arrived here on Wednesday evening on his maiden visit to the Kashmir valley. He is scheduled to attend the Kashmir University's 21st

J&K Emerging As An Innovation Hub: CM Omar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who is also the pro-chancellor of

the University of Kashmir, Thursday said that for a long time, Jammu & Kashmir's economy was viewed through a narrow lens, but the J&K of 2026 is emerging as a hub for Innovation and Participatory Governance. He was addressing the 21st Convocation ceremony

Above-Normal Feb Temperatures Trigger Early Bloom In Kashmir



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Day temperatures continued to hover above normal across Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, with several places in Kashmir recording departures of 6 to 9 degrees Celsius above the seasonal average. According to the data accessed, Srinagar recorded a maximum of 20.2 degrees Celsius, 8.2 degrees above normal, while Qazigund settled at 20.4 degrees, 9.4 notches above normal. Kupwara registered 20.3 degrees (8.9 above normal) and Koker-nag 18.9 degrees (9.1 above normal). Pahalgam record-

ed 14.6 degrees, 6.1 above normal, and Gulmarg 10.6 degrees, 8.2 above normal. In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a maximum of 27.0 degrees Celsius, 3.9 degrees above normal. Katra settled at 25.2 degrees (4.3 above normal), while Banihal and Batote recorded over 20 degrees each, nearly 7 degrees above normal. Bhandarwah registered 18.9 degrees, 4.5 above normal. Ladakh also witnessed relatively mild conditions, with Leh at 7.4 degrees Celsius, Kargil at 9.3 degrees and Nubra Valley at 10.9 degrees. The continued spell of warmer days,

Terror Graph Declining In J&K, Launch Pads Under Watch: Lt Gen Katiyar

Says Pak Army Still Supporting Infiltration; Op Sindoor Taught Them A Harsh Lesson

YOGESH

PATHANKOT: Noting a sustained decline in terrorism indicators in Jammu and Kashmir, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Command, Lt Gen Manoj Kumar Katiyar, on Thursday said the security situation in the Union Territory has "become very normal," even as the Army remains vigilant against cross-border attempts to disturb peace. Addressing a press conference on the sidelines of the Investiture Ceremony at Mamun Military Station here, Lt Gen Katiyar, said, "All terrorism parameters in Jammu and Kashmir have consistently declined. The situation in Jammu and Kashmir has become very normal." "However, Pakistan keeps on hatching conspiracies to send



a few terrorists to disturb the atmosphere. Our Army and all departments of the civil administration are fully prepared to deal with it," he said. Responding to queries about encounters in the Kathua-Kishtwar belt, he said the Army acts

promptly on intelligence inputs. "Wherever we receive information, we take immediate and prompt action. This year, in several successful operations, we neutralised terrorists who had come to create disturbances in our country." On the reported revival of terror launch pads and camps across the border following Operation Sindoor, the Army Commander said the developments are under constant surveillance. "We have kept them under watch. We are fully aware of what actions are taking place there. If they are trying to regenerate or reassemble their terrorist bases, we have that information. We will formulate our plans accordingly," he said, adding that operational details could not be shared

Mughal Road To Reopen For Vehicular Traffic Today

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SHOPIAN: Authorities have ordered reopening of historic Mughal Road for vehicular movement from Friday (February 27), following the successful clearance of heavy snow accumulation along the high-altitude stretch. The decision has sparked widespread relief and happiness among residents of Shopian and the Pir Panchal region, who remain cut off from each other for months during the harsh winter season. According to official orders issued by the district administrations of Shopian and Poonch, accessed, Light Motor Vehicles (LMVs) will be permitted to ply on the road between Buzilaz and Peer Ki Gali from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, subject to favourable weather conditions and absence of any unforeseen disruptions. The reopening follows recommendations from the Officer Commanding, 79 RCC

(GREF), after snow clearance operations were completed on the crucial Buzilaz-Peer Ki Gali stretch, one of the most avalanche-prone segments of the route. Officials said the movement will initially remain regulated and restricted to daytime hours to ensure commuter safety. Authorities said that traffic will only be allowed under suitable weather conditions, and travellers must strictly adhere to advisories issued by the Traffic Police. To ensure smooth and safe passage, the 79 RCC (GREF) has been directed to maintain adequate

"LIFELINE" that reconnects families, facilitates trade, and reduces travel time between the Kashmir Valley and the Jammu region.

Earlier Stone-Pelters Used To Make Headlines, Now It's Sports: Mandaviya

WARIS FAYAZ

GULMARG: Asserting that earlier stone pelters used to make headlines, now it's sports Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Manu Sukh Mandaviya on Thursday said Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing a shift in public narrative. While addressing the valedictory ceremony of the Gulmarg leg of the Khelo India Winter Games-2026, Mandaviya, said, "The region (J&K), once associated with unrest, is now gaining recognition for sporting events and youth participation. Newspapers that earlier focused on security challenges are now highlighting sports and development." The Minister linked the change to developments after



the revocation of Article 370, saying new opportunities and public confidence have emerged in Jammu and Kashmir. "After the abrogation of Article 370, there is newfound belief in J&K. Earlier stone-pelters used to make headlines now it is sports. Times are changing in J&K and will have a massive role to meet PM Modi's dream of a Viksit Bharat by 2027," he added. He said the region is contributing to a developed India through sports, tourism and youth engagement. Calling Gulmarg one of the world's finest winter destinations, Mandaviya said its

geographical advantage and sporting potential make it ideal for winter sports. He expressed confidence that Gulmarg will develop into a world-class winter sports centre with improved infrastructure and regular events. He said sports promote unity, discipline and constructive engagement for youth, adding that interactions with local athletes reflected growing enthusiasm and professionalism. Mandaviya said the Khelo India Winter Games are helping build a winter sports ecosystem while strengthening Jammu and Kashmir's tourism profile nationally and internationally. He announced that future editions of the Winter Games will be extended

Sadaqat-ul-Fitr Fixed At Rs 80 In J&K: Grand Mufti

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: The Grand Mufti of Jammu and Kashmir, Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam, on Thursday announced that Sadaqat-ul-Fitr for 2026 has been fixed at Rs 80 per person, urging Muslims to fulfil the obligation before Eid-ul-Fitr prayers. He said Zakat-ul-Fitr is compulsory for every Muslim, including men, women and infants. Parents must pay on behalf of minor children, while adult children are responsible for themselves. A husband, he clarified, cannot pay on behalf of his wife without her consent. The Mufti explained that the amount is based on the value of half a Sa' of wheat, calculated at Rs 77 and rounded off to Rs 80 as a precaution. Wealthier individuals may give Sadaqat-ul-Fitr in wheat, cash, dates, raisins or other approved food items

Jaishankar Urges UN Bodies To Advocate Zero-Tolerance For Terrorist Acts

AGENCIES

GENEVA: India remains firm and uncompromising in its opposition to terrorism in all its forms, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said, asserting there can be no justification, especially when innocent lives are targeted. "Confronting terrorism requires collective resolve," Jaishankar said and urged the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to "advocate zero-tolerance for terrorist acts." Jaishankar was virtually addressing the High-Level Segment of the 61st session of the UNHRC on Wednesday when he pointed out that India seeks to find and expand common ground in a world marred by conflict, polarisation and uncertainty. "We have consistently underlined dialogue over confrontation, consensus



over division, and human-centric development over narrow interests," he said. "We remain firm and uncompromising Mr President in our opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations as well. Terrorism is among the most egregious violations of human rights and there can be no justification,"

Commissioner SMC inspects Municipal assets, reviews infrastructure

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, conducted an extensive inspection of municipal assets at Tibetan Colony, Eidgah, and Devi Angan, Badam Wari, to review the status of civic infrastructure and assess the management, maintenance, and utilization of public facilities.

During his visit to Tibetan Colony, Eidgah, the Commissioner undertook a comprehensive review of municipal infrastructure, including sanitation arrangements, drainage networks, and waste management operations. He evaluated the performance of field-level services and directed concerned officials to ensure sustained cleanliness,



improved operational efficiency, and prompt resolution of civic grievances raised by residents.

At Devi Angan, Badam Wari, the Commissioner inspected the municipal asset and reviewed its

maintenance standards, operational functionality, and potential for enhanced public utilization. Emphasizing the importance of safeguarding public infrastructure, he instructed officials to maintain the facility strictly in accordance with municipal norms and to maximize its effective use for community benefit.

Highlighting the importance of regular on-ground monitoring, the Commissioner reiterated SMC's commitment to strengthening urban governance through improved infrastructure management, enhanced accountability, and responsive civic administration.

Senior officers and officials of Srinagar Municipal Corporation accompanied the Commissioner during the inspection.

DC Kulgam reviews implementation of PM Surya Ghar–Muft Bijli Yojana

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Thursday chaired a meeting of concerned officers to review the implementation and progress of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in the district.

The scheme aims to enhance rooftop solar capacity across residential households, enabling them to generate their own electricity, significantly reduce monthly power bills, and benefit from substantial government financial assistance.

During the meeting, Executive Engineer,



KPDCL, Kulgam, presented a detailed overview of the progress achieved so far. He informed that around 4,012 applications have been received for registration under the scheme in the district. Against a target of 625 installations set by the Managing Direc-

tor KPDCL for Kulgam, the department has already surpassed the target with 659 Solar Rooftop (SRT) systems installed as on date. Additionally, material has been delivered at 62 more sites for further installations.

The DC emphasized on

the sub-division wise mass outreach campaign to sensitize public about the scheme. He also directed the KPDCL officials to ensure timely installation of the roof top solar plants and release of subsidies to beneficiaries.

The DC also emphasized to accelerate the conversion of applications submitted to SRT installations. He also directed the SDO's for immediate commissioning of SRT's where material is delivered or installed.

The meeting was attended by SE KPDCL, XEN KPDCL, Lead District Manager (LDM), representatives from JKEDA, and all AEEs, AE, and JE of KPDCL.

DC Shopian presides over NCORD meeting

Calls for strengthened action against drug menace

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta Thursday presided over a meeting of the District Level NCORD (Narco Coordination) to review and strengthen measures aimed at curbing drug abuse and illegal narcotics activities in the district.

During the meeting, the DC directed all concerned departments to intensify efforts to speed up preventive and enforcement actions.

Drug Control authorities were directed to conduct regular inspections of pharmacies and ensure strict compliance with prescribed norms regarding sale of medicines. He emphasized maintaining proper sale registers, verification of prescriptions and preventing misuse of scheduled drugs.

Agriculture and horti-



culture departments were asked to rope in farmers in hotspot areas for alternative cropping ventures.

The DC directed the education department to ensure installation of prominent signboards outside all schools across the district declaring the areas as "No Smoking Zones." Authorities

were further instructed to strictly enforce the prohibition of smoking and sale of tobacco products around educational institutions as per established norms.

Review of constitution of anti drug committees in schools and engagement of youth in sports activities was also focused upon for action. Directions for sustained

awareness campaigns and collective responsibility to safeguard the youth from the menace of drugs was emphasized on the occasion.

SSP, Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmed Choudhary; ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; ACR, Shakoor Ahmed Dar, district officers, Tehsildars and other concerned attended the meeting.

SWD Sgr organizes sensitization Programme for teachers under BBBP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Social Welfare Department, SANKALP-Hub for Empowerment of Women (Mission Shakti), Srinagar organized a sensitization programme on Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) at Government Degree College, Nawa Kadal Thursday.

The programme witnessed active participation of teachers from various government and private educational institutions.

The session commenced with opening remarks by Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, District Social Welfare Officer, Srinagar, who highlighted the significance of collective responsibility in addressing gender disparities and reaffirmed the department's commitment towards strengthening initiatives that promote the rights and dignity of the girl child.

Dr. Tawheeda Rasool, Assistant Professor, deliberated on teachers role in preventing school dropouts among girls and emphasized the transformative role educators play in shaping mindsets, ensuring retention of girls in schools, and fostering an inclusive academic

environment that nurtures equality and empowerment.

The legal dimensions of the initiative were comprehensively discussed by Advocate Mir Naveed Gul, Panel Lawyer, who spoke on the legal aspects related to Beti Bachao Beti Padhao. He elaborated on the constitutional safeguards, laws protecting the girl child, and the legal responsibilities of institutions in upholding gender justice and preventing discrimination.

District Mission Coordinator, SANKALP-HEW while speaking during the programme reiterated the department's continued dedication towards empowering women and girls through sustained community-based interventions.

The sensitisation programme aimed to engage educators as key stakeholders in advancing the objectives of BBBP. By strengthening awareness and institutional responsibility, the initiative seeks to foster long-term behavioral change and reinforce the educational ecosystem as a powerful platform for promoting gender equity and social inclusion.

Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY CHC Rajpora achieves historic breakthrough with inaugural of TKR

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: In a landmark achievement for rural healthcare, the first-ever Total Knee Replacement (TKR) surgery under combined spinal epidural anaesthesia (CSE) at Community Health Centre (CHC) Rajpora was successfully performed under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) scheme, marking a major step forward in providing advanced medical care at the grassroots level.

The surgery was successfully performed by Orthopedic Surgeon, Dr. Ajaz Rafeeq and his dedicated surgical team, with the anaesthesia team led by Dr. Mohsin Farooq. The coordinated expertise, meticulous planning, and teamwork of both surgical and anaesthesia teams ensured that the procedure was carried out smoothly, safely, and successfully, restoring hope and mobility to the patient.

This historic achievement was made possible

due to the recent upgradation of the operation theatre at CHC Rajpora into a fully modular facility, equipped with modern surgical instruments and advanced technology. The upgradation was accomplished through the dedicated efforts of the hospital administration and the proactive support of the Deputy Commissioner Pulwama and the Health Administration, including the Director of Health Services, Kashmir. Their combined commitment has significantly strengthened the capacity of CHC Rajpora to perform such high-end surgical procedures locally, bringing advanced medical care closer to the community.

The patient received completely cashless treatment under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, eliminating the financial burden that often accompanies such advanced orthopedic procedures. The successful surgery not only brings relief to the patient but also sets a precedent for providing specialized surgical care in rural health-care centers.

Myntra Celebrates its 19th Birthday with Myntra Birthday Blast

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: To commemorate its 19th birthday, Myntra, one of India's leading fashion, beauty, and lifestyle destinations, has announced Myntra Birthday Blast (MBB). The event will go live from February 28, with Myntra Insider customers getting early access 24 hours early, starting February 27. With irresistible offers, this edition brings together an expansive selection of over 6 million styles from 20,000+ international and made-in-India brands across fashion, beauty, and lifestyle categories.

The categories expected to see traction in this edition include Men's and Women's Ethnic Wear, Beauty and Personal Care, and Watches and Wearables, driven by the wedding season demand and upcoming festivals such as Eid and Holi. Other categories expected to witness demand include Women's and Men's Western Wear, Men's apparel, Sports wear, and Spring-Summer essentials as shoppers refresh their wardrobes for the new season. Additionally, momentum is anticipated across Travel Essentials, Footwear, Kids' Wear, Accessories, and gifting-related categories, supported by increased social gatherings and travel during this period.

Several popular brands that are expected to witness heightened traction include H&M, Nike, MANGO, Levis,



U.S. Polo Assn., Anouk, Libas, and Body Works, and M.A.C.

Speaking on the third edition of Myntra Birthday Blast, Ritesh Mishra, Head of Category and Revenue, Myntra, said, "Myntra Birthday Blast continues to be a special event for us to celebrate our journey with millions of customers across the country. As Myntra celebrates 19 years, we are incredibly grateful for the love of our customers and the trust of thousands of brand partners, which have played a pivotal role in redefining the fashion landscape in the country. As we continue to set new benchmarks in the e-commerce paradigm, our focus remains on scaling excellence and setting the new standards for how the modern customer experiences fashion, beauty, and lifestyle shopping."

As Myntra continues to serve diverse audience segments, its Gen Z-focused FWD portfolio will bring together lakhs of trend-first styles across

youth-preferred brands. With the spring-summer season approaching, FWD, which resonates strongly with younger customers, will offer expressive fashion options for outings and travel fits. Shoppers can explore global styles across Tops, T-shirts, Shirts, Dresses, Jeans, Kurtas & Kurtis at great prices.

Myntra's hyper-speed delivery service, M-Now, will continue to serve as a key convenience driver during the event, especially for time-sensitive purchases. With 1 lakh+ styles across fashion, beauty, accessories, and home, M-Now enables shoppers across Tier 1 cities such as Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Hyderabad, Kolkata, and Pune, as well as emerging Tier 2 markets like Jaipur, Lucknow, Patna, and Ahmedabad, to receive their orders starting in 30 minutes. Amid a busy calendar of weddings, festive season, and last-minute travel plans, M-Now ensures customers have access to trend-first options, helping them find the perfect look exactly when they need it. (PR)

SHEW organises Nutritional Kit Distribution Programme at SDH Sedow

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women, Mission Shakti Shopian, in collaboration with the Department of Health, Thursday organised a Nutritional Kit Distribution Programme for pregnant women under the flagship initiative of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao at Sub District Hospital, Sedow.

The programme was conducted with the objective of promoting maternal health, nutritional awareness and overall well-being of expecting mothers.

During the session, Dr. Parvaiz educated the women about the importance of maintaining a balanced and nutritious diet during pregnancy. He highlighted that proper nutrition plays a vital role in ensuring the healthy growth and development of the baby while also safeguarding the mother's health.

Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat assumes charge as DC Anantnag

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat assumed charge as Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag, succeeding SF Hamid, during a formal handover ceremony held today at the DC Office.

Senior officers of the district administration, including ADCs, CEO PDA, GM



The Mission Coordinator for Sankalp Hub addressed the gathering and urged the women to prioritise self-care. She emphasised that mothers shoulder significant responsibilities within their families and society, and therefore, their physical as well as mental well-being must not be overlooked.

Furthermore, the Gender Specialist from Sankalp

Hub provided detailed information about various welfare schemes available for women and girls. The participants were guided on eligibility criteria, benefits, and the step-by-step process to apply for these schemes, empowering them to access government support effectively.

The programme concluded with the distribution of nutritional kits among pregnant women.

and the social delegations. After assuming charge, Dr. Bhat inspected various sections of the DC Office establishment and took preliminary stock of their functioning. He also interacted with several applicants and issued necessary instructions to the concerned authorities regarding their concerns.

Awareness programme on New Labour Codes, Welfare Schemes held in B'pora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: A Mega awareness programme on the newly introduced Labour Codes and social security schemes was organised on Thursday by the Office of the Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC), Bandipora, in collaboration with District Information Centre Bandipora, at Town Hall Bandipora.

The programme witnessed active participation from members of Traders' Federations of Bandipora, Sumbal and Naidkhai, along with a large number of shopkeepers, contractors, HR representatives, management representatives of private educational institutions, construction workers and workers from the unorganised sector.

During the programme, officers imparted detailed awareness about the four new Labour Codes, highlighting key reforms, simplified compliance procedures, enhanced social security coverage, mandatory issuance of appointment letters, timely payment of wages, improved safety standards, and provisions for inclusion and protection of women workers. Participants were also sensitised about the rights and responsibilities of employers and workers under the new legal framework.

Special emphasis was laid on the registration

of unorganised and construction workers and the benefits available under labour welfare schemes. The participants were informed about various social security measures, including medical assistance, educational assistance for wards, disability assistance, and other welfare benefits available to registered workers.

On the occasion, labour cards were distributed among eligible workers on the spot. Additionally, sanction letters for educational assistance and disability assistance were also provided to registered construction workers, extending immediate support to the beneficiaries.

The programme was interactive, with participants actively engaging in discussions and seeking clarifications regarding labour laws, compliance requirements, and welfare entitlements.

On the occasion, stakeholders appreciated the efforts of the Labour Department and District Information Centre Bandipora for organising the awareness programme and facilitating access to welfare services at the grassroots level.

Among others, Labour Officer Mushtaq Ahmad Kambay, Labour Inspector, Abid Rashid Naik, and officials of the Information Department were also present on the occasion.

J&K border villages now 'symbols of connection', not conflict: CM Omar

Describes graduating students as 'spring of J&K in full bloom'

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said border villages are no longer symbols of conflict but have emerged as "symbols of connection."

Addressing the 21st convocation of the University of Kashmir, CM Omar, said his government is working to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a hub of innovation and knowledge-based industries, while ensuring inclusive and sustainable development.

Hailing the graduating students as the "spring of J&K in full bloom," the Chief Minister underlined key challenges facing the region, including climate change, agricultural transformation and youth mental health.

"We are meeting at a pivotal moment," CM Omar said, referring to the recently presented 2026-27 budget. Describing it

as a "fiscal compass," he said the budget reflects the government's intent to build a modern, progressive and economically vibrant Jammu and Kashmir.

"For decades, we were defined by tourism alone or agriculture alone. The J&K of 2026 is evolving into a centre of innovation and participatory governance," he said, acknowledging that the region has faced economic setbacks following the trauma of 2025.

"Our resilience has defined us," Omar added. The Chief Minister said his government's vision rests on three pillars—meritocracy, sustainability and digital sovereignty.

On tourism, Omar said the government is moving beyond traditional destinations like Gulmarg and Pahalgam by promoting border tourism. "Villages like Keran, Gurez and Teetwal, once synonymous with conflict, are now symbols of connection," he said.



He added that the government, in collaboration with the Union Government, is developing nine new tourist destinations to ensure the benefits of

tourism reach the last mile. Stressing the need for balance, Omar said climate concerns remain central to policy planning. "Our glaciers are

receding and our winters are changing. We must protect what we promote, which is why we are investing in sustainable infrastructure," he said.

Calling the KU convocation a day of succession, the Chief Minister told the graduating students that they were succeeding the generations who kept the flame of knowledge alive through difficult times and were now the torch-bearers of the future.

He urged the students to embark on the journey of self-realisation even as their formal education concluded.

The Chief Minister further asked students to acknowledge the sacrifices of their parents and expressed gratitude to faculty members for their contribution in shaping the lives of students.

Highlighting a key milestone, the Chief Minister said that nearly 60 percent of the degrees and medals at this year's convo-

cation were earned by women. Terming it a powerful instrument against poverty and instability, he said J&K had moved from 'Women's Welfare to Women-led Development.'

He said under the UMEED scheme, 7 lakh women had been organised into 80,000 Self-Help Groups, leading to the rise of "Lakshmi Didi's" as financial anchors in their communities.

He added that interest-free soft loans were being provided for women-led startups in manufacturing and IT sectors. He encouraged women graduates to aspire for leadership roles in civil services, biotechnology and part of global platforms.

Turning to agriculture, he described it as the cultural soul of the people but stressed the need for transformation through a High-Density Revolution.

The Chief Minister said that the technology and quality saplings were being provided

to enable fruit exports to international markets.

He urged Science and IT graduates to develop solutions such as real-time pest detection apps and blockchain-based traceability systems to authenticate products like Pampore saffron in global markets.

Articulating a 'Saffron & Silicon' vision, Omar said J&K was being positioned as a data-friendly zone and an ideal destination for Green Data Centers, with a focus on creating job providers rather than job seekers.

The Chief Minister also underscored the importance of mental health, stating that society had endured immense pressure and trauma.

CM Omar said that the government was expanding district-level counselling through Mission Youth and urged Psychology and Social Work graduates to help de-stigmatise conversations around mental well-being—(KNO)

JKECC delegation calls on Sakeena Itoo, express gratitude for reviewing TET order

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A delegation of the Jammu Kashmir Employees Coordination Committee (JKECC) Thursday called on Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo and expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Education Minister for timely and considerate intervention in keeping in abeyance the order concerning the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) requirement for in-service teachers across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The delegation, led by senior representatives of JKECC, apprised the Minister of widespread concerns and anxiety among thousands of serving teachers following the issuance of the order. They highlighted that many experienced educators, who have been rendering dedicated services in far-flung and challenging areas for years, were apprehensive about the implications of the directive on their professional stability and morale.

In her interaction with the delegation, the Education Minister reiterated the Government's commitment to welfare of teaching community. She assured the representatives that



the department remains open to consultations with stakeholders to ensure that reforms in the education sector are implemented in a manner that is fair, transparent, and in the larger interest of both students and teachers. "Teachers in Jammu and Kashmir have consistently contributed to society and have strengthened the education system despite infrastructural constraints, climatic challenges and difficult terrain," Minister Sakeena said.

The Minister asked the delegation to extend cooperation to the Department in its ongoing efforts to enhance quality education and implement progressive reforms. She added that such collaborative engagement between the government and employee representatives would continue in the future for the overall

development of the education sector across Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, the delegation apprised the Minister that the decision to revoke the order has brought immense relief to the teaching fraternity and has reaffirmed their faith in the government's commitment to safeguarding the interests of employees. They described the Minister's action as empathetic, pragmatic and pro-education, noting that it reflects a balanced approach between maintaining academic standards and recognizing the ground realities faced by teachers.

They stated that the Government's responsiveness has not only addressed an administrative concern but has also boosted the morale of educators who form the backbone of the region's schooling framework.

Javid Dar inaugurates processing cum training centre for fruits, vegetables

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Strengthening efforts to boost value addition and self-employment in the agriculture sector, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Thursday inaugurated a Modern Processing-cum-Training Centre for fruits and vegetables at Udheywala in Jammu.

The centre, established at a cost of ₹90 lakh, aims to promote skill development, entrepreneurship and income generation among the farmers, rural youth and women, particularly members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

While addressing the gathering, the Minister said the government is committed towards empowering the farmers through modern technology, scientific training and value addition initiatives. He stressed the need for departments to identify



high-potential sectors and expand skill-based training programmes to enhance productivity and ensure sustainable livelihoods.

"The focus must be on equipping the farmers and women with modern processing techniques and encouraging cultivation of improved and hybrid varieties of fruits and vegetables to increase returns," he said.

The newly inaugurated facility will offer six-month and one-month certificate courses in fruit and vegetable preservation and processing. It will also organise mobile

demonstrations and promote community-level processing units to extend technical knowledge to the farmers at the grassroots level.

On the occasion, Soil Health Cards were distributed among the beneficiaries to encourage balanced fertiliser use and scientific soil management practices.

Director Horticulture Jammu, Gul Syed, Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta, Director Rural Development Department Jammu, Shehnaz Akhter and other senior officers were present at the event.

SDH Chadoora receives advanced anaesthesia workstation to enhance surgical capabilities

NAVEED UL HAQ

BUDGAM: Sub District Hospital (SDH) Chadoora Budgam on Thursday received a latest Anaesthesia Workstation, aimed at strengthening surgical facilities at the hospital.

The machine was inaugurated by MLA Chadoora Ali Mohammad Dar in the presence of Chief Medical Officer Dr Gulzar, Block Medical Officer Dr Riyaz and other concerned officials.

Officials said that with the installation of the new equipment, the hospital will be able to conduct advanced and complex surgical procedures more efficiently. The facility, they said, will further streamline services under the 24x7 FRU, where gynaecological surgeries are already being performed during night hours.

In addition to gynaecology, surgical services in ENT, Orthopaedics, Ophthalmology and General

Surgery are expected to be strengthened with the availability of the latest anaesthesia support system.

Meanwhile, a Rogi Kalyan Samiti (RKS) meeting was convened, during which several additional medical machines were approved for the hospital.

The MLA said that the upgradation of equipment is part of ongoing efforts to enhance healthcare services for the local population—(KNO)

SDA enforces strict waste management rules to protect environment

RAJA SYED RATHER

SONAMARG: The Sonamarg Development Authority (SDA) has intensified enforcement of the Solid Waste Management Rules in strict compliance with the directives of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), warning of strict action against violators.

Under the directions of Chief Executive Officer Bilal Mukhtar, the Authority has ordered mandatory four-stream segregation of waste at source, including wet waste, dry waste, domestic hazardous waste and sanitary waste. All waste generators have been directed to install separate covered and labelled bins within their premises, strictly as per the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. Mixing of waste has been strictly prohibited.

As per the circular accessed, dumping of garbage on roadsides, drains, open land, forest areas, riverbanks and water bodies has been banned. Open burning of solid or plastic waste has also been strictly prohibited



and will invite penal action. All establishments, including hotels, guest houses, restaurants, shopkeepers, pony operators, tent operators and tour operators, have been directed to hand over only segregated waste to the authorised agency, as per the order.

It says that the collected waste must be transported strictly to the Solid Waste Management Plant at Sarbal as notified by the SDA. "Disposal at any unauthorised site has been declared illegal, while daily lifting and transportation of waste to the designated plant has been made mandatory," it adds.

The order further prohibits the use, stocking and distribution of banned single-use plastic items. Stakeholders have been directed

to ensure proper channelisation of plastic waste to authorised recyclers in accordance with Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

Line departments have been asked to ensure safe transportation and scientific processing of waste at the Sarbal plant as per approved standards, with continuous monitoring and enforcement drives to be carried out.

As per the circular, any negligence, violation or deviation will attract strict action under the Solid Waste Management Rules and the Environment Protection Act, including environmental compensation, spot penalties, sealing of premises, cancellation of registration and initiation of legal proceedings without prior notice.

Fakhrudin Hamid assumes charge as DC Baramulla

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: Syed Fakhrudin Hamid Thursday assumed charge as the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla in the presence of senior district and sectoral officers at the DC Office Baramulla.

On the occasion, senior officers of the district administration, officials and staff of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, along with members of civil society, extended a warm welcome to the new DC.

Soon after assuming charge, the DC interacted with senior officers of the district administration, where he outlined his vision of people-centric governance as the core principle guiding the functioning of the administration.

The DC emphasised that the administration is fundamentally meant to serve the people and must remain accessible, responsive and accountable to the public at all times.

J&K Govt Appoints Inam Ul Haq Siddiqui as Ombudsman for Sgr, G'bal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Jammu & Kashmir Government has appointed Inam Ul Haq Siddiqui, a retired senior KAS officer, as the new Ombudsman with a mandate to oversee grievance redressal in the districts of Srinagar and Ganderbal. The appointment was formalized through Government Order issued on Wednesday.

Siddiqui, a distinguished bureaucrat with over three decades of service, brings a wealth of administrative experience to the role. In a significant move, he has been allotted the prestigious Srinagar and Ganderbal districts, which notably include the Hon'ble Chief Minister's constituency, underscoring the government's commitment to robust oversight in the region.

Throughout his illustrious career, Siddiqui has held a variety of key positions, serving as Additional Secretary to the Government, Chief Executive Officer of the Gulmarg Development Authority, Joint Director of the Information Department, and Project Director for the Governor's Grievance Cell. His extensive ground-level experience also includes tenures as Assistant Commissioner (Revenue), Assistant Commissioner (Settlement), and Assistant Commissioner (Development).

Officials stated that his previous roles, particularly with the Governor's Grievance Cell, were pivotal in strengthening systems for account-



ability and improving governance delivery. His expertise extends to large-scale projects, having been closely associated with World Bank-funded initiatives where he contributed to planning, financial oversight, and the modernization of land records.

Siddiqui's proficiency in technology-driven governance is backed by advanced professional training. He completed a specialized course in Management Information Systems and Data Monitoring & Evaluation from the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom, as well as training with the Department of Space, Government of India, in Hyderabad. Widely regarded for his integrity and result-oriented approach, Siddiqui was previously honored with the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Honesty, Integrity, and Meritorious Public Service by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

His appointment as Ombudsman is expected to significantly reinforce transparency, fairness, and the effectiveness of grievance redressal mechanisms for the citizens of Srinagar and Ganderbal.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE, GARDENS & PARKS, KASHMIR
EMPORIUM GARDEN, SRINAGAR
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GIST OF E- TENDER NOTICE NO. 01 OF 2026
Dated: - 26/02/2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory, J&K, bids are invited (In Double Cover System) from the Registered Ornamental Plant Material Growers, Producers, Suppliers with J&K State/Central Govt. for the following work for: -

| S. No. | Name of Job/Work | Value of security deposit | Cost of tender document | Period of contract |
|--------|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Supply of Cut Flower Spikes, Garlands, Greens during Spring/Summer & Autumn/Winter Months | Rs.20,000.00 (Rupees Twenty Thousand only) | Rs.1000.00 (Rupees One Thousand only) in the shape of Demand Draft | 01 (One) year from the date of award of contract |

The bidding document(s) consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded through the www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below: -

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Period of downloading of bidding document | 26.02.2026 from 03:30 PM to 23.03.2026 up to 02:00 PM |
| 2. | Bid submission Start Date | 26.02.2026 from 04:00 PM |
| 3. | Bid submission End date | 23.03.2026 up to 02:00 PM |
| 4. | Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online) | 27.03.2026 at 02:00 PM |

In case of any eventuality (online) the date of opening will be considered on any other convenient working day.

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(Member Secretary)
Floriculture Department,
Kashmir.

DIPK-11397-25
DT: 26/02/2026

Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

Turning Optimism Into Lasting Change

Vice-President C P Radhakrishnan's maiden visit to Jammu and Kashmir has brought renewed attention to the changes taking place in the Union Territory. Speaking after experiencing the calm and beauty of Dal Lake, he described the region as entering a "new era of peace, progress and prosperity," a sentiment that reflects growing optimism about Kashmir's future.

During his visit to attend the 21st convocation of the University of Kashmir, the Vice-President took time to explore Srinagar and interact with the surroundings. His morning cruise on Dal Lake, which he later shared on social media, highlighted not just the region's natural charm but also a sense of calm that has increasingly returned to the Valley.

Radhakrishnan also pointed to visible improvements in infrastructure and connectivity, crediting the administration for its focus on eco-tourism and the protection of Kashmir's natural heritage. These efforts, he noted, have helped revive tourism and created fresh opportunities for local livelihoods. Such words from a national leader are encouraging, especially for a region that has long carried the weight of conflict and uncertainty. Better roads, smoother connectivity and a steady flow of tourists have brought relief to many families dependent on tourism and related sectors. At the same time, the emphasis on sustainable development is crucial for preserving Kashmir's fragile environment. Yet, the real measure of progress lies beyond official praise. Lasting peace and prosperity will depend on how deeply these changes touch everyday lives—through jobs, education, environmental care and inclusive governance. Development must reach all sections of society, not just visible urban centers or tourist destinations.

The Vice-President's reception by Manoj Sinha, Omar Abdullah, and senior officials reflected institutional cooperation. Going forward, translating this cooperation into consistent, people-focused governance will be key.

Jammu and Kashmir is clearly at an important moment in its journey. Optimism is welcome, but it must be supported by sustained efforts on the ground. Only when development feels real, inclusive and lasting will the promise of a "new era" truly resonate with the people of the Valley.

Re-examining Teachers Through TET: A Question Of Fairness And Dignity

TAWHEED PARVAIZ BHAT

The teacher has always been regarded as the architect of society, the one who shapes young minds, nurtures values, and builds the intellectual foundation of the nation. Yet, in recent times, the teaching fraternity finds itself repeatedly subjected to new rules, fresh directives, and evolving conditions that often raise questions not about competence but about dignity and fairness.

The recent decision to require teachers in Jammu and Kashmir to qualify the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) again has caused deep unrest, particularly among those who entered the department after clearing the rigorous selection process of the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (SSB). This concern becomes even more pronounced when we speak specifically about the 2014 and 2019 batches of teachers. These teachers did not enter the department casually; they were selected after successfully completing a competitive written examination followed by a formal interview process. Their recruitment was not provisional or informal; it was structured, merit-based, and officially validated.

The 2014 batch of teachers, who qualified for the SSB examination and interview, entered the department with full legitimacy and confidence that their merit had been duly assessed. Similarly, the 2019 batch of teachers also underwent the same rigorous process of written examination. These 2014 and 2019 batch teachers began their professional journeys with the belief that they had fulfilled all necessary eligibility requirements laid down by the recruitment authority.

Today, when these same 2014 and 2019 batch teachers are being asked to again prove their eligibility through TET, it naturally raises a fundamental question: if they were fully qualified to be appointed through SSB examination and interview, why is their competence being reassessed now? The issue is not about capability; rather, it is about consistency and respect for due process. The 2014 batch teachers and the 2019 batch teachers have already demon-



strated their merit through competitive selection. To subject them once more to a qualifying examination creates a perception that their earlier selection process is being indirectly questioned.

It is important to repeatedly emphasize that the 2014 and 2019 batch teachers are not opposed to professional development or quality enhancement. They fully understand the need for maintaining high educational standards. However, they feel that being re-examined after successfully clearing the SSB examination and interview undermines the credibility of the very recruitment system that selected them. The 2014 batch teachers have already spent more than a decade serving students with dedication, while the 2019 batch teachers have been actively contributing to classrooms with energy and commitment. Both batches have proved their capability not only in examinations but also in real teaching environments.

Moreover, the expectation that the 2014 and 2019 batch teachers should again prepare for TET while simultaneously managing classrooms, admin-

istrative duties, family responsibilities, and social obligations places an additional psychological and professional burden on them. These teachers are not fresh aspirants preparing for their first recruitment; they are already serving educators who entered the department through a lawful and merit-based process.

If we speak of uniform national standards, then policy implementation must also be uniform and rational. The 2014 and 2019 batch teachers fulfilled all eligibility norms applicable at the time of their recruitment. Altering these norms retrospectively creates uncertainty and may discourage future aspirants who trust the credibility of recruitment boards. When a teacher qualifies the SSB examination and interview, joins service, and dedicates years to teaching, that qualification should retain its validity and respect.

The issue, therefore, is not a rejection of evaluation but a plea for justice and dignity. The 2014 and 2019 batch teachers represent a generation of educators who trusted the system, cleared a transparent recruitment process, and entered

the department with pride. Requiring them to once again prove their eligibility risks demoralising those who have already been working diligently in classrooms across the region.

Educational reforms are indeed necessary for strengthening quality, but reforms must also acknowledge the legitimacy of past recruitment processes. The government must carefully reconsider policies affecting the 2014 and 2019 batch teachers, ensuring that reforms enhance standards without diminishing the respect owed to those who have already proven their merit through SSB examinations and interviews.

Ultimately, the strength of an education system depends on the confidence and morale of its teachers. Safeguarding the dignity of the 2014 and 2019 batch teachers is not merely about protecting a group of employees; it is about upholding the integrity of the recruitment system and preserving the trust that teachers place in it when they dedicate their lives to nation-building.

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Why Peace, Fraternity, And Pluralism Are Essential To India's Future



DR. KHWAJA IFTIKHAR AHMED

India's progress in the twenty-first century cannot be judged only by the length of its motorways, the size of its economy, or the sophistication of its technology. Equally important is the moral and social character of its people. For a nation as vast and diverse as India, lasting growth is possible only when it is rooted in peace, fraternity, interfaith harmony, and strong social cohesion. These are not abstract ideals; they are the very foundations on which India's unity, integrity, and the rationale of its unique secular identity rest.

The vision of the Indian Constitution was clear and farsighted. Its framers imagined a republic where citizens of different religions, languages, and cultures would live together with a mutual sense of equal dignity, rights, and respect. Secularism in the Indian context was never meant to deny faith or oppose religion. Instead, it affirmed respect for all belief systems while ensuring that the state remained impartial and just. This pluralistic framework has enabled India to remain united despite extraordinary diversity. Any weakening of this delicate balance risks eroding social harmony and, eventually, public trust in institutions of governance.

History offers enough evidence that societies divided along religious, ethnic, or cultural lines struggle to achieve sustainable development. Internal conflicts consume resources, weaken institu-



tions, and divert attention away from education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Peace, therefore, is not only a moral imperative; it is an economic necessity. Promoting harmony among communities, especially in a country where almost all major world religions have deep historical roots, is essential for stability and progress.

Social science research consistently shows that societies marked by trust, cooperation, and inclusion perform better in innovation, productivity, and human development. Fraternity, a core constitutional value, is perhaps the most overlooked pillar of Indian democracy. Political rights and economic opportunities lose meaning if citizens do not feel a sense of shared belonging and collective destiny. Fraternity nurtures empathy, restrains extremist tendencies, and prevents democracy from being reduced to mere majoritarianism. Without a spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood, democratic institutions risk becoming hollow.

This sense of social connect-

edness is even more critical in today's rapidly changing and evolving world. Globalisation, urbanisation, and digital communication have transformed how Indians live and interact. While these changes have brought immense opportunities, they have also intensified misinformation, polarisation, and anxiety around identity. When divisive narratives spread unchecked, they generate fear and hostility between communities, gradually weakening the social fabric of the nation.

Social stability and economic development are deeply interconnected. Advanced economies are built not only on capital and technology, but also on inclusive institutions that provide equal opportunity to all. If social tensions persist, India will struggle to fully harness its greatest asset—its young population. Exclusion based on religion, caste, ethnicity, or any other identity limits participation in the economy and diminishes collective potential. Global development indicators clearly show that

inclusive societies outperform divided ones in human development, innovation, and long-term growth.

India's aspiration to become a five-trillion-dollar economy cannot be realised amid persistent social conflict. Growth and harmony are not competing goals; they reinforce each other. Resources spent managing internal discord are resources taken away from development. A peaceful and cohesive society, on the other hand, multiplies economic and social gains.

The rise of forces that threaten unity and secular values must therefore be addressed with seriousness and urgency. History teaches us that once intolerance becomes normalised, reversing it is extremely difficult. Hate speech, discrimination, and communal polarisation may begin on the margins, but over time they tend to seep into mainstream institutions. If left unchecked, diversity—India's greatest strength—can be turned into a perceived weakness.

Education plays a decisive role in this context. An educational system grounded in constitutional values, scientific temper, and ethical reasoning can nurture responsible and empathetic citizens. Familiarity with India's shared cultural heritage helps young people appreciate diversity rather than fear it. Societies that invest in civic education produce citizens who are more tolerant, socially responsible, and committed to the common good.

Media and public discourse also carry a profound responsibility. In an age of instant communication, irresponsible narratives can inflame social tensions within hours. Responsible journalism, fact-based debate, and accountable communication are essential for preserving social stability. Societies that value truth and reason are far less vulnerable to manipulation and extremism.

Civil society initiatives further strengthen social cohesion. Grassroots interfaith dialogue, community service, and cultural exchange create shared spaces for cooperation and understanding. Such interactions humanise the "other," dismantle stereotypes, and build everyday experiences of solidarity.

As India moves deeper into the twenty-first century, it must align material progress with moral clarity. Peace, interfaith harmony, fraternity, and social cohesion are not obstacles to development—they are its prerequisites. Preserving the secular character of the nation and nurturing unity in diversity is not the responsibility of the state alone; it is a shared duty of every citizen.

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Beyond Strategic Partnership Against Terrorism

The foundation of this partnership lies in the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism, which has become a vital platform for dialogue, coordination, and operational planning

DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

In the contemporary global security landscape, terrorism remains one of the most pressing challenges. Nations across the world are compelled to collaborate, share intelligence, and develop joint strategies to counter this menace. Among the most significant partnerships in this domain is the cooperation between India and Israel, two countries that have faced persistent threats from extremist groups and have responded by forging a robust alliance against terrorism. The friendship between India and Israel stands today as one of the most dynamic and strategically significant. The friendship between India and Israel stands today as one of the most dynamic and strategically significant bilateral relationships in contemporary geopolitics. Rooted in civilizational depth, shaped by post-colonial aspirations, and strengthened by shared security concerns and technological collaboration, the India-Israel partnership has evolved into a multidimensional alliance with profound global implications.

The foundation of this partnership lies in the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism, which has become a vital platform for dialogue, coordination, and operational planning. Established in the late 1990s, the JWG has evolved into a mechanism that not only addresses traditional forms of terrorism but also anticipates emerging threats such as cyber warfare, drone misuse, and AI enabled attacks. The tenth meeting of this group, held in New Delhi, reaffirmed the commitment of both nations to a policy of zero tolerance against terrorism. India's security concerns are primarily shaped by cross border terrorism emanating from its neighborhood. For decades, the country has grappled with insurgencies in Kashmir and sporadic extremist violence in other regions. Israel, on the other hand, has faced existential threats from hostile groups in the Middle East. Despite differences in geography and political context, both nations share a common understanding: terrorism is not confined by borders, and its defeat requires international solidarity.

One of the most striking aspects of the India Israel partnership is the fusion of experience and technology. India brings to the table its vast expertise in counter insurgency operations, having dealt with diverse forms of militancy across its territory. Israel contributes cutting edge technological solutions, ranging from advanced surveillance systems to drone defense mechanisms and cyber security frameworks. This synergy allows both nations to craft responses that are not only tactical but also strategic in scope. The cooperation extends beyond intelligence sharing. Law enforcement agencies from both countries have strengthened ties to ensure that terror networks can be tracked, prosecuted, and dismantled. Judicial collaboration has also been emphasized, recognizing that terrorism must be fought not only on the battlefield but also in the courtroom. By harmonizing legal frameworks and investigative procedures, India and Israel aim to close loopholes that terrorists often exploit. Another dimension of this partnership is its global outlook. Both nations understand that terrorism is a transnational phenomenon, often funded and coordinated through international networks. Hence, they have consistently advocated for stronger multilateral cooperation. India and Israel have pushed for reforms in global institutions to ensure that counter terrorism measures are not hindered by political biases. Their joint statements often highlight the need for collective responsibility, urging nations to rise above narrow interests and confront terrorism as a shared enemy of humanity.

Historically, India recognized Israel in 1950, yet full diplomatic relations were established only in 1992. During the Cold War, India's foreign policy was influenced by its leadership in the Non-Aligned Movement and its strong support for the Palestinian cause. Israel, meanwhile, found itself diplomatically isolated in many parts of the world. Despite the absence of formal ties, discreet cooperation—especially in defense—continued behind the scenes. The post-Cold War geopolitical shift and India's economic liberalization created a new strategic calculus. The collapse of bipolarity, the rise of transnational terrorism, and the need for technological modernization



prompted New Delhi to reconsider its approach to Tel Aviv.

The formalization of ties in 1992 marked the beginning of a steady upward trajectory. A historic milestone occurred in 2017 when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Israel, becoming the first Indian Prime Minister to do so. The visit symbolized a de-hyphenation of India's Middle East policy, separating its engagement

A historic milestone occurred in 2017 when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Israel, becoming the first Indian Prime Minister to do so. The visit symbolized a de-hyphenation of India's Middle East policy, separating its engagement with Israel from its relations with Palestine.

with Israel from its relations with Palestine. Shortly thereafter, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited India, further cementing the personal rapport between the leaders and institutionalizing strategic dialogue.

One of the central pillars of India-Israel friendship is defense cooperation. Israel has emerged as one of India's top defense suppliers, providing advanced military technologies including missile systems, drones, surveillance equipment, and radar technologies. In an era defined by asymmetric warfare and border tensions, India values Israel's expertise in counter-terrorism and intelligence-sharing. Israel's technological edge in defense innovation aligns with India's ambition to modernize its armed forces and strengthen indigenous defense production. Joint development projects, such as surface-to-air missile systems, reflect a shift from a buyer-seller dynamic to collaborative innovation. Beyond defense, agriculture has become a powerful symbol of the partnership's human dimension. Israel's pioneering work in drip irrigation, desert farming, and water management has been instrumental in supporting India's agrarian transformation. Centers of Excellence established across various Indian states showcase Israeli techniques adapted to local conditions. These initiatives address critical challenges such as water scarcity, climate change, and food security. In a world increasingly vulnerable to environmental disruptions, such cooperation carries global significance, demonstrating how technological transfer can empower developing economies to achieve sustainable growth.

Water technology is another area where Israel's expertise has global resonance. Israel's success in desalination and wastewater recycling offers valuable lessons for water-stressed regions, including parts of India. Joint projects in water purification and smart water management systems reflect an understanding that resource security is inseparable from national security. As climate change intensifies competition over water resources worldwide, the India-Israel collaboration in this sector represents a model for cross-regional cooperation. Innovation and entrepreneurship further deepen the partnership. Both countries have vibrant start-up ecosystems. India's vast market and digital transformation initiatives complement Israel's reputation as the "Start-Up Nation." Collaborative innovation funds and research partnerships in cyber security, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and renewable energy illustrate a forward-looking dimension of the relationship. In the global knowledge economy, such alliances transcend geography and contribute to technological resilience. From agriculture to artificial intelligence, from counter-terrorism to space cooperation, the relationship has grown beyond mere diplomatic engagement

time security, cyber defense, and technological standards. At the same time, India maintains strategic autonomy, ensuring that its partnership with Israel does not compromise its independent foreign policy stance. This delicate balancing act underscores India's evolving role as a major power capable of engaging multiple poles simultaneously. The fight against terrorism constitutes a shared existential concern. Both India and Israel have endured attacks targeting civilians and state institutions. Intelligence-sharing, joint training programs, and homeland security cooperation enhance both countries' capabilities to respond to evolving threats. In the global context, this collaboration contributes to counter-terrorism frameworks and strengthens norms against violent extremism. It also demonstrates how countries facing similar security challenges can pool expertise to safeguard democratic societies.

Cultural and people-to-people ties add a softer yet meaningful layer to the relationship. The Jewish community in India, though small, has lived for centuries without experiencing systemic persecution. This history of coexistence forms a moral foundation for contemporary ties. Indian culture, cinema, and yoga enjoy popularity in



into a robust strategic convergence that influences regional balances of power and global governance debates.

The geopolitical implications of India-Israel friendship extend beyond bilateral interests. In West Asia, India has traditionally balanced relations among competing regional actors, including Gulf Arab states and Iran. The normalization agreements between Israel and several Arab countries have opened new possibilities for multilateral engagement. Platforms such as the I2U2 grouping—comprising India, Israel, the United States, and the United Arab Emirates—reflect emerging multilateral frameworks aimed at economic cooperation and regional stability. These arrangements signal a shift toward pragmatic, issue-based coalitions in global diplomacy.

India's relations with Israel also intersect with its broader ties to the United States. Israel has long been a key American ally, and the triangular dynamic among India, Israel, and the United States strengthens strategic coordination in areas such as mari-

Israel, while Israeli tourists frequently visit India, especially regions like Goa and Himachal Pradesh. Academic exchanges and student collaborations further broaden mutual understanding. Such societal interactions humanize diplomacy and ensure that strategic ties are anchored in cultural empathy.

Energy security and economic diversification also shape the partnership. While trade volumes have grown significantly since 1992, there remains potential for expansion, particularly in high-value sectors such as defense manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, and digital services. The integration of supply chains and joint ventures enhances resilience in a fragmented global economy. As geopolitical rivalries reshape trade patterns, diversified partnerships like that between India and Israel gain greater strategic relevance. The global significance of India-Israel friendship also lies in its symbolic dimension. It represents the convergence of two post-colonial democracies that have navigated

complex security environments while maintaining pluralistic institutions. In a world witnessing democratic backsliding in some regions, the partnership underscores the importance of shared values alongside strategic interests. Though each country faces internal debates and policy challenges, their cooperation signals a commitment to democratic resilience and technological progress.

At the same time, the relationship must navigate sensitivities. India continues to support a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, advocating peaceful negotiations and respect for international law. Balancing solidarity with Israel and long-standing support for Palestinian aspirations requires diplomatic finesse. India's engagement with both sides reflects its broader foreign policy principle of multi-alignment rather than rigid alliances.

Looking ahead, emerging domains such as space cooperation and quantum technologies may define the next phase of collaboration. Israel's advancements in satellite technology and India's successful space missions create opportunities for joint research and commercial ventures. Cooperation in climate innovation, green hydrogen, and digital public infrastructure could further enhance global impact. By pooling expertise, both nations can contribute solutions to challenges that transcend national borders. The India-Israel friendship thus exemplifies how bilateral relationships can evolve into strategic partnerships with global implications. It integrates defense and development, technology and tradition, realism and idealism.

Ultimately, the global significance of India-Israel ties rests not merely in arms deals or trade figures but in their shared pursuit of innovation, security, and sustainable progress. As the twenty-first century unfolds, their cooperation is likely to shape debates on technology governance, counter-terrorism, water management, and regional connectivity. In bridging South Asia and West Asia, the friendship contributes to a more interconnected and multipolar world order—one in which collaborative strength, rather than ideological rigidity, defines the path forward.

Symbolically, the timing of the JWG meetings often coincides with high level diplomatic exchanges. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's historic visit to Israel in 2017 marked a turning point, elevating the relationship from transactional defense cooperation to a broader strategic partnership. Since then, counter terrorism has remained a central pillar of bilateral ties, alongside trade, agriculture, and innovation. Critics sometimes argue that such partnerships risk being perceived as militaristic. However, India and Israel have consistently framed their cooperation within the language of security and peace. Their joint venture is not about aggression but about safeguarding citizens from indiscriminate violence. By investing in technology, intelligence, and judicial cooperation, they aim to create a framework that can serve as a model for other nations confronting similar threats.

Looking ahead, the India Israel partnership is likely to deepen further. With terrorism becoming increasingly sophisticated—leveraging digital platforms, encrypted communications, and autonomous technologies—the need for collaboration is more urgent than ever. Both nations are aware that complacency is dangerous. Their joint venture against terrorism is not a static agreement but a dynamic process, constantly adapting to new realities. In conclusion, the India Israel counter terrorism partnership exemplifies how nations with different histories and geographies can unite against a common threat. It blends India's operational experience with Israel's technological prowess, creating a formidable alliance that addresses both immediate dangers and future challenges. More importantly, it sends a powerful message to the world: terrorism cannot be defeated in isolation. Only through cooperation, innovation, and unwavering commitment can nations hope to secure peace for their citizens.

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Ideas In Classroom

upon the Universities to aspire to move beyond their traditional role as custodians of knowledge- evolving into vibrant centers of innovation, human development, and social transformation.

“My Mantra is that Industry and Intellect should grow together. Our Universities should collaborate with Industry, innovators, research and development organisations to build Viksit Bharat and to ensure that the higher education campuses and companies co-create the Future,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that the technology evolves at breakneck speed. He said that the digital revolution, artificial intelligence, global realignments, and demands for new skills are redefining higher education.

“Possibilities for collaboration and innovation stretch endlessly. Careers being prepared for today may morph tomorrow. Industries are reshaping. The real question isn't whether change will come, but whether we can sync with it. I believe those youth will surge ahead who possess critical thinking, core knowledge, and a resolve to lifelong learning.

Artificial Intelligence now permeates every field-healthcare, agriculture, finance, urban planning, governance. So, the question arises: Will technology serve human welfare or just profit? I see universities' campuses crafting that answer, where knowledge fuses with life's values,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor outlined three key priorities for the faculty members- “First, adaptability as every curriculum's core skill. Second, seamless integration of AI and emerging tech with human intelligence. Third, global and interdisciplinary collaboration. Modern challenges interconnect so universities must shatter subject silos and mandate cross-disciplinary teamwork.”

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that our goal is to become a fully developed nation by 2047.

“Viksit Bharat isn't a dream, but a resolve fuelled by hard work. It demands diligence, innovation, moral strength, and ceaseless invention-and this mission falls to our young generation,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also congratulated all the medal winners and lauded the girl students for their dominant performance.

He said that out of 239 gold medals, a staggering 186 are won by our daughters and of the 164 PhDs awarded, 108 bear our daughters' names.

“No statement could more powerfully define the New India. This tells our people: Give daughters opportunity, encouragement, and equal ground, and they don't just join—they lead, excel, and set new standards. To today's medalists and graduates: You are not just forging your futures—you are rewriting possibilities for every young woman next at Kashmir University,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The dignitaries also released the Kashmir University's Profile on the occasion.

Shri Omar Abdullah, Chief Minister; Ms Sakina Itoo, Minister for Higher Education; Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Vice-Chancellors of various Universities; HoDs of different educational institutions, senior officials of Civil and Police administration, faculty members, students and their parents attended the convocation ceremony.

“Yah Hum Sabka Kashmir

and landmark infrastructure projects such as the Chenab Rail Bridge, the Vice-President said these initiatives create new opportunities and strengthen social harmony. He expressed hope that under the leadership of the Lieutenant Governor and the Chief Minister, Srinagar would emerge as the cleanest city in the country under the Swachhta Survekshan.

Recalling his tenure as Governor of Jharkhand, the Vice-President shared that a delegation from Jammu & Kashmir had visited the state under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative and was warmly received. He underlined that in a democracy, respecting the sentiments of others is as important as respecting one's own sentiments, and such exchanges deepen national integration.

In his concluding remarks, the Vice-President urged the youth to stay away from drugs and use social media responsibly. He reminded them that life will test their patience, courage and character beyond the classroom. Ending his address on a note of unity and belonging, he said, “Yah na mera Kashmir hai, na tumhara Kashmir hai — yah hum sabka Kashmir hai.”

The ceremony was attended by the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir and Chancellor of the University of Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha; the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir and Pro-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir, Shri Omar Abdullah; the Minister for Higher Education, J&K, Ms. Sakeena Masood Itoo; the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir, Prof. Nilofer Khan; senior faculty members, distinguished guests, parents and graduating students.

VP Enjoys Shikara

convocation on Thursday evening.

“I experienced the timeless charm, pristine waters, and breathtaking natural beauty of Srinagar during a morning cruise on Dal Lake today,” the vice president posted on his personal X handle.

The vice president said he was deeply impressed by the transformative changes taking place in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in infrastructure development and improved connectivity.

“I appreciate the efforts of the administration in promoting eco-tourism, preserving natural heritage, and creating new livelihood opportunities for local communities,” he said.

The vice president said these initiatives have not only given a boost to tourism but have also ushered in a “new era” of peace, progress, and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir.

J&K Emerging As

of the University of Kashmir, where Vice President of India C. P. Radhakrishnan was the Chief Guest. Lieutenant Governor and Chancellor Manoj Sinha, Minister for Education Sakina Itoo, Advisor to the CM Nasir Aslam Wani, Vice Chancellor Nilofer Khan, members of the University Council, faculty and graduating students were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister described the moment as pivotal, recalling that he had recently presented the 2026-27 Budget in the Legislative Assembly, terming it a “Fiscal Compass.” He said the budget was not merely a statement of accounts but a declaration of intent to transform J&K into a modern, progressive and economically vibrant region.

“For too long, our economy was viewed through a narrow lens. We were ‘just’ tourism, or ‘just’ agriculture. But the J&K of 2026 is becoming a hub for innovation and participatory governance,” he said.

Referring to the challenges faced in recent years, including the trauma of 2025 and the economic setbacks that followed, he said resilience had defined the people of J&K. “My government is focused on three pillars: Meritocracy, Sustainability, and Digital Sovereignty,” he asserted.

Urging students to honour the sacrifices behind their success, he asked them to look towards their parents seated in the gallery and said the degree they were receiving belonged

as much to them. Quoting Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), he reminded them, “Your Heaven lies under the feet of your mother,” and said that as they walked across the stage, they were walking with the dreams and sacrifices of their elders. He also expressed gratitude to the faculty for mentoring students with discernment in an age of information overload.

Calling the convocation a day of “succession,” the Chief Minister told the graduating students that they were succeeding the generations who kept the flame of knowledge alive through difficult times and were now the torch-bearers of the future. Quoting Kashmiri mystic poetess Lalleshwari (Lall Ded), he urged students to embark on the journey of self-realisation even as their formal education concluded.

He asked students to acknowledge the sacrifices of their parents and expressed gratitude to faculty members for their contribution in shaping lives of students.

Highlighting a key milestone, the Chief Minister said that nearly 60 percent of the degrees and medals at this year's convocation were earned by women. Terming it a powerful instrument against poverty and instability, he said J&K had moved from “Women's Welfare” to “Women-led Development.”

He said under the UMEED scheme, 7 lakh women had been organised into 80,000 Self-Help Groups, leading to the rise of “Lakhpatis Didis” as financial anchors in their communities. He added that interest-free soft loans were being provided for women-led startups in manufacturing and IT sectors. He encouraged women graduates to aspire for leadership roles in civil services, biotechnology and be part of global platforms.

“I want to see you in our civil services, leading our biotech labs, and representing us on the global stage. Your brilliance is the gold medal J&K wears today,” he said.

On tourism, the Chief Minister said while it remains J&K's lifeline, it must evolve. He stressed that reliance solely on destinations like Gulmarg and Pahalgam was not sufficient and highlighted the government's push for border tourism in villages such as Keran, Gurez and Teetwal. He said nine new destinations were being developed in coordination with the Union Government to ensure benefits reach the last mile.

Emphasising sustainability, he said investments were being made in sustainable infrastructure, including artificial snow technology in Gulmarg and promotion of eco-friendly accommodations, to protect the fragile environment. He called upon Environmental Science graduates to help create a “Green Standard” for Kashmiri hospitality.

Turning to agriculture, he described it as the cultural soul of the people but stressed the need for transformation through a High-Density Revolution. He said technology and quality saplings were being provided to enable fruit exports to international markets. He urged Science and IT graduates to develop solutions such as real-time pest detection apps and blockchain-based traceability systems to authenticate products like Pamprose saffron in global markets.

Articulating a “Saffron & Silicon” vision, he said J&K was being positioned as a data-friendly zone and an ideal destination for Green Data Centers, with a focus on creating job providers rather than job seekers.

Addressing concerns about employability, he said the administration was restructuring industrial policy to incentivise knowledge-based industries and establish R&D centres within J&K so that graduates would not need to migrate to cities like Pune or Hyderabad for opportunities. Common Facilitation Centres were being developed to help young innovators convert ideas into prototypes without heavy financial burdens.

The Chief Minister also underscored the importance of mental health, stating that society had endured immense pressure and trauma. He said the government was expanding district-level counselling through Mission Youth and urged Psychology and Social Work graduates to help de-stigmatised conversations around mental well-being.

Reiterating his government's commitment to a transparent and stable environment, he said recruitment reforms were aimed at replacing “Recommendation” with “Qualification,” ensuring merit remained the only currency.

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi's call to “Be the change that you wish to see in the world,” he urged graduates to solve problems, confront injustice and pursue their dreams with resilience.

“The road from Naseem Bagh leads to the world,” he said, encouraging students to excel globally while preserving the spirit of Kashmiriyat. Referring to the university's motto, “Let us move from darkness to light,” he told the graduates, “Today, you are that light,” expressing confidence that they would lead Jammu & Kashmir towards a bright and dignified future.

SED Keeps TET

SED had also said that JKBOSE shall develop and notify a detailed schedule for conduct of TET.

“The board shall coordinate with NIC, School Education Department, Higher Education Department, Home Department, and other concerned authorities for logistical, technical and security arrangements,” it reads.

It had also said that the board shall ensure alignment of syllabus and examination standards with the guidelines of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) with suitable contextual modifications.

In the previous order, SED while referring to the returned and the findings with advice that was sought from the Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, UT of J&K said that if any of such teachers fail to qualify the TET within the time that we have allowed, they shall have to quit service. They may be compulsorily retired; and paid whatever terminal benefits they are entitled to—(KNO)

Above-Normal Feb

coupled with a significant precipitation deficit this month, has begun to reflect on the ground. Horticulture experts said several fruit trees and ornamental plants in the Valley are showing signs of early budding and flowering, weeks ahead of their usual schedule.

They said the reduced chill period has shortened dormancy in apple and other temperate fruit crops, potentially disturbing their natural growth cycle. Any sudden cold spell at this stage, they cautioned, could affect flowering, fruit setting and overall yield.

Farmers have also reported accelerated vegetative growth in some seasonal crops, raising concerns about long-term crop health if dry and warm conditions persist—(KNO)

Terror Graph Declining

due to security considerations.

Lt Gen Katiyar alleged that infiltration attempts continue to receive backing from across the border. “We believe the Pakistan Army is supporting infiltration. The terrorists are coming after training, and there is a possibility that the Pakistan Army may be helping in their training,” he said.

He further accused Pakistan's military leadership of perpetuating confrontation to retain domestic relevance. “Their relevance comes through a state of confrontation with India. Despite repeated peace efforts from our side, they keep doing something to keep this confrontation alive,” he said.

Dismissing nuclear threats as a pressure tactic, Lt Gen Katiyar asserted that the Indian Army would not be deterred in safeguarding national security.

“We see it as a bogey meant to prevent us from taking strong action. We will not get deterred by nuclear threats,” he said.

Referring to Operation Sindoor, he said Pakistan had issued nuclear warnings while simultaneously seeking a ceasefire. “During Operation Sindoor, they desperately sought a ceasefire while issuing nuclear threats. We ignored those threats. This time, we are better prepared, with a clear future plan,” he stated.

On the possibility of another retaliatory action, he said Pakistan had been taught a “very strong lesson” and any renewed provocation would invite a stronger response. “Our preparations are ongoing. If they do not understand this lesson and create conflict conditions again due to their internal reasons, we will respond in an even better and stronger manner,” he said.

Asked about the scale of a potential future response, the Army Commander said, “The response will be stronger than what we have done earlier. How far we go and at what level depends on the situation at that time, but we are very clear that it will be harsher than last time.”

Clarifying claims about foreign mediation during Operation Sindoor, Lt Gen Katiyar outlined the sequence of events. “After the attack on May 7, 2025, our DGMO conveyed that we had completed our action and wanted to talk. They refused. Fighting continued for 88 hours. After extensive damage to their military bases, their DGMO approached ours, and it was during that conversation that the ceasefire draft was prepared. After deliberations, our government accepted the request,” he said.

Rejecting suggestions that civilian areas were targeted, he said the operation was precise and objective-driven. “We did not target any civilian areas. We initially targeted only terrorist bases. When Pakistan attacked our military stations, we responded by attacking their military stations and air bases.”

Reiterating the Army's preparedness, Lt Gen Katiyar said operational readiness must serve as a deterrent. “Our preparation must be such that the enemy thinks ten times before undertaking any untoward act,” he said.

Lt General Katiyar said the Indian Army is set to induct dedicated drone platoons across infantry, artillery and armoured regiments while expanding specialised ‘Bhairav’ units to strengthen deep-strike and special operations capabilities.

He said the Army has restructured its formations in recognition of the growing importance of drones and autonomous systems in modern warfare.

Lt General Katiyar said dedicated ‘Ashni’ drone platoons—small sub-units within infantry battalions—have already been created, and similar specialised platoons will now be raised in every regiment, including artillery and armoured units.

The Army Commander noted that these platoons have developed expertise in drone operations, adding that every regiment will have a component specialising in drone warfare. Drone integration, he said, has been carried out down to the smallest sub-units, reflecting a shift toward networked and technology-driven combat.

Highlighting operational readiness, Lt Gen Katiyar said future conflicts are likely to demand swift, precise action both to protect troops and to conduct accurate strikes against hostile targets. The expansion of drone capabilities is aimed at enhancing surveillance, reconnaissance and precision engagement capacity across formations.

He added that most of the drones recently showcased during a military demonstration were manufactured in Western Command workshops. The Army has begun fabricating drones in-house at scale, tailoring them to specific operational requirements. According to him, in-house production allows the Army to align technology development with field realities and evolving battlefield needs.

Alongside drone expansion, the Army is strengthening its specialised ‘Bhairav’ battalions, which are being structured as agile, light commando forces capable of operating independently in hostile territory.

Lt Gen Katiyar said these battalions are intended to enhance strike and special operations capability, particularly in scenarios requiring deep penetration and rapid execution. Future battlefields, he indicated, would rely increasingly on small, mobile teams capable of precision tasks beyond conventional frontlines.

The ‘Bhairav’ units are expected to be employed for deep operations inside adversary territory as part of an integrated operational framework.

People of Pathankot wakeup with unusual sounds of blasts and hovering of fighter aircrafts in the skies on Thursday morning as Western Command turned its annual investiture ceremony into a full-scale battlefield simulation at Dhyani Chand Stadium, Mamun Military Station, sending a strong message on combat readiness and future warfighting capabilities.

The ceremony was presided over by Western Command, Army Commander Manoj Kumar Katiyar, it combined military honours with an elaborate Operational and Combat Capability Demonstration, transforming the stadium into a live war zone for over an hour. The event was attended by senior military officials, civil administration representatives, police and paramilitary officers, veterans, families and local civilians.

Breaking away from the traditional hall-based format, Lt Gen Katiyar said the decision to hold the ceremony in a field environment reflected the Army's combat-focused mindset.

“Instead of a ceremonial display, we showcased modern equipment and operational capabilities. This is our way of thanking the units that performed exceptionally well during Operation Sindoor,” he said. Units were honoured for exemplary service during Operation Sindoor and Operation Rahat, reinforcing what the Army Commander described as a culture of “courage, professionalism and selfless service.”

The highlight of the demonstration was the debut performance of the elite Bhairav Battalion, a newly raised light commando force designed to bridge the gap between conventional infantry and Para Special Forces. The battalion executed coordinated heliborne assaults, anti-terror strikes and simulated deep-penetration missions. Robotic mules, sniffer dogs and small assault teams demolished a mock terror hideout amid controlled blasts and live-fire manoeuvres.

“These specialised battalions will enhance our strike and special operations capability. In coming times, small, agile teams capable of penetrating deep into hostile territory will be decisive,” Lt Gen Katiyar said.

A swarm of indigenous drones dominated the skyline, including long-range UAVs with ranges exceeding 100 km. Missile-armed unmanned systems, surveillance drones and loitering munitions showcased precision strike capabilities.

The Army Commander announced the raising of dedicated “Ashni” drone platoons across infantry, artillery and armoured regiments.

“We realised the use of drones is extremely important. Therefore, we have integrated drone usage across all units, right down to the smallest sub-units,” he said.

The demonstration also featured battlefield digitisation and network-centric warfare systems, integrated multi-domain operations combining land, air and electronic warfare, BrahMos and Akash missile batteries in simulated precision engagements, Ajeya tank formations and latest field artillery guns, Apache attack helicopters providing aerial fire support, Multi-sector drone swarms operated in sync with ground formations, reflecting Western Command's ability to conduct deep precision engagements and shape the tactical battlefield.

Referring to past conflicts including 1971 and Kargil, Lt Gen Katiyar said the western neighbour had failed to learn lessons. “Operation Sindoor was another lesson. While we are commit-

ted to peace, any future provocation will be met with far more decisive action,” he warned. He stressed that the danger has not receded. “Our preparation must be greater than before, and the response stronger than in the past.”—(KNO)

Mughal Road To Reopen

manpower and machinery at vulnerable locations, particularly in avalanche-prone zones. Continuous monitoring of these stretches will be carried out to mitigate risks such as landslides, shooting stones, and sudden snow slides.

The Senior Superintendents of Police of Poonch and Traffic Rural Jammu, along with officials in Shopian, have been instructed to deploy sufficient personnel at key checkpoints, including Behramgalla, Buziaz, and Poshana. These measures aim to regulate traffic flow, enforce timing restrictions, and prevent congestion on the narrow mountain road.

Residents from both sides of the Pir Panjal range have welcomed the move, calling it a “lifeline” that reconnects families, facilitates trade, and reduces travel time between the Kashmir Valley and the Jammu region. Many expressed hope that the road will remain operational for the whole year very soon.

The Mughal Road, officially designated as NH-701A, serves as an alternate route connecting Shopian in south Kashmir with Poonch and Rajouri districts in Jammu.

Apart from its strategic importance, the road also holds historical significance, tracing the route once used by Mughal emperors.

Commuters have been advised to plan their journeys carefully, stay updated with official traffic advisories, and avoid unnecessary travel during inclement weather conditions to ensure safety along the mountainous terrain—(KNO)

Earlier Stone-

from four days to nearly 15 days, with the addition of a Fit India carnival and related activities.

While reaffirming the Government's commitment to transforming the region into a premier global winter sports hub, the Union Minister said, “Next Khelo India Winter Games in Gulmarg will be a 15-day festival.”

He said, “The land of Kashmir has immense potential. Gulmarg will be the global hub for Winter Sports in the coming times.”

Mandaviya emphasized that sports have the power to unite society, foster sportsmanship, create harmony and drive development.

Reflecting on his interaction with athletes and coaches at Khelo India Centres in Jammu & Kashmir, he noted the remarkable sporting spirit emerging from the region.

In a bid to promote sports, culture and tourism and to make Gulmarg a “world-class tourism destination”, Mandaviya said the region's potential needed to be fully explored. “I have travelled to 55 countries and also travelled to Switzerland in Europe. Today when I was on the highest slopes of Pir Panjal and watched with awe the white beauty all around, it was simply breath-taking,” he said.

“I am all for a 15-day festival in Gulmarg. It will not only have all the components of winter sports competition like skiing and snow mountaineering, it will also include a FIT India carnival and cultural programmes to give it a festive atmosphere. To explore the amazing potential of the region, we need to do more to make a global tourism destination,” he added.

Mandaviya felicitated the Indian Army team for defending the Khelo India Winter Games championship title. Army won five medals, including nine golds, six silvers and eight bronze Runners-up Himachal Pradesh (14 medals including six golds, seven silvers and one bronze) and No. 3 Haryana were also handed their trophies by the Union minister.

He reiterated that the Khelo Bharat Niti has been transforming the face of Indian sports. “Khelo Bharat Niti will fulfil the aspirations of the youth of India. Times have changed and there can be no politics in sports. Our policies are athlete centric and not built in favour of national federations,” said Dr Mandaviya.

Praising the Jammu and Kashmir administration for successfully conducting the Gulmarg leg of KIWG 2026, Dr Mandaviya congratulated all stakeholders, especially the security forces, for enabling a seamless Games.

The first phase of KIWG 2026 were held in Ladakh from January 20-26. More than 900 athletes from 25 states and Union Territories took part in six different sports between Gulmarg and Leh.

The Union minister also said a National Centre of Excellence for winter sports will also be established in Jammu & Kashmir—(KNO)

Sadaqat-ul-Fitr

instead of the fixed amount.

He said the charity should be distributed among the poor, destitute, needy relatives, orphans and travellers within local communities, and must not be given to mosques, khanqahs or political and religious organisations—(KNO)

Jaishankar Urges UN

especially when innocent lives are targeted.

“Confronting terrorism requires collective resolve, and we look at this Council and to the United Nations at large to advocate zero-tolerance for terrorist acts,” Jaishankar said.

Asserting that India's vision is rooted in the understanding that the insecurity of any region, or the marginalisation of any group, eventually undermines the rights and well-being of all, the minister said, “India approaches this Council with the conviction that human rights are best advanced through dialogue, capacity-building and genuine partnerships, and not by politicisation, selectivity or double standards.”

Jaishankar said India's humanitarian outreach has been guided by empathy rather than just geography. Whether through disaster relief, medical supplies, vaccines, food grains or development partnerships, India has been a dependable partner of first resort for many, he added.

At the outset, Jaishankar drew attention to how India began the current High Level Segment as an elected member of the Human Rights Council, and said, New Delhi's mandate reflects the trust and expectations of the international community, especially of partners in the Global South.

“For us, human rights are not abstract ideals, but an integral part of our civilisational ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam that sees the world as one family,” he added.

The minister underscored how in recent years, the devastating impact of pandemic, climate change, geopolitical tensions and economic stress have exacerbated existing inequities, and how, for many communities, these translate into lost years of schooling, pressures on food and fuel security, and mounting debt burdens. “All these erode the promise of human rights and backsliding on the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals,” Jaishankar added.

The minister also spoke about how India has been investing in developing human capacities at an unprecedented scale and how the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) has enabled hundreds of millions to access welfare benefits, financial services and public schemes, with transparency and minimal leakage.

“Our DPI experience has also been shared as a global public good with our partners, reaffirming that technology can and must be a force multiplier for human rights, not a new fault line,” he added.

India, Israel cement trade, investment & tech ties

SIANS

TEL AVIV: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday emphasised the importance of unlocking the full potential of bilateral trade and investment between India and Israel, according to the joint statement issued after the successful conclusion of the summit.

The Prime Ministers affirmed their commitment to integrating India's and Israel's advancements in AI, cybersecurity, semiconductors, quantum computing, biotechnology, agriculture and water management, defence platforms, and space exploration.

This partnership strengthens India's vision of an 'Atmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat 2047', aims to spark the next wave of technological transformation and shared progress of both countries, the joint statement said.

The leaders acknowledged that Indian and Israeli capabilities complement each other perfectly - Israel is a global powerhouse of technology and innovation, India serves as a hub of talent, manufacturing excellence and entrepreneurial energy.

They welcomed the signing of the India-Israel Bilateral Investment Agreement by the two Finance Ministers in New Delhi in September 2025, which is expected to enhance investor confidence, promote greater two-way investments, and ensure transparency, predictability, and protection through a clear framework of treatment of investment and an independent dispute resolution mechanism.

Both leaders asserted their commitment to the realisation of the FTA Agreement between the two countries and tasked the negotiating teams to expedite the negotiations for an early signing of an FTA.

The two leaders welcomed the strategic partnership in the financial-cyber domain. This collaboration will focus on enhancing the resilience of the financial ecosystem through the exchange of financial-cyber intelligence, joint development of methodologies, and the performance of multi-lateral financial-cyber simulations operationalised through Financial Computer Security Incident Response Teams of both countries.

Prime Minister Netanyahu appreciated India's fintech revolution, exemplified by the Uni-



finied Payments Interface (UPI), which is a world-class model for affordable, real-time cross-border transactions. Both sides agreed to explore linking UPI with Israel's fast payment system to enhance interoperability and strengthen economic ties.

The leaders noted that direct air connectivity is a basic building block that is essential for scaling the bilateral relationship to new heights.

They expressed their desire to expand direct air connectivity between Tel Aviv and major Indian cities and encouraged both Indian and Israeli airlines to take up the opportunity to

start direct flight operations between the two countries.

The leaders welcomed the launch of the India-Israel Financial Dialogue to boost closer financial cooperation.

Both leaders encouraged more Indian participation in the infrastructure sector of Israel, particularly in light of major upcoming projects in Israel in the sectors of metro, rail, road, airports, desalination plants, and wastewater treatment plants.

The Prime Ministers reviewed the functioning of the India-Israel Industrial R&D and Innovation Fund

(I4F), jointly implemented by the Department of Science and Technology of India and the Israel Innovation Authority.

They agreed to further strengthen the operational implementation of the I4F mechanism, including enhanced outreach to industry and facilitation of high-quality joint R&D partnerships, in order to fully realise the Fund's potential and expand impactful cooperation between Indian and Israeli enterprises.

Acknowledging the success of the India-Israel Joint Research Calls (IIJRC), implemented by the Department of

Science and Technology (DST), India, and the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology (MOST), Israel, the Prime Ministers agreed to increase the contribution of both sides from the current USD 1 million to USD 1.5 million each.

The Prime Ministers recognised the importance of creating institutional support to advance joint innovation activities between the two countries.

In this context, they agreed to explore the development of Tech Gateway mechanisms to facilitate collaborative R&D initiatives, technology validation processes, pilot projects and joint development activities between Indian and Israeli innovation ecosystems.

The Prime Ministers recognised the strategic importance of Artificial Intelligence as a key driver of innovation and agreed to deepen cooperation in AI talent and expertise.

They welcomed efforts to develop enabling frameworks that strengthen linkages between AI professionals, research institutions and innovative enterprises, including by facilitating professional collaboration and participation in leading innovation activities in both countries.

Recognising the advances

made by Israel and India in artificial intelligence, both leaders welcomed the signing of the MoU on Cooperation in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and agreed to deepen collaboration in this frontier technology for the welfare of their peoples.

The Prime Ministers welcomed the ongoing collaboration between the Israel Space Agency (ISA) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

They emphasised the importance of fostering greater cooperation between the two nations' space industries, encouraging joint ventures, innovation partnerships, and knowledge exchange to drive progress in the global space sector.

Recognising the critical role of water and agriculture in sustainable development, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Netanyahu affirmed the importance of efforts to strengthen the partnership in water and agriculture.

The partnership focuses on key areas of water conservation, wastewater treatment and its reuse for agriculture, desalination, water utility reforms, and the cleaning of the Ganges and other rivers using advanced water technologies, the joint statement added.

PM Modi concludes landmark Israel visit, Netanyahu sees him off in another heartwarming gesture

SIANS

TEL AVIV: In yet another special gesture, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara Netanyahu bid farewell to PM Narendra Modi at the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv as the visiting leader concluded his two-day State Visit to the country on Thursday.

PM Modi and Netanyahu shared a warm hug and were engaged in a conversation before the former boarded the plane.

Netanyahu and the First Lady had also welcomed PM Modi on the tarmac on Wednesday as the Indian Prime Minister landed in the country on his second landmark visit.

Earlier in the day, PM Modi and Netanyahu held talks and agreed to elevate ties to Special Strategic Partnership. The two leaders also discussed giving greater momentum to cooperation between India and Israel.

"Today's discussions with PM Netanyahu were very fruitful. We've taken a historic decision to elevate our time-tested partnership to a Special Strategic Partnership. This decision reflects the aspirations of the people of both countries," PM Modi posted on X.

"We discussed giving



new direction and greater momentum to our cooperation. This includes economic and trade linkages. We have decided to establish a Critical and Emerging Technologies Partnership. This will accelerate cooperation in many futuristic areas," he added.

PM Modi termed agriculture as a key area where the two nations are working closely.

In a post on X, PM Modi wrote, "Agriculture is a key area where India and Israel are working closely. In today's talks, it was decided to increase the number of Centres of Excellence to 100. This will greatly benefit farmers."

PM Modi also met the star cast of the Jewish spy thriller series Fauda. While sharing the selfie with the star cast of the series on X, PM Modi wrote, "Thankfully, this interaction required

only a selfie, no undercover work! Fauda."

PM Modi began the second day's engagements by calling on Israeli President Isaac Herzog as both leaders discussed ways to further enhance cooperation in education, start-ups, innovation, tech and connectivity.

PM Modi and Herzog also planted a tree in the Presidential Gardens under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative.

"Ties of warmth and goodwill! PM Narendra Modi called on the President Isaac Herzog of Israel, today. PM thanked President Herzog for his steadfast support in strengthening the special India-Israel Partnership. Both leaders explored avenues to further enhance cooperation in education, start-ups, innovation, tech and connectivity," Ministry of

External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated on X.

"PM Narendra Modi planted a tree in the Presidential Gardens under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative. PM also extended an invitation to President Herzog to visit India in the near future," he added.

Prior to meeting Israeli President, PM Modi visited the Yad Vashem World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Jerusalem, laying a wreath at the memorial in memory of the Holocaust victims.

Prime Minister Modi was accompanied by Israeli PM Netanyahu and Yad Vashem Chairman Dani Dayan as he visited the Holocaust Memorial and Museum which perpetuates and documents the Holocaust.

The visit included a tour of the Book of Names - a monumental installation containing the names of 4.8 million Jewish victims of the Holocaust - and a memorial ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance. Prime Minister Modi also signed the Yad Vashem guest book.

PM Modi on Wednesday addressed a Special Plenary of the Knesset in Jerusalem - the first such address by an Indian Prime Minister at the Israeli parliament.

Indian Railways to recruit over 5,000 ex-servicemen as Pointsmen on contract basis

SIANS

NEW DELHI: Indian Railways will recruit more than 5,000 ex-servicemen as Pointsmen on a contract basis to quickly fill vacancies, as part of a new cooperation framework with the Indian Army aimed at supporting retired soldiers and Agniveers, Ministry of Railways said on Thursday.

The move comes under a newly introduced 'Framework of Cooperation' between the Railways and the Army to expand post-retirement job opportunities for Agniveers and serving Army personnel transitioning to civilian life.

The initiative is designed to ensure a smoother shift from military service to civilian careers while creating a dedicated support system for retiring personnel.



Under the plan, the Ministry of Railways has decided to hire ex-servicemen as Pointsmen across various zones on a contractual basis until regular recruitment processes are completed.

More than 5,000 Level-1 posts are currently being processed at the Zonal and Divisional levels. So far, nine Railway Divisions have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with

concerned Army organisations to facilitate the hiring process.

Army recruiting units have also been asked to actively coordinate with Railway Divisions to speed up appointments.

The broader framework highlights a shared commitment to providing meaningful second-career opportunities to veterans while contributing to national development goals.

Welfare and resettlement of retired armed forces personnel already form an important part of Railway policy, the ministry said.

To support this, Indian Railways has provisioned 10 per cent horizontal reservation in Level-2 and above posts and 20 per cent in Level-1 posts for ex-servicemen.

In addition, 5 per cent reservation in Level-2 and above posts and 10 per cent in Level-1 posts have been earmarked for ex-Agniveers.

In 2024 and 2025, a total of 14,788 posts were reserved for ex-servicemen in Railway vacancy notifications.

This included 6,485 posts in Level-1 and 8,303 posts in Level-2 and above categories, as per the ministry.

ED presents sanction order to prosecute P. Chidambaram in INX Media case in special court

SIANS

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has placed the prosecution sanction order received from the competent authority against senior Congress leader and former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram in connection with the alleged INX Media money laundering case before the Special Rose Avenue Court in New Delhi, according to an official statement issued by the central anti-money laundering agency on Thursday.

The prosecution sanction order, which was obtained on February 10, 2026, "has been placed before the Special Rouse Avenue Court to expedite the trial in the case," the ED statement said.

The ED had initiated



an investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, based on an FIR dated May 15, 2017, registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against M/s INX Media Private Limited, M/s INX News Private Limited, Karti Chidambaram (P. Chidambaram's son), and others for offences punishable under Section 120-B read with Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, along with Sections

8, 13(2), and 13(1)(d) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

According to the financial investigative agency, probe revealed that Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) approval was granted to the INX Media Private Limited during the tenure of P. Chidambaram as the Union Finance Minister.

"In consideration for granting and subsequently regularising FIPB approval, illegal gratification was demanded and received through entities beneficially owned or controlled by Karti Chidambaram," the statement said.

The ED alleged that the illicit funds were routed through shell entities, including M/s Advantage Strategic Consulting Private Limited (ASCPL) and associated companies under the direct or indirect

control of Karti Chidambaram.

Investigation also revealed that the funds were layered through complex financial transactions across multiple jurisdictions without any genuine business activity and subsequently integrated through investments in companies such as M/s Vasan Health Care Private Limited and M/s AGS Health Care Private Limited, before being multiplied through share sales and overseas investments.

According to the ED, Karti Chidambaram and his close associates allegedly acted on behalf of P. Chidambaram, interacted with representatives of INX Media regarding FIPB approvals, and collected proceeds of crime arising from the alleged arrangement.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir UT

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER FLOOD SPILL CHANNEL DIVISION NARBAL

PIN No.193401

Fax/Phone: 01951-260223 Email: javidahmakur.80821@jk.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

e- NIT No. 24 of 2025-26 Dated: 25 /02/2026

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders (in Single Cover System) on percentile basis are invited from approved and eligible contractors for the following works to be received by the Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal.

| S.No | Name of Work | Est. Cost (₹. In Lacs) | Earnest Money | Cost of T/Doc. (₹.) | Time of completion | Class of Contractor | M.H Account |
|------|---|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 01 | Construction of retaining wall on right side of Doodhganga Nallah at village Wathora RD 26800m | ₹.4.25 Lacs | 8500/- | 400/- | 12days | DEE | 2711 (M&R) |
| 02 | Construction of toe crate tier over existing crate protection wall on both sides of Gogaldara Nallah at Budran RD 14780m. | ₹.3.40 Lacs | 6800/- | 300/- | 10days | DEE | 2711 (M&R) |

Position of AAA =Accorded, Position of TS = Sanctioned, Position of funds: (100% Budgetary provision 2025-26)

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

| | | |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | Date of Issue of Tender Notice | 25-02-2026 |
| 2. | Period of downloading of bidding documents | 25-02-2026 from 1800 Hrs |
| 3. | Bid submission Start Date | 25-02-2026 from 1800 Hrs |
| 4. | Bid Submission End Date | 05-03-2026 upto 1400 Hrs |
| 5. | Date & time of opening of Bids | 06-03-2026 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal. |
| 6. | Submission of Performance Security (PS) | The bidder has to provide 5% of contract Cost as Performance Security & Addl. performance security as per circular issued by the J&K Finance Department vide No. FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 dt:08/08/2025 within 7 days after opening of Financial Bid. |

NOTE:-

- The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploading softcopy any short fall if any found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected
- As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Sectt. Finance department vide No.OM.No.A/24(2017)-651 dttd. 07-06-2018 which reads as under :-
 - Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of E-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared 1st Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.
 - The Cost of tenders should be collected by uploading a copy of necessary Treasury Challan/Receipt.
- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/Receipt (Debited to M.H.0701 -Rev. Misc) and Earnest Money in the shape of CDR/FDR in favour of Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal failing which the tender will be rejected out rightly. The issuing date of CDR/FDR uploaded must be between issuing date to Bid Submission end date of NIT. CDR/FDR (Earnest money/Bid security) and relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of contract.
- All other terms and conditions same as laid down in the PWD Form-25 Double shall also remain in force.

Sd/-
Er. Javid Ahmad Kurpal
Executive Engineer
Flood Spill Channel Division
Narbal.

FSCDN/CS/7523-44
Dated: 25/02/2026
DIPK-11368-25
DT: 26/02/2026

Ranji Trophy final: Mayank's defiant 130* takes Karnataka to 220/5 at stumps against J&K on Day 3

IAN S

HUBLI (KARNATAKA): Opening batter Mayank Agarwal produced a magnificent rearguard century to anchor Karnataka's resistance, but Jammu and Kashmir retained firm control on the proceedings at stumps on Day 3 of the Ranji Trophy final at the Hubli Cricket Ground, the home side closing at 220/5 in response to the visitors' imposing first-innings total of 584.

Resuming the day with Jammu and Kashmir's lower-order at the crease, Karnataka struck early through Prasadh Krishna, who completed a superb five-wicket haul as the visitors added 57 runs to their overnight tally. Valuable contributions from Sahil Lotra (72), Abid Mushtaq (28), and Yudhvir Singh Charak (30) helped push Jammu and Kashmir to a commanding 584, establishing a dominant platform in the summit clash.

Facing a daunting deficit, Karnataka began cautiously but suffered an early setback when Auqib Nabi Dar removed KL Rahul before lunch, leaving the hosts at 35/1. Nabi's disciplined seam bowling and probing lines set the tone for Jammu and Kashmir's relentless pressure.

The visitors tightened their grip further in a devastating post-lunch spell. Sunil Kumar struck soon after the interval, dismissing Devdutt Padikal, before Nabi produced a sensational burst that turned the game decisively. The seamer removed Karun Nair and Smaran Ravichandran off successive deliveries, reducing Karnataka to a precarious 57/4 and threatening to



trigger a collapse.

Amid the crisis, Mayank stood tall with an innings of immense character and composure. Initially watchful against the moving ball, he gradually asserted himself, rotating the strike efficiently and punishing loose deliveries. His calm presence at the crease helped Karnataka regain some stability as he stitched together a crucial 105-run partnership with Shreyas Gopal.

Mayank brought up a resilient century in the final session, raising his bat to a warm reception from the home crowd, reaching the milestone with a single off Sahil Lotra. The landmark knock underlined his resolve on a surface on which bowlers bending their backs were achieving a lot.

Jammu and Kashmir, however, struck back at a crucial juncture when Yudhvir Singh Charak trapped

Gopal lbw for 27 with a sharp nip-backer, breaking the threatening stand and restoring momentum to the visitors.

Undeterred, Mayank continued to anchor the innings and found valuable support in Kruthik Krishna. The duo showed determination and discipline against a probing attack, ensuring Karnataka avoided further damage in the closing stages. Mayank survived a tense moment late in the day when wicketkeeper Kanhaiya Wadhawan dropped a chance off Abid Mushtaq with the Karnataka opener on 124.

Mayank remained unbeaten on a superb 130 off 207 deliveries at stumps, while Kruthik Krishna provided steady support with an unbeaten 27. Their unbroken stand carried Karnataka to 220/5, though the hosts still trail by 364 runs and face the immedi-

ate challenge of avoiding the follow-on.

Auqib was the standout bowler for J&K, finishing with three key wickets, while Sunil Kumar and Yudhvir chipped in with one apiece.

Despite Mayank's heroic effort, Jammu and Kashmir remain firmly in command of the contest after three days. Karnataka's hopes now hinge heavily on the opener, whose resilience will be crucial as they attempt to erase the deficit and keep their ambitions alive heading into Day 4.

Brief scores:
Jammu & Kashmir 584 all out (Shubham Pundir 121, Yawer Hassan 88, Sahil Lotra 72, Kanhaiya Wadhawan 70, Paras Dogra 70; Prasadh Krishna 5-98) lead Karnataka 220/5 in 69 overs (Mayank Agarwal 130 not out, Kruthik Krishna 27 not out; Auqib Nabi Dar 3-32) by 364 runs.

Ranji Trophy: DK hails J&K pacer Auqib Nabi as 'an absolute champion'

IAN S

HUBLI: Former Indian wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik has heaped praise on Jammu and Kashmir's pacer Auqib Nabi Dar after his excellent performance in the ongoing Ranji Trophy 2025-26 Final, where the right-arm pacer has dismantled Karnataka's top order by taking three wickets so far at the Hubli Cricket Ground on Thursday.

Karthik loved the determination of Auqib, who played all the matches in the ongoing tournament, weathered different conditions and has taken 58 wickets so far. He is one wicket away from becoming

the highest wicket-taker in the current season.

"Watching this Ranji Trophy campaign and following it closely, one thing I can say for certain, for all the young boys and girls out there playing this sport and wanting to represent the country, do it the AAQIB NABI way. 'I can't think of any pacer/player in a long time doing what he's done,' he wrote on X.

Karthik also feels that Auqib's focus and hard work in the domestic league can take him to the national team, adding that Auqib is a champion and shared his best regards for the future. "Domination from start to end and almost single-handedly



winning the domestic tournament that matters the most to get into the national side," he wrote. "Fitness across the

whole campaign, bowling those long spells and across different soils, weather conditions and whether there's been any help for a pacer or not, he's been there for his team with the belief every time he's had the ball to STRIKE for his team.

"Hats off to you AAQIB, you're an absolute champion and hope you get a lot of success that comes your way and may you be the lesson on how it's done to break the doors through sheer will power, skill and resilience," he concluded.

Meanwhile, J&K have scored 584 runs in their historic Ranji Trophy Final against Karnataka after winning the toss.

T20 WC: Ravindra picks 4-27 as NZ win by 61 runs, knock SL out of tournament

IAN S

COLOMBO: Batting all-rounder Rachin Ravindra weaved a superb web with his crafty left-arm spin bowling to pick 4-27 as New Zealand crushed Sri Lanka by 61 runs to move closer in entering semi-finals of the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup. The result also meant co-hosts Sri Lanka were eliminated from the tournament in front of their home crowd at the R Premadasa Stadium on Wednesday.

Sri Lanka appeared favourites to win the Super Eights clash when they reduced New Zealand to 84/6, but Mitchell Santner and Cole McConchie staged a remarkable turnaround with a record 84-run stand for the seventh wicket. Their late assault lifted New Zealand to 168/7, with 70 runs coming in the final four overs.

Sri Lanka's chase faltered immediately as Matt Henry dismissed Pathum Nissanka on the first ball. Ravindra then took charge with his slower balls and flight to pick his career-



best figures in T20Is, as New Zealand's spinners bowled 17 of the 20 overs to exploit the dry conditions.

Sri Lanka never recovered from the early blows, and saw the asking rate spiralling beyond reach to end up at 107/8, as their campaign ended in front of a disappointed home crowd.

The victory has given New Zealand a significant net run-rate boost, strengthening their position in the race for the semi-finals. Pakistan now face a daunting task to qualify for the next stage,

even if they beat Sri Lanka and New Zealand lose to England.

Matt Henry struck with the very first ball of the chase by knocking over Pathum Nissanka with a seaming delivery that breached his defence and dismissed him for a golden duck. Charith Asalanka briefly resisted before Henry returned to remove him with a miscued hoick to midwicket.

With Pavan Rathnayake and Kusal Mendis struggling against tight lines from Santner and Lockie

Ferguson, Sri Lanka crawled to 20/2 in powerplay, their second-lowest score in this phase in T20Is. The introduction of Rachin Ravindra deepened Sri Lanka's crisis, as he had Mendis and Rathnayake stumped in quick succession.

Captain Dasun Shanaka followed soon after, edging to backward point off Ravindra, who had Dushan Hemantha perishing tamely. Kamindu Mendis tried to counterattack with inventive strokes in his 23-ball 21, including reverse sweeps and boundaries off McConchie and Santner.

He added urgency alongside Dunith Wellalage, but Santner dismissed him for 31, by having him caught at cow corner. At 77/7, the chase was all but over. Wellalage briefly entertained with a six and a flurry of strokes in a 23-ball 29, but Glenn Phillips dismissed him in the final over, as New Zealand completed a resounding victory which strengthens their push to enter the semi-finals.

Truck driver's daughter Renu Danu saw snow for the first time at 24, by 26 she owned KIWG 2026

IAN S

GULMARG: The first time Renu Danu saw snow, she didn't touch it. She studied it as she stood on the slopes of Gulmarg, the silence broken only by the crunch of skis slicing across frozen earth.

The snow was not soft like in films. It did not care that she was 26, she was a constable in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and had grown up in Haldwani, Uttarakhand, where winters were cold but never white.

Two years later, Renu stood on the podium with three silver medals around her neck at the Khelo India Winter Games 2026. Her's is not just a story about winning. It is a story about arrival.

Back home, her father drives trucks for a living. Renu's mother keeps the house steady. One brother serves in the Air Force. They understand sacrifice. They understand discipline. But they did not understand skiing. "They know cricket, football, volleyball," Renu says with a smile. "They don't understand what Nordic skiing is. They don't understand what ski mountaineering is. They only see videos of me."

In Haldwani, there were no ski tracks, no winter sport academies, no dreams shaped like mountains. There were only dusty grounds, where she ran races and played kabaddi, unknowingly building the endurance that would one day carry her across frozen valleys.



Sports was always there but opportunity was not. For her studies came first, life came first, and sport had to wait. In 2021, Renu joined the CRPF as a Constable General Duty. It was supposed to be a job, stability, and security. It became something else.

In 2024, Renu was posted to Srinagar. Kashmir introduced her to a new geography. And then, Gulmarg introduced her to herself. She trained for just one month before competing at the Khelo India Winter Games 2024. She did not win. She did not even come close. But she finished. For most athletes, finishing is routine. For Renu, finishing was defiance.

"I was new," she says. "I didn't know the techniques but I completed the races."

In 2025, Renu returned stronger and finished fourth in a Nordic event. However, she won silver in Ski Mountaineering relay. The same year, she won gold at the National Winter Biathlon

Championship in Gulmarg, racing through exhaustion, balancing speed with precision shooting.

Each year, she moved forward, each year, the mountain gave her more. This year, it gave her three silvers in women's Nordic 15-km Sprint, and women's Ski Mountaineering Relay. Three medals, three affirmations. This is proof that she belonged.

The Army's High Altitude Warfare School became her classroom. Olympian coach Nadeem Iqbal taught her technique and CRPF coach K Shukla and team manager Magesh K gave her something equally valuable - belief.

"When she came, she knew nothing about winter sports," Shukla says. "But she worked harder than anyone. Her future is bright. I see her at the World Championships, even the Olympics."

Discipline Renu already had, endurance she had built unknowingly, in childhood games. What she needed was exposure and now she has it. But she also sees what's missing.

"We only get to train two months a year," Renu says. "Imagine if we could train all year. Imagine how good we could be."

"Artificial snow tracks, better gyms, year-round training facilities," Renu wants not just for her, for everyone who comes after. Her ambitions now stretch beyond Gulmarg, beyond India. She wants to compete in FIS races, World Championships, and the Olympics.

INOX CINEMA SHIVPORA SRINAGAR

Movies Schedule
Friday, 27th February



O' ROMEO (A)
HINDI WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES - 06:00PM



VIYAAH KARTAARE DA (U/A 13+)
PUNJABI - 03:25 PM

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