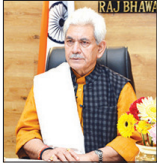


Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K
@OfficeOfLGJandK



Infrastructure upgradation of Shiv Khori is an announcement that the holy shrines of our ancient tradition are being reawakened and restored to life. Today, devotees' perseverance bears fruit & we fulfilled the vibrant dreams of our ancestors who yearned for it.

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Evacuation Demands Grow

Kashmiri Students In Iran Describe Frightening Conditions

Families Meet Div Com Kashmir, Request Immediate Action



FILE PHOTO

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Anxiety and uncertainty continue to grip several families across Kashmir whose children are pursuing higher education in Iran, as the ongoing war-like situation in the country has heightened fears about the safety and mental well-being of hundreds of Indian students.

Concerned parents and stranded students have urged the Government of India (GoI) to immediately initiate evacuation measures, preferably through the Armenia border, as the security situation in various Iranian cities continues to deteriorate.

On Saturday, a group of anxious parents met the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir and apprised him of the growing concerns regarding the safety of their children studying in different universities across Iran. During the meeting,

the parents, requested the administration to take up the matter urgently with the Ministry of External Affairs and ensure the safe return of the students.

The Div Com assured the parents that the administration is closely monitoring the situation and is in touch with the concerned authorities. "Necessary efforts are being made to address the issue, although the evacuation process may take some time due to the prevailing circumstances," he said.

One of the parents said the situation in Iran has become extremely alarming, and families back home are under immense mental stress.

"Our children are living in constant fear. We keep hearing about explosions and attacks in different cities. As parents, we are unable to sleep or focus on anything. We request the Government of India to evacuate them at the earliest," he said. **●P-06**

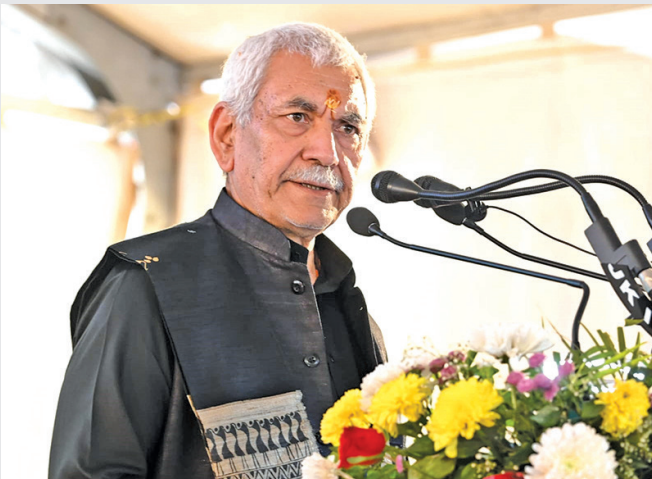
J&K Re-Emerging As Center Of Knowledge, Art, Music, Philosophy: LG Sinha

Inaugurates Infrastructure Upgradation And Beautification Works At Holy Shiv Khori

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Declaring a new dawn for the region, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Saturday said that Jammu & Kashmir is currently undergoing a historic cultural revival. The L-G expressed deep confidence that the Union Territory is being restored to its ancient status as a hub of intellectual and artistic excellence, marking what he termed a complete "renaissance" for the valley.

"Today I say with deep confidence that after centuries, Jammu Kashmir is experiencing a genuine spiritual, cultural, and social renaissance. This Union Territory is re-emerging as a center of knowledge, art, music, and philosophy," the Lieutenant Governor said while inaugurating the infrastructure upgradation and beautification works at holy Shiv Khori Shrine in Reasi District. The works were com-



pleted by JSW Group under its Corporate Social Responsibility.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to Shri Sajjan Jindal, CMD of JSW Group and his entire team for the historic endeavour. "I see this as a profound

act of kindness for humanity's shared heritage," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said since the 2023 MoU with JSW Group, we awaited this day and today, anticipation ends.

"Shiv Khori's awakening begins. We have not only

upgraded infrastructure but fortified faith itself.

I have always held a firm conviction that the light of spirituality must be readily accessible to every person in society," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that the infrastructure upgradation of Shiv Khori is an announcement that the holy shrines of our ancient tradition are being reawakened and restored to life. He said that, today, devotees' perseverance bears fruit and we fulfilled the vibrant dreams of our ancestors who yearned for it.

"Our strong belief in spirituality has guided every effort - from the historic upgradation for Baba Amarnath Yatra, to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board's vision of transforming the entire region into a living spiritual corridor, to placing Shiv Khori firmly on the map of India's **●P-06**

Int'l Women's Day LG Reaffirms Commitment To Women Empowerment In J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, greeted women of Jammu Kashmir on the occasion of the International Women's Day, which

is being celebrated on 8th March.

In his message on this occasion, the Lieutenant Governor has said, "On the occasion of International Women's Day, I extend my

greetings and felicitations to all my sisters of Jammu Kashmir in their steadfast commitment and unwavering drive to forge the future of UT and our great nation. I trust this occasion will inspire

them to step forward as vital partners in country's development journey.

Women's empowerment stands as the strongest catalyst for development and poverty eradication. **●P-06**

International Women's Day Women Driving Force Behind Progress Of Society: Sakeena Itoo

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo Saturday remarked that women are playing a transformative role across all sectors and their contribution towards shaping our society is remarkable.

The Minister made these remarks while addressing grand International Women's Day celebrations at Abhinav Theatre here today, organised by Mission Shakti in collaboration with J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) under the theme 'Give to Gain'.

Addressing a large gathering of women achievers, officers, students and social workers, the Minister highlighted that women today are playing a transformative role across all sectors including education, healthcare, administration, entrepre-



neurship, science, sports and social development and this day is observed to celebrate their achievements and recognitions in diverse fields.

"Women are not only backbone of their families but a driving force behind the progress of society. Their resilience, determination and leadership are shaping a stronger and more inclusive future for our country," Minister Sakeena said.

The Minister reaffirmed that the government is committed to ensure equal opportunities, dignity and safety for women and **●P-06**

Life Returns Back To Normal In Kashmir Valley After Authorities Lift Restrictions

IANs

SRINAGAR: Life returned to normal after six days on Saturday in Kashmir Valley as authorities lifted all restrictions and people started their day-to-day routine as usual.

Shops, private transport, other businesses, public transport, banks, post offices and government offices started working as usual in the entire Valley.

Deployments of police and the security forces continued to remain on ground to keep a close watch on the situation as people came out to buy essentials of life.

5G Internet services and call facility on prepaid mobile phones were restored yesterday evening in the entire Valley.

These had been brought down to prevent miscreants and anti-national elements from uploading objectionable content on the social media.



Schools, colleges and universities in the Valley had been ordered to remain closed till March 7 and these will re-open on Monday.

All exams scheduled till Saturday had been postponed by the Kashmir University and the central university of Kashmir.

Officials said new dates would be announced for these exams by the university authorities soon.

Private transport and pedestrian movement also resumed in city centre Lal Chowk in Srinagar. In order to enforce restrictions, security forces had erected barricades and used coils of concertina wire to block passage inside the city centre during the last five days.

Protests had broken out in the Valley last week after the Iranian supreme leader, **●P-06**

DGP Reviews Anti-Terrorist Operations, Law And Order In Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Saturday reviewed the anti-terrorist operations and the prevailing law and order situation in Awantipora police district.

Officials said the DGP, Nalin Prabhat, IPS, chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the overall security scenario, counter-terror (CT) operations, both kinetic and non-kinetic, and the law and order situation in Police District Awantipora.

He was accompanied by Special DG Coordination, PHQ Jammu and Kashmir, S.J.M. Gillani-IPS, Inspector General of Police Kashmir Zone, V.K. Birdi-IPS and DIG south Kashmir range, Javid Iqbal Matoo-IPS.

The review meeting was held at the District Police Office Awantipora and was attended by senior officers including SSP Awantipora,



Addl. SP Awantipora, all SDPOs, Dy. SP SOGs.

During the meeting, the DGP took a detailed review of the prevailing security situation with special focus on ongoing CT operations, both kinetic and non-kinetic.

He also reviewed measures being taken to curb drug abuse and other criminal activities across Police District Awantipora.

The DGP emphasised the need to further intensify the drive against anti-national elements, drugs **●P-06**

In Three Years, Nearly Six Lakh Tourists Visit Manasbal

Wullar-Manasbal Development Authority Plans Water Sports, Zipline

RAJA SYED RATHER

GANDERBAL: Tourist footfall at Manasbal Lake in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district has witnessed a steady rise over the past three years, with authorities planning several adventure, infrastructure and conservation projects to transform the scenic lake into a major eco-tourism destination.

Chief Executive Officer of Wullar-Manasbal Development Authority (WMDA), Ahsan-ul-Haq Chisti, said Manasbal holds immense potential for adventure tourism and efforts are underway to enhance visitor facilities while safeguarding the lake's fragile ecosystem.

"Manasbal is a unique tourist destination in Kashmir with huge adventure potential. Tourist flow has been steadily



increasing over the past three years," Chisti said.

He said, over 1.6 lakh tourists visited Manasbal in 2023, while the number increased to around 2.2 lakh in 2024. In 2025, the tourist footfall reached about 2.12 lakh, reflecting growing interest among visitors.

He said a significant number of foreign tourists also visit the

lake due to its natural beauty and adventure possibilities.

To further boost tourism, the WMDA is procuring water sports equipment worth Rs 3 crore, which is expected to become operational in the coming months.

"Once the equipment arrives, tourists will be able to enjoy various water-based

recreational activities," Chisti said, adding that the authority is also planning to introduce a zipline facility to enhance adventure tourism in the area.

He said the authority has also established a homestay cluster in collaboration with the Tourism Department to encourage community participation and increase the stay duration of tourists.

"In the last two to three months, several cultural programmes and events were organised which received a very positive response from both locals and visitors. We plan to organise more such events in collaboration with cultural organisations," he said.

Besides cultural tourism, the authority is promoting eco-friendly activities such as mountaineering, cycling, nature walks and water-based recreation to enrich **●P-06**

Domestic LPG Price Hiked By Rs 60 Per Cylinder

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Domestic cooking gas LPG price on Saturday was hiked by a steep Rs 60 per cylinder, the second increase in rate in less than a year, as oil companies pass on a part of the spike in global energy rates that followed the West Asia crisis.

Non-subsidised LPG – the one that common households use in kitchens – will now cost Rs 913 per 14.2-kg cylinder in Delhi as against Rs 853 previously, according to the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) website.

Ujjwala Yojana beneficiaries – the over 10 crore poor who have got free LPG connection since 2016 – will also have to bear the same amount of price increase. They will now pay Rs 613 per 14.2 kg cylinder after accounting for a subsidy of Rs 300 per bottle they get for up to 12 refills in a year.

The price increase, the website showed, is effective from March 7. **●P-06**

Air India, IndiGo Plan Special Gulf Flights To Bring Back Stranded Passengers



IANs

NEW DELHI: Air travel between India and the Gulf region is gradually resuming amid disruptions caused by the ongoing Iran-Israel conflict, with airlines including Air India and IndiGo announcing special and scheduled flights on Saturday to bring back stranded passengers.

Flight operations between India and several Middle Eastern destinations had been severely affected after multiple countries in West Asia temporarily closed their airspace due to the conflict between Iran and Israel. The

closures triggered widespread cancellations and left thousands of travellers stranded across the Gulf region.

With some airspaces gradually reopening, airports in cities such as Dubai and Abu Dhabi have partially resumed operations, allowing airlines to restart a limited number of flights aimed primarily at evacuating stranded passengers and maintaining essential connectivity.

In a statement posted on X, Air India said: "Air India and Air India Express continue to operate scheduled flights to/from Jeddah and Muscat assessed safe for operations. Additional non- **●P-06**

CM Omar felicitates frontline electric utility workers at 'Lineman Diwas'

Stresses on zero casualty goal for linemen, emphasizes proper use of safety gear

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Saturday presided over Lineman Diwas celebration at Convention Centre Jammu.

Organised by Jammu Power Development Corporation Limited, the event recognised linemen as the frontline technical workforce maintaining the electricity supply in Jammu and Kashmir. It marked a step in acknowledging the welfare of personnel who work during emergencies and natural calamities to ensure uninterrupted power.

Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister, Dheeraj Gupta; Financial Commissioner (ACS) Power Development Department, Ashwani Kumar; Managing Director JKPDC, Rahul Yadav and Managing Director JPDCL, Gural Singh besides other dignitaries attended the function.

In his keynote address, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah

described the day as a uniquely important and long-overdue occasion. He spoke of the foundational role electricity plays in governance and public life. "Power makes virtually all other aspects of our lives function. Government services like healthcare, education and irrigation do not work without electricity," he said, underscoring that behind every switched-on light is a lineman.

He termed linemen the "actual foot soldiers and indispensable workforce of the power department," and singled out their service during Operation Sindoor and the 2025 floods for special praise. "You brave adverse conditions like war and natural calamities. You put your lives on the line of duty just like our brave defence forces," he said.

Addressing safety, the Chief Minister issued a clear directive: "We have to aim for achieving the goal of zero casualty of linemen during work. The entire J&K government and the



power department will ensure the safety of each individual lineman."

He stressed that procuring safety equipment is only half the responsibility. The department must ensure the equipment reaches field linemen and that they receive proper training to use it. Directing the engineering leadership, he said officers on duty must ensure strict



adherence to safety precautions and standard operating procedures at all times, leaving no room for carelessness or a hurried approach.

Looking ahead, the Chief Minister suggested introducing cash prizes from the next edition of Lineman Diwas to make the recognition more meaningful for the honoured personnel.

He also felicitated linemen

with certificates and mementos for their service. The awardees included Milkhi Ram, Ashiq Hussain, Bharat Bhushan, Ram Lal, Suram Chand, Bal Krishan, Ajit Raj, Parvez Ahmed Shah, Kuldeep Raj, Manohar Lal, Bhim Singh, Ajay Singh, Rakesh Kumar, Asgar Ali, Ajay Kumar, Swami Raj, Saifullah Bhat, Sohan Lal, Manjeet Singh and Mohd Tanveer.

tralised procurement of safety equipment worth ₹1.5 crore, including safety shoes, belts, helmets and discharge rods, for systematic distribution to field linemen.

Financial Commissioner (ACS) PDD Ashwani Kumar underlined the importance of linemen in a technology-dependent society. He stated their services ensure daily continuity and support essential sectors like healthcare, transport and others. He called for a culture of skills upgradation through structured training programmes. Emphasising quality safety practices, he asserted that proper use of safety equipment and protecting the lives of workers must remain a priority.

A presentation by Assistant Engineer Sachin Tickoo documented the work of linemen during demanding situations. It highlighted how power department personnel ensured electricity supply during the 2025 floods, Operation Sindoor and the COVID-19 pandemic.

EVACUATION FROM IRAN

Div Com Assures Action as Families Demand Government-Led Rescue

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Parents of students studying in Iran met the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, seeking urgent evacuation of their children amid escalating tensions and security concerns in the country.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner assured the parents that authorities are actively working on the matter, though the process may take some time.

Several parents later gathered at Kashmir Press Colony and urged the Government of India to carry out a full-scale evacuation of students from Iran to ensure their safe return.

The parents said the evacuation process should be conducted entirely under the supervision of the Government of India, citing safety concerns and the deteriorating situation in several Iranian cities.

They pointed out that some countries, including Azerbaijan, have already evacuated their citizens from Iran amid the rising tensions.

Students currently

studying in Shiraz said they recently heard continuous blasts near hospitals and a passport office in the city, forcing them to remain underground for safety.

Students from Tehran University of Medical Sciences also reported that the city of Qom has been placed under red-alert conditions after explosions were reportedly heard in the area.

Earlier, students in Urmia and Qom were asked to prepare a list of those willing to travel through Armenia as part of a possible evacuation route.

However, several students expressed reluctance to travel independently and instead requested that evacuation be arranged through the Embassy of India in Iran.

Meanwhile, Dr Mohammad Momin Khan, National Representative of the All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA), met Mohammad Fathali, Ambassador of Iran to India, and urged him to facilitate the safe return of Indian citizens currently studying in Iran.[KNT]

LoC Youth to Get Livelihood Boost as Army Announces Porter Rally

AGENCIES

KUPWARA: The Indian Army will organize a Defence Porter recruitment rally in the Machhal sector of Kupwara district from March 29 to April 2, 2026, officials said on Saturday.

The drive aims to enroll youth from the Keran Bowl, Machhal Valley, and surrounding villages situated along the Line of Control (LoC).

"The Defence Porter role involves assisting the Army in logistical support and transportation of essential supplies in the challenging terrain of remote border areas," an official spokesperson said.

The initiative is part of the

Army's efforts to empower local communities and foster civil-military cooperation in the border district. It provides a stable livelihood opportunity for local youth while enabling them to contribute to operational preparedness in the region.

Interested and eligible candidates must submit their application forms by the last date of March 25, 2026.

Local residents have welcomed the announcement, expressing hope that such recruitment drives will strengthen the bond of trust between the security forces and the people living in the border areas. (KNS)

Div Com reviews progress of transit accommodation for migrant employees

Over 4100 flats completed across Kashmir, 680 more to be ready by April 2026

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Saturday chaired a meeting to review the progress of construction of transit accommodation for migrant employees across Kashmir division.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners, Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrant), Chief Engineers of KPDCL, Jal Shakti, PWD and other concerned officers.

At the outset, the Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner gave a detailed presentation on the physical progress of the transit accommodation and the status of allied works. It was informed that out of a total of 6000 flats being constructed at 20 locations across the Valley, 4112 flats have been completed



so far, of which 3257 have already been allotted to migrant employees.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner reviewed the status of completion of transit accommodation flats in each district. He also took

a detailed review of the availability of essential services including water supply, electricity, drainage facilities and Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), besides the physical status of other allied works in the accommodation towers.

Div Com chairs Divisional Level PWMC meeting

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg Saturday chaired a meeting of the Divisional Level Plastic Waste Management Cell (PWMC) in his office chamber, to discuss measures for elimination of Single Use Plastic (SUP) and to address the issue of plastic pollution in the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner SMC, Director General Rural Sanitation, Director Urban Local Bodies (ULB) Kashmir, Director Rural Development Department Kashmir and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, Director ULB Kashmir briefed the Divisional Commissioner about the



implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, formation of Special Task Force, establishment of

Plastic Management Cell, besides action taken in terms of seizure of Single Use Plastic and imposition

of fines on violators.

The Divisional Commissioner directed all stakeholder departments to ensure strict enforcement of the ban on Single Use Plastic across the division. He also stressed that extensive awareness campaigns should be carried out to sensitise the public about the harmful effects of SUP on the environment.

Meanwhile, Director General Rural Sanitation informed the meeting that Collection and Segregation Centres have been established under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban to strengthen plastic waste management and ensure proper disposal and segregation of waste.

MLA Zadibal reviews utilization of funds under RKS, Kayakalp programs



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A meeting was convened at JLN Hospital, Rainawari Srinagar Saturday by MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq to review and discuss the proposed agenda for utilization of funds under the RKS and Kayakalp programs for the year 2025-26.

The meeting was attended by the Medical Superintendent, Deputy Medical Superintendent, Chief Medical Officer Srinagar, Deputy Director Information, various Executive Engineers, Tehsildar Khanyar, Ward Officer SMC, Project Officer ICDS, and several Heads of Departments of JLN Hospital.

During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held regarding the pro-

posed works and procurement of items aimed at improving hospital infrastructure, sanitation facilities, patient amenities, and medical equipment at the hospital. The agenda items were thoroughly deliberated upon and were positively received by the MLA.

On the occasion, Tanvir Sadiq appreciated the initiatives taken by the hospital administration for strengthening healthcare facilities and improving patient services. He assured full support for the proposed works and emphasized the need for timely implementation of the planned initiatives.

The MLA also promised to facilitate the provision of electric wheelchairs and an ambulance for the hospital to further enhance patient care and accessibility.

J&K Bank elevates Ashutosh Sareen and Rajesh Malla Tikoo to CGM Posts

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Strengthening its top-tier leadership further, J&K Bank elevated its two General Managers, Ashutosh Sareen and Rajesh Malla Tikoo, to the position of Chief General Managers.

Congratulating the officers on their elevation, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "These elevations reflect the Bank's commitment to recognising experi-

ence, merit and leadership potential within the organisation. As we pursue our strategic growth agenda, strengthening our leadership pool remains a key priority."

He added that the Bank has institutionalised a structured and transparent career progression framework to prepare the next line of leadership and ensure continuity in driving the Bank's long-term strategic goals.

Satish Sharma flags off "Nasha Muk" Motorcycle rally

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: In a significant initiative aimed at spreading awareness against drug abuse and promoting a healthy society, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), IT, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, Saturday flagged off a "Nasha Muk" motorcycle rally from Jourian to Khour.

The rally was organized by the Society for Scheduled and Backward, an NGO actively engaged in social welfare and awareness programmes.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of youth, social activists,



volunteers and members of civil society who joined the rally carrying banners and placards advocating a drug-free society.

Flagging off the rally, the Minister said that such initiatives play a crucial role in mobilizing society against the growing menace of drug abuse. He stressed that

the drug problem not only affects the individuals and families but also poses a serious threat to the social and economic fabric of society.

Satish Sharma maintained that the government has undertaken a massive campaign to eradicate the drug menace from Jammu and Kashmir, focusing on awareness, prevention,

enforcement and rehabilitation. He said that coordinated efforts of government agencies, civil society organizations and the public are essential to effectively tackle the challenge.

The Minister underscored the importance of youth engagement in constructive and positive activities, particularly in sports, education and skill development, which serve as powerful tools in steering the young people away from substance abuse. He added that the Youth Services & Sports Department has been actively promoting sporting activities across the region to channelize the energy of youth in a productive direction.

Calling upon the parents, teachers, community leaders and social organizations to remain vigilant and proactive, Satish Sharma said that a united societal response is necessary to eliminate the scourge of drugs. He emphasized that awareness campaigns like the "Nasha Muk" rally help in sensitizing the people and strengthening the resolve to build a drug-free and healthy Jammu and Kashmir.

The participants of the rally pledged their commitment towards spreading awareness about the harmful effects of drugs and actively contribute towards the mission of making the region "Nasha Muk."

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL AND HOSPITALS DIVISION SRINAGAR

(Tele-fax No: 019-2496089, e-mail id: exen-mechospmgr@jk.gov.in)

Subject:- Comprehensive Maintenance of Complete VRV system at SPS Library, Srinagar from Jan 2026 to March 2026

Ref :- This office NIT No: M&HDS/TS /2025-26/121/e-tendering Dated: 19.12.2025

CANCELLATION

In view of administrative approval kept in abeyance by the Director General, Libraries and Research, J&K vide order No. 93 DL of 2025, Dated: - 31-12-2025, the above referred e-NIT issued by this office is hereby cancelled.

No: M&HDS/TS/9323-26,
Dated:06-03-2026

DIPK-11649-25
DT: 07/03/2026

Executive Engineer,
Mechanical & Hospitals Division,
Srinagar.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Illegal Excavation In Heart Of Srinagar

What may appear to be a small act of digging could potentially threaten the safety of people living in nearby areas. It is the last night's illegal excavation in the heart of Srinagar Doodhganga. According to the Environmental Policy Group (EPG), unknown individuals allegedly carried out excavation up to a depth of nearly five feet in the hinterland of the embankment during the night. Such activity is not only unlawful but also dangerous, as flood embankments are built to protect surrounding areas from rising water levels, particularly during heavy rainfall or flood situations. Any digging close to these structures can weaken their strength and stability. Even limited excavation can disturb the soil structure supporting the embankment, increasing the risk of damage or breaches during periods of high water flow. For a city like Srinagar, where waterways like Doodganga play a crucial role in draining excess water, disturbing flood protection infrastructure is a serious risk. It is also concerning that the area where the excavation reportedly took place falls on government land belonging to the Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) Department. Land meant for flood protection must remain strictly safeguarded. Any illegal excavation or encroachment in such zones not only violates regulations but also puts public safety at risk. The role played by local residents in intervening and stopping the activity is commendable. Their alertness helped prevent further damage. Similarly, the Environmental Policy Group acted responsibly by promptly bringing the matter to the notice of the concerned officials in the Flood Control Department. While officials have assured that steps will be taken to stop such activities and prevent encroachment, the administration must now ensure that these assurances translate into action. The area where excavation took place should be restored to its original condition, and the embankment must be strengthened if any structural risk has been created. The authorities, particularly the office of the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, must treat the matter with seriousness and ensure that strict monitoring is put in place to prevent such incidents in the future. Srinagar has experienced devastating floods in the past, and those memories remain fresh. Protecting flood channels and embankments is essential for the safety of the city. Any activity that compromises this protection must be addressed promptly and firmly to avoid potential risks in the future.

Good Morning

Kashmir

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UPSC Success: A Story Of Struggle Or A Story Of Popularity?

DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH

The Union Public Service Commission's Civil Services Examination in India is not just an exam, but a symbol of the dreams, struggles, and aspirations of millions of young people. Every year, lakhs of candidates from across the country appear for this exam, and only a few hundred ultimately secure a place in the administrative service. Therefore, those who succeed in this difficult examination naturally become the subject of discussion and respect in society. The news media, social media, and the general public are eager to know their life stories. An interesting, and sometimes worrying, trend has emerged over the past few years. Successful candidates, often raised in affluent urban backgrounds, suddenly seem to identify themselves as "farmer's son," "village son," or "from a rural background." This trend isn't just a question of personal identity; it also highlights a broader socio-psychological process in which one's story is presented in a particular way to gain popularity and sympathy.

It's natural to ask why this happens. Is it simply an attempt to inspire or a strategy to gain popularity? The answer to this question is not simple, as it lies in many social, cultural, and media-related reasons. Stories of struggle have always been highly respected in Indian society. When someone overcomes difficult circumstances and achieves great success, that story inspires millions. This is why the news media often highlights examples where a candidate achieves success despite limited resources, financial difficulties, or a rural background.

There's no doubt that such stories play a positive role in society. They instill in young people the belief that success can be achieved through hard work and determination, no matter the circumstances. In a country like India, where a huge gap still exists between rural and urban opportunities, such stories become a source of hope and inspiration. But the problem arises when the pressure to present a story that is more appealing or emotional than the reality increases. In this age of social media, everyone wants to present their story in a way that reaches and influences as many people as possible. In this process, sometimes the complexity of the real background is reduced to a simplified and sentimental narrative.



Many candidates actually come from villages or humble backgrounds and share their stories to inspire other young people. India boasts numerous successful officers with roots in small towns and rural settings. Their success demonstrates that hard work and dedication can lead to great achievements, even with limited resources. However, in this age of social media, a different trend is also evident. Some people overemphasize their identities, such as "farmer's son" or "village boy or girl," to cultivate their image. This is often intended to garner sympathy, make their story more inspiring, or attract more attention in the news and social media.

Nowadays, the news media and social media play a vital role in shaping a person's image. The story of a successful candidate can spread across the country in a matter of hours. Various interviews, video platforms, and news articles often highlight aspects of the story that are emotional and inspiring.

This is natural from the media's perspective, as viewers and readers feel more connected to such stories. Headlines like "Youth from village joins administrative service" or "Farmer's daughter makes it to administrative service" attract immediate attention. As a result, sometimes some aspects of the story are given more prominence, while others are overlooked. If a candidate's family originates from a rural area, but they were educated and raised in cities, the media often highlights those rural connections. This presents a partial pic-

ture of reality.

In a society as vast and diverse as India, identity isn't always simple and one-dimensional. A person may be born in a village but educated in a city. One's parents may be engaged in farming, while the family's financial situation may be relatively stable.

In reality, both can be true simultaneously. But when an attempt is made to simplify and impact a story, one identity is often given prominence. This is why people sometimes feel that a reality-deflecting or exaggerated image is being presented. Today is a time of image and narrative. Social media has given everyone the opportunity to create their own image. People not only express who they are, but also decide how they want to appear to society. But when this process becomes more based on image-building than reality, it becomes a subject of crit-

icism. Society begins to feel that identity is being used to gain popularity.

It's also important to remember that not every successful candidate does this. There are thousands of officers across the country who speak honestly about their backgrounds and view their success not merely as a personal achievement, but as a social responsibility. Ultimately, the true value of success in the administrative service should be determined by how an officer uses their position for the benefit of society. Honesty, sensitivity, and a spirit of public service are the hallmarks of any officer. Popularity may be fleeting, but true service and honest work are the foundation that earns a person lasting respect.

(Dr. Priyanka Saurabh, PhD (Political Science), is a poet and social thinker.)

Handh Te Handh Koor: The Lost Charm Of Kashmir's Spring

TAWHEED PARVAIZ BHAT

Kashmir, often described as heaven on earth, is known for its four distinct seasons, spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Each season carries its own charm, significance, and deep cultural connection with the people of the valley. Among them, spring holds a special place, for it marks the rebirth of life after the long and harsh winter. With the arrival of spring, nature awakens from its deep slumber. Snow begins to melt, rivers start flowing freely, and the land slowly regains its colors. Birds return to the trees, filling the air with cheerful chirping, while flowers begin to bloom across fields and orchards. Apple orchards prepare for a new cycle of life, crop fields turn vibrant, and tender green grass spreads across the landscape. The terraced lands display a beautiful contrast of brown soil bordered with fresh green growth. Spring does not only transform nature; it also changes the mood of people. After months of cold and isolation, faces begin to glow again. Farmers return to their orchards and fields with renewed hope and enthusiasm. However, the spring that we witness today is not the same as it once was. Decades ago, this season carried a deeper cultural beauty and simplicity. People stepped into their orchards with tools of cultivation and baskets of hope. Today, unfortunately, many walk into the same orchards carrying chemicals and pesticides.

One of the most beautiful



cultural traditions associated with the spring of Kashmir was the collection of dandelions, locally known as Handh. Fields, earthen ridges (locally called bun/Bare), and apple orchards, especially those located on slightly elevated lands known as wuder, would appear like lively gathering grounds. Young girls and women from villages would step out in groups carrying traditional baskets on their heads and small knives in their hands to collect the tender dandelion leaves. These girls were lovingly known as "Handh Koor" the girls who gather Handh.

The sight of these Handh Koors walking through village paths in the soft spring sunlight was truly enchanting. After the long winter, their presence itself symbolized the return of life and joy. Their laughter, colourful attire, and baskets created a scene that

added immense charm to the Kashmiri spring. As they collected Baar Handh (dandelion from crop fields) and Baag Handh (from orchards), they would sing traditional Kashmiri songs. The melodies of Rouf and verses of great Kashmiri poets like Lal Ded and Habba Khatoon echoed through orchards and fields. The chirping birds joined this melody, creating a natural orchestra in the heart of Kashmir's countryside.

The beauty of Handh Koor even inspired Kashmiri poets. The famous poet Rasul Mir beautifully captured such scenes in his poetry:

Matan wudre hunk san chokh khasaa,
Tik dar kasabas grai choka maara.
Wali kasturi yi par mai trav naariye,
Chon paknov parzanov me dorye.

While reading Rasul Mir, one cannot help but imagine that he too might have been enchanted by the grace and charm of the Handh Koor.

For the people of Kashmir, Handh was not just a plant, it was a natural healer. Scientifically known as Taraxacum officinale, dandelion has remarkable medicinal properties. It was traditionally cooked as a nutritious spring vegetable and was believed to purify the body after winter. Families also dried it for use during the following winter months. It was particularly given to women after childbirth as a natural remedy for recovery and strength.

Thus, both Handh and Handh Koor symbolized healing, one healing the body, and the other healing the spirit through beauty, culture, and tradition. When the golden flowers of dandelion bloomed across fields and the graceful

Handh Koors walked through village paths, together they created the true jewellery of Kashmiri Spring.

Sadly, this beautiful tradition is slowly fading away. The new generation hardly recognizes these symbols of culture and nature. Instead of baskets filled with wild greens, we now see plastic containers filled with chemical pesticides. The gentle rhythm of village life is being replaced by machines, tillers, and chemicals.

Today we are facing increasing health problems, including cancer and other deadly diseases. Perhaps one reason is that we have drifted away from the natural ways of life that once kept our society healthy and balanced. We have forgotten the simple gifts that nature and God bestowed upon us. It is time to rediscover and revive these traditions, traditions that connect us with our land, our culture, and our natural heritage. The story of Handh Koor is not merely a memory of the past; it is a reminder of a harmonious relationship between humans and nature.

If we wish to preserve the true spirit of Kashmir's spring, we must bring back the values, simplicity, and respect for nature that once defined our lives.

Only then will the valleys once again witness the real beauty of spring, where the golden flowers of Hand bloom across fields and the graceful Handh Koors walk through village paths, carrying with them the timeless charm of Kashmir.

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IDEAS, OPINIONS AND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED ARE WRITERS' OWN AND MAY NOT BE FOUND IN ACCORD WITH THOSE OF GOOD MORNING KASHMIR

■ When Pain Becomes Personal

Why We Understand Others Only After We’ve Been There



DR. REYAZ AHMAD

There is a common human confession, often spoken with regret: “Now I understand... because it happened to me.”

This is not merely a moral statement; it is a psychological pattern, a philosophical problem, a logical limitation, and a spiritual lesson. The same truth appears across disciplines: people grasp another person’s burden most deeply when they are placed in a similar situation.

Below is a multi-lens explanation, psychological, philosophical, logical, and religious, of why this happens, and what it demands from us.

1) Psychological explanation: the empathy gap and the limits of imagination

a) The “empathy gap”

Psychology recognizes that our compassion is often constrained by our current emotional state. When we are safe, healthy, comfortable, or socially secure, we underestimate how fear, pain, hunger, debt, grief, or humiliation can dominate someone’s decisions. This is why advice from a comfortable position often sounds simplistic to the suffering person: “Just be patient,” “Just leave,” “Just work harder.”

b) Experience activates emotional understanding, not just intellectual knowledge

You can know about anxiety, infertility, chronic pain, discrimination, unemployment, or caregiving, but knowing about a thing is not the same as knowing through a thing. Lived experience adds:

- bodily memory (stress, fatigue, insomnia),
 - emotional depth (helplessness, shame, dread),
 - and social reality (people’s judgments, loneliness, stigma).
- That is why empathy often deepens

sharply after personal hardship: experience turns abstract information into felt reality.

c) Fundamental attribution error: we misjudge others as “weak” instead of “under pressure”

Humans naturally explain their own failures by circumstances (“I was overwhelmed”) but explain others’ failures by character (“they are irresponsible”). Once we enter the same circumstances, the story flips: we recognize that pressure can crush even strong people.

d) Familiarity and similarity bias

We empathize more with people who resemble us or whose suffering we can easily imagine. Similar experience reduces psychological distance. When the distance collapses, compassion rises.

2) Philosophical explanation: “knowing” is not only thinking—it is also being

a) The difference between propositional knowledge and experiential knowledge

Philosophy distinguishes:

- **Knowing that (facts, concepts, definitions), and**
- **Knowing what it is like (qualitative experience).**

A person may “know that” grief hurts, but only the bereaved person knows the texture of grief—how time slows, how ordinary life becomes heavy, how memories become wounds. Philosophically, experience produces a kind of knowledge that language cannot fully transfer.

b) Moral imagination is real, but limited

Ethics often calls us to imagine ourselves in another’s place. Yet moral imagination has a ceiling. Without experience, we frequently:

- minimize how hard it is,
 - romanticize suffering (“it makes you stronger”),
 - or moralize it (“they deserve it”).
- Experience interrupts these illusions.

c) Existential insight: suffering reveals the hidden structure of life

Many philosophical traditions—from Stoicism to existentialism—argue that comfort can make us blind. Hardship exposes dependency, vulnerability, and the fragility of control. When we suffer, we stop speak-



ing like judges and start speaking like humans.

3) Logical explanation: incomplete information produces incomplete judgment

From a logical standpoint, misunderstanding others is often an information problem.

a) You can’t compute what you don’t measure

If a person lacks key variables—trauma history, financial constraints, family dynamics, mental health, workplace politics, social stigma—then their “judgment” is based on an incomplete model. The conclusion may be logically consistent within that small model, yet still false in reality.

A simple logic analogy:

- Premise set A (limited): “If someone is late repeatedly, they are careless.”
- Premise set B (full): “They are late because they take a parent to dialysis daily, and transport is unpredictable.”

Same behaviour, different premises, different conclusion.

b) “If it were me...” is often a faulty simulation

People run a mental simulation: “If I were in their place, I would do X.”

But the simulation is invalid if you import your own resources—confidence, money, health, family support—into their scenario. The correct simulation is:

“If I had their constraints, history, and risks, what would I do?”

That is a much harder calculation—and usually more humble.

c) Hidden costs and unseen pressures

Many human decisions are made under invisible costs: shame, fear, dependency, social punishment, legal risk, or emotional exhaustion. When those costs become visible through experience, our reasoning becomes less harsh and more accurate.

4) Religious explanation: trials teach humility; compassion is demanded before experience

Religiously, this idea appears as both a description of human weakness and a command to rise above it.

a) Humans are tested to learn mercy, not superiority

Most religious traditions interpret suffering as a tool that can soften arrogance. Trials remind people that they are not invincible—and that today’s secure person may be tomorrow’s needy person. This produces humility: a spiritual antidote to judgmentalism.

b) Compassion is not optional; it is worship in action

Across religions, ethical life is measured by how we treat the vulnerable:

- caring for the poor, sick, and orphan,
- respecting the dignity of the weak,
- and restraining the impulse to mock or condemn.

In Islamic ethics, for example, mercy (rahmah), justice (‘adl), and avoiding suspicion and contempt are central moral duties. In Christian teaching,

love of neighbor and mercy are core. In Buddhism, compassion (karuṇā) is a primary virtue. In Hindu traditions, dayā (compassion) and seva (service) are central. The shared moral thrust is clear: you are not allowed to wait for personal suffering before becoming humane.

c) The “golden rule” logic: act as you would want to be treated

Religions repeatedly teach: don’t measure people from your comfort; measure from your conscience. The spiritual standard is to treat others with the care you would want if roles were reversed—whether or not you have personally endured that hardship.

d) A warning against arrogance

Religiously, the person who says, “That could never happen to me,” is warned: life can flip quickly. Therefore, empathy is not only kindness; it is spiritual realism.

Bringing the four lenses together

- Psychology says: empathy is limited by imagination and emotional distance.
- Philosophy says: lived experience produces a form of knowledge arguments cannot replace.
- Logic says: judgments fail when the model lacks hidden variables.
- Religion says: hardship can awaken mercy—but you must choose compassion even before hardship comes.

So yes, people often understand others only when they face similar situations. But the higher lesson is this:

Maturity is to understand before you are forced to.

Practical ways to practice “pre-experience empathy”

1. Replace judgment with inquiry: “What might I be missing?”
2. Assume hidden constraints: most struggles are partly invisible.
3. Speak less, listen more: suffering people need presence before solutions.
4. Avoid moral arrogance: today’s stability is not a permanent entitlement.
5. Turn empathy into action: support, accommodation, advocacy, service.

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International Women’s Day

A New Era Of Women’s Power And Unfinished Struggles

LALIT GARG

In the story of the development of human civilisation, if any force has contributed the most to creation, it is the power of women. She is the giver of life, the bearer of culture, and the sensitive soul of society. Indian tradition has never confined women merely to a social role; rather, it has given them the highest reverence in the form of a “mother”. From the sacred expression “Matru Devo Bhava” (Mother is divine) to the declaration “Janani Janmabhoomishcha Swargadapi Gariyasi” (Mother and motherland are greater than heaven), our culture reflects a unique reverence for women. This is why in India even the earth, the cow, and the motherland are addressed as “mother”. Yet, the irony is that the very society which has elevated women to the status of goddesses still witnesses women facing insecurity, discrimination, and violence. International Women’s Day 2026 does not merely offer an occasion for celebration; it provides an opportunity for deep reflection on the real condition of women. Studies conducted across the world clearly show that while progress has certainly been made in improving the status of women, the journey toward equality, safety, and freedom is still far from complete.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2025 by the World Economic Forum, only about 68.8 per cent of the global gender gap has been closed so far, meaning that nearly one-third of the gap still remains. The largest disparity exists in the area of economic participation, where equality has reached only around 61 per cent. This data indicates that while women have almost achieved parity in the fields of education and health, their participation in economic opportunities and political leadership is still limited. Globally, women make up only about 42 per cent of the workforce, and their representation in top managerial positions remains around one-third.

The situation in India also presents a mixed picture. On one hand,



Indian women are achieving remarkable success in fields such as space exploration, science, the armed forces, politics, and administration. On the other hand, their participation in the labour market remains relatively low. According to recent statistics, India’s female labour force participation rate stands at around 32 per cent, and a large number of women remain outside employment due to domestic responsibilities. These figures reported by Business Standard are not merely numbers; they reveal the deeper realities of social structure, mindset, and inequality of opportunity. Today, women across many countries are serving as presidents, prime ministers, scientists, military officers, and industrial leaders. In India too, the presence of women as presidents, prime ministers, chief ministers, scientists, and fighter pilots reflects this transformation. Yet it is also true that only a limited number of countries in the world have women at the highest political offices, and the issue of equal pay remains unresolved. Several international studies suggest that women still receive lower wages than men for the same work. Another alarming reality is that situations of conflict, war, and crisis affect women

the most. According to recent global studies, nearly 670 million women in 2024 were living in regions affected by violent conflict.

Emerging challenges of the modern age—such as climate change, war, terrorism, poverty, and digital inequality—are also creating new difficulties for women. If these problems are not addressed in time, millions of women and girls may be pushed into extreme poverty in the coming decades. History also tells us that whenever society has faced crises, women have displayed extraordinary courage. During India’s freedom struggle, courageous women such as Kittur Chennamma, Begum Hazrat Mahal, Rani Avanti Bai Lodhi, Sarojini Naidu, and Durga Bhabhi proved that women are not only symbols of compassion but also embodiments of courage and resistance. However, despite these glorious chapters of history, social realities often appear painful. Practices such as dowry, female foeticide, domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual crimes continue to exist in many societies around the world. This is not merely a legal issue; it is fundamentally a question of social mindset. In reality, the root cause of the problems faced by women is not only external

structures but also the mindset that has for centuries attempted to limit women’s capabilities by labelling them as “weak”. When society defines women only through roles and not as individuals, inequality inevitably arises.

The global message of International Women’s Day 2026 also points in this direction: “Rights, equality and empowerment for all women and girls”. This message reminds us that even today women across the world do not fully enjoy the same legal rights as men. According to data from the United Nations, women globally have, on average, only about 64 per cent of the legal rights available to men. This reality compels us to recognise that merely creating laws is not enough; those laws must also be transformed into social consciousness. The true meaning of women’s empowerment is not only granting rights but also ensuring opportunities, respect, and the freedom to make decisions.

Education, healthcare, digital literacy, economic independence, and political participation—these five pillars form the real foundation of women’s empowerment. However, the beginning of this transformation must take place within the family. If daughters and sons receive equal opportunities in the family, if discrimination in education ends, and if social evils such as dowry are collectively rejected by society, only then will true liberation for women become possible. For the empowerment of women in India, Narendra Modi has initiated several significant measures. Whether through the Ujjwala Yojana providing cooking gas connections to women, the construction of houses and toilets in rural areas, or the passage of the Nari Shakti Vandan Act in Parliament, various steps have been taken to strengthen women’s dignity and participation.

Today, many countries across the world acknowledge that under Modi’s leadership, Indian women are progressing rapidly. From sports to entertainment, and from politics to defence and the military, women are increas-

ingly taking on prominent roles. Ultimately, the issue is not about Indian or non-Indian women; it is about the attitude toward women. What is needed is a transformation of this mindset. The world must eliminate neglect and oppression of women and create an environment where their dignity and identity are protected. The true significance of this day will be realised only when women are not merely participants in development but when the brutalities and injustices that attack their identity come to an end.

Women too must recognise the power within themselves. History bears witness that whenever women have discovered their inner strength, they have changed the direction of society. Education and self-confidence play for women the same role that light plays against darkness. Today’s woman is not merely someone demanding rights; she is a creator of change. She is conducting scientific research, flying aircraft across the skies, drafting laws in parliament, and leading society in countless ways. Yet we must remember that the question of women’s dignity is not merely a women’s issue, it is a measure of the civilisation of an entire society. A society where women are safe, respected, and self-reliant is truly a developed and humane society.

Therefore, the real message of International Women’s Day is that honouring women should not remain a one-day celebration but should become a continuous social consciousness throughout the year. When society accepts that women are not only the foundation of the family but also the creators of the future, the day will not be far when the term “women’s empowerment” itself will become unnecessary—because women will be naturally empowered. Perhaps then the world will truly live the ideal expressed by Indian culture thousands of years ago: “Where women are honoured, there the gods rejoice.”

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Kashmiri Students

Another parent said several countries have already started evacuating their citizens from Iran and urged the Indian government to take swift action. “Countries like Azerbaijan have already evacuated their nationals. We urge the Government of India to take similar steps and arrange the safe evacuation of our children. Their safety must be the top priority,” the parent added.

Some parents assembled at the Press Colony, Srinagar and reiterated that the evacuation process should be fully coordinated and managed by the GoI to ensure a safe and organised return of the students. Students studying in different Iranian cities described the situation as tense and frightening amid reports of explosions and security alerts. A student studying in Shiraz said multiple blasts were heard near their hospital and even around the passport office, forcing them to remain in underground shelters.

“Yesterday, we heard several blasts near our hospital and even close to the passport office. Authorities asked us to stay underground for safety. The situation is extremely frightening, and we are worried about what might happen next,” the student said. Students from Tehran University of Medical Sciences also reported that the city of Qom has been placed on red alert following reports of explosions in the region. “We have been told that Qom is on red alert after explosions were reported there. Many of us are extremely anxious and want to return home safely,” another student said.

Earlier, students in cities such as Urmia and Qom were asked to prepare a list of those willing to travel through the Armenia border route. However, the response remained limited as many students requested that the evacuation process be directly arranged by the Embassy of India in Iran.

Dr Mohammad Momin Khan, National Representative of the All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA) and its J&K President, met Iran’s Ambassador to India, Mohammad Fathali, and raised serious concerns regarding the safety of Indian students studying in Iranian universities.

During the meeting, Dr Khan urged the ambassador to facilitate the safe return of Indian citizens and ensure coordination with authorities to support evacuation efforts.

According to the AIMSA representative, the Indian Embassy in Iran has offered logistical support to help Indian students relocate to neighbouring Armenia, which is considered relatively safer under the current circumstances. However, students have been asked to arrange their own onward travel from Armenia to India.

Dr Momin, who remains in constant contact with nearly 1,000 students studying across various Iranian universities, said many students are currently stranded at Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, and Urmia University of Medical Sciences, while some have reportedly been shifted to an undisclosed location in Qom due to security concerns.

He said the embassy has informed students that they may leave the country through the Armenian border, but only after fulfilling certain conditions.

As per the communication, the students, those willing to leave Iran through Armenia, must first book their flight tickets from Armenia to New Delhi. A copy of the confirmed ticket must then be submitted to the Indian Embassy, after which the embassy will inform them about the time and arrangements for travelling from cities such as Shiraz to the Armenian border. Students without confirmed tickets will not be allowed to cross the border.

Students will also be required to pay a visa fee of 10 US dollars at the Armenian border.

Officials have further informed that if students reach Armenia earlier than their scheduled flight date, they will have to arrange their own accommodation and hotel stay until they depart for India.

However, if more than 40 to 50 students opt for this route together, the embassy may arrange a bus for their travel and possibly provide accommodation in Urmia before their onward journey.

At the same time, the embassy has clarified that if students decide to leave Iran through this route, the responsibility of the journey will rest with the students themselves, and the embassy will not take responsibility for their travel.

The advisory issued by the embassy currently asks students to remain where they are and avoid unnecessary movement. Officials have also indicated that there is no official evacuation plan in place for now. Dr Momin said confusion continues to prevail among students regarding travel arrangements and the high cost involved.

“Many students cannot afford the airfare from Armenia to New Delhi, which currently costs nearly Rs 1 lakh per ticket. Some students who can afford the fare have already booked their flights from Armenia,” he said.

Most of the students are from Jammu and Kashmir and would be able to travel easily to their hometowns from New Delhi once they reach India.

“Many students believe that the Government of India should arrange repatriation flights and bear the cost of their return,” he added—(KNO)

J&K Re-Emerging As

great centers of devotion.” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated that it is his prime objective to make Jammu Kashmir a vibrant, breathing spiritual heart of the nation.

“After five years of sustained efforts, I can say with quiet satisfaction-that dream is no longer distant. He said that the flame of tapas and dharma for which this land was once renowned across the world - we are relighting it with full conviction.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the youth to create balance in inner and outer life.

“This renaissance is for you. Come to the sacred shrines of this land and allow yourself to feel what centuries of unbroken devotion feel like when it meets you in silence. That energy does not belong to the past. It flows still- and it is yours to draw from,” he further said.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted a series of upcoming facilities designed to enhance the safety and convenience of pilgrims at visiting the holy Shri Shiv Khori shrine.

“The new helipad is slated for completion this month. Heli-services for the devotees of Shri Shiv Khori is also expected to start from the month of April. To protect pilgrims from unpredictable weather and shooting stones, a protective track shed will also be completed soon.

A future development roadmap has also been prepared. Recognizing the heavy footfall during festive

seasons, an alternative track between Ram Mandir and Shiv Khori will be constructed for decongestion. Comprehensive repair and renovation work of the Ransoo Shrine building and existing tracks will be taken up, while adequate sanitation facilities will be provided along the track. A serai and langar facility will also come up for pilgrims in Ransoo,” he said. The Lieutenant Governor said that the time has come for the Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board to introduce a 'Sound and Light Show' to enrich the experience of the devotees. With the collective interest and consensus, the feasibility of a Ropeway project may be explored, he said.

“We are fully committed to creating a thriving ecosystem where local traders, artisans, youth, and women can access new opportunities, ensuring prosperity for every family,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also flagged off garbage collection vehicle donated by J&K Bank to Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board.

The works inaugurated today includes renovation of Shivam Dwar (Darshani Deodi); repair and renovation of Mahadev Bhawan including Yatra Registration Counter; existing Ghat refurbishment (near Shivam Dwar); Gazebos near bathing Ghat and near Shani Mandir; Toilet Complexes; renovation of Medical Kiosk near Ram Mandir; construction of Pony Shed at Ransoo near Darshani Deodi and installation of Lights at various locations.

Shri Kuldeep Raj Dubey, Member of Legislative Assembly from Reasi; Shri Sajjan Jindal, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD), JSW Group; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu and Chairman Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board; Ms Sarah Rizvi, DIG Udhampur and Reasi Range; Shri Kumar Abhishek, Deputy Commissioner Reasi; senior officials; prominent citizens from different walks of life and devotees in large number attended the inaugural ceremony.

LG Reaffirms Commitment

Today, our women tirelessly work to reshape society into a fairer, more equitable order. Countless talented women from the Union Territory are excelling in their fields, each poised to help build a peaceful and prosperous Jammu Kashmir. International Women’s Day offers us a vital moment to reaffirm our dedication to upholding women’s rights, ensuring justice, safeguarding their security, and advancing their well-being. Let us unite in building a society where women enjoy equal chances, advancing and thriving through their true potential. I extend my best wishes to everyone for a truly successful observance of this special day.”

Cloudy Weather,

to suspend farm operations between March 10 and 12 in view of the forecast.

It also said day temperatures are likely to fall by 4 to 6 degrees Celsius at many places after March 9 and may remain lower till March 12.

According to the MeT data, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 24.5 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 10.5 degrees Celsius.

Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 16.6 degrees Celsius and a minimum of minus 2.0 degrees Celsius. Jammu recorded a maximum temperature of 31.8 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 19.1 degrees Celsius—(KNO)

Women Driving Force

girls, noting that several initiatives are being implemented by Government to empower women and make them self sustainable.

She underlined that education remains the most powerful tool for empowering women and enabling them to realise their full potential. She urged young girls to pursue their ambitions with confidence and encouraged families to support the aspirations of their daughters.

“An educated and empowered woman uplifts not only her family but also the entire community. When women progress, the nation progresses,” she stated. Citing example of Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister Sakeena said that her achievement of leading one of the critical and important Ministry in central government is proof that women can lead in every field. She called upon the young girl students to make women like Nirmala Sitharaman as role model and demonstrate that determination and hard work can overcome any barrier. Congratulating the participants and women on International Women’s Day, the Minister reiterated the government’s resolve towards strengthening policies and programmes that ensure empowerment, safety and socio-economic advancement of women.

In his welcome address, Mission Director, Mission Vatsalya/Mission Shakti, Nazim Zai Khan said that this special day is commemorated to celebrate the existence, achievements, and resilience of women and girls all across Jammu & Kashmir and entire Globe.

He added that this day is not only a celebration of how far women have come in society, politics, and economics, but also a reminder of the work that remains to achieve true equality. “The theme for this year’s Women’s Day Celebration, ‘Give to Gain’ encourages us to embrace generosity and action, giving respect, resources, justice and voice to empower women and girls,” he said.

He added that these interventions bring visible change at the community level and reaffirm Government’s collective commitment to building a Viksit Bharat @2047, where every girl and woman thrives in a discrimination-free environment.

He also spoke about various initiatives taken by the Social Welfare department for the empowerment and welfare of women and children in Jammu and Kashmir.

Secretary, JKAACL, Harvinder Kour while delivering vote of thanks, spoke about the importance of the day for the women folk.

Later, in recognition of meritorious public service, the Minister felicitated Commissioner Secretary, Forests Ecology and Environment, Sheetal Nanda. On the occasion, students of Cluster University, Jammu presented a thought-provoking skit on the theme “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao”, which effectively conveyed the importance of girl child education and empowerment.

During the event, the Minister also felicitated women achievers from various fields like sports, para-sports, entrepreneurship, administration and meritorious public service, Art and Culture, child welfare and

other areas for their outstanding contribution to society and exemplary achievements. Earlier, Minister Sakeena inaugurated an exhibition showcasing various products of women entrepreneurs and women Self Help Groups. She also witnessed paintings displayed by the women artists reflecting their creativity and innovation. Principal Secretary Culture, Brij Mohan Sharma; Commissioner Secretary, Forests Ecology and Environment, Sheetal Nanda; MD Women’s Development Corporation, Purnima Mittal; senior officers of social welfare department, women achievers, social workers and large number of students were also present on the occasion.

Life Returns Back

Ayatullah Ali Khamenei was killed in US-Israeli air strikes on Tehran.

Protesters clashed with the security forces at a number of places during those those protests. The protesters were more aggressive in Shia Muslim dominated areas.

Authorities had imposed restrictions to protect civilian life and property in the Valley. Despite keeping heightened vigil on the situation, police and the security forces showed exemplary patience and professionalism in dealing with the situation. In order to instill confidence among the people, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah interacted with the members of the civil society including representatives from religious, social, business communities and prominent citizens on Wednesday.

Omar appealed people to observe their grief with dignity and discipline without doing anything to disturb the law and order situation. He had got positive response from the civil society members during that interaction.

DGP Reviews Anti-Terrorist

and crime.

He directed officers to take strict and effective action against those involved in such unlawful activities and urged them to remain vigilant, disciplined and proactive in their respective areas of responsibility.

He stressed strong coordination, intelligence-based operations, and proactive policing to maintain peace and stability.

The DGP appreciated the efforts of officers and jawans and urged all ranks to remain alert, disciplined, and mission-oriented, officials said.

The DGP and all top level police officers have been camping in the Valley since March 1 when the anti-US and anti-Israel protests started in the Valley. The DGP has been visiting areas affected by protests during the last seven days and taking security review meetings to assess, coordinate and direct measures for bringing in normalcy to the Valley. After six days, all restrictions were lifted in the Valley today. Life started normally and no untoward incident has been reported from anywhere.

In Three Years, Nearly

the overall tourist experience.

Chisti said that under the Smart City project, WMDA is constructing jogging and cycling tracks along the boundary of the lake, with around 80 percent of the work already taken up.

“The jogger and cycling tracks will not only provide recreational space for visitors but will also help protect the lake from future encroachments by clearly demarcating its boundary,” he said. To address traffic congestion during peak tourist season, authorities have also operationalised a bypass road near Manasbal, allowing routine traffic between Ganderbal and Bandipora to avoid the tourist zone.

He said the development authority is also improving public facilities, including washrooms, passenger sheds, selfie points and welcome gates, while ensuring that the structures remain environment-friendly and blend with the natural landscape.

Further plans include the creation of theme parks and a rural museum around the lake in coordination with departments such as Forest and Soil Conservation.

Highlighting conservation efforts, Chisti said that dredging operations have been restarted after many years, resulting in the clearance of over one lakh square metres of lake area and reopening of several water channels.

He added that authorities are also undertaking manual de-weeding and are removing around 7,000 cubic metres of aquatic weeds by the end of March, which will significantly improve water quality and lake ecology.

The lake has also witnessed a large presence of migratory birds this winter, many arriving from Siberia, prompting authorities to organise bird and wetland festivals to highlight the ecological importance of the area.

“To tackle pollution, WMDA has adopted a six-lakh square metre catchment area for solid waste management and is coordinating with the district administration to establish an integrated solid waste management plant,” he said.

Meanwhile, he said the capacity of the proposed Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) has been enhanced and the Detailed Project Report (DPR) is currently with the UEED, with planning aimed at meeting requirements up to 2047.

Chisti added that Manasbal also holds heritage importance due to the presence of an ancient 10th-century temple, which has been stabilised and restored in phases by the development authority. “It is one of the major historical attractions of Manasbal and has been preserved carefully for visitors,” he said, adding that the focus remains on promoting tourism in a sustainable and eco-friendly manner while protecting the natural and cultural heritage of Manasbal Lake—(KNO)

Domestic LPG

This is the second increase in rate in 11 months. The price was last hiked by Rs 50 in April last year.

Alongside, the price of commercial LPG – the one used by establishments such as hotels and restaurants – was increased by Rs 114.5 per 19-kg cylinder. It now costs Rs 1,883 in Delhi. This increase comes on top of Rs 28 per 19-kg cylinder raise effected on March 1.

Commercial LPG rate has risen by Rs 302.50 this year.

Industry officials said the increase follows a steep

rise in global energy prices since the US and Israel attack on Iran last weekend triggered a wider military conflict in the oil and gas-rich Middle East.

The conflict has led to a near halt in tanker movement through the Strait of Hormuz -the narrow but critical sea lane between Iran and Oman used by Middle Eastern producers to export oil and gas to global markets. The disruption has sharply curtailed energy shipments from the region, triggering a spike in global oil and gas prices.

Since the conflict broke out on February 28, US crude soared 35.63 per cent for the biggest weekly gain in the history of the futures contract dating back to 1983. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures closed at USD 90.90 per barrel. Brent jumped about 28 per cent for its biggest weekly gain since April 2020, to settle at USD 92.69 per barrel.

Asian spot prices for liquefied natural gas (LNG) have also jumped to around USD 25.40 per million British thermal units (MMBtu) – a three-year high and more than double of last week’s levels of around USD 10 per mmbtu amid fears of supply disruptions and halted exports from Qatar.

LPG markets have also tightened as shipments from key Gulf exporters face logistical disruptions, pushing international propane and butane benchmarks higher and raising concerns over supply availability for major importers such as India.

Despite Saturday’s price increase, cooking gas in India is priced at the lowest when compared with neighbouring countries, industry officials said.

In Mumbai, non-subsidised LPG now costs Rs 912.50, Rs 939 in Kolkata and Rs 928.50 in Chennai, according to the IOC website.

Rates differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local sales tax or VAT.

The Strait of Hormuz is also a critical conduit for India’s energy imports, with roughly half of the crude oil the country buys from overseas transiting through the narrow waterway. In addition, nearly 40 per cent of India’s natural gas imports, largely in the form of LNG from Gulf suppliers like Qatar and the UAE, also pass through the strait.

For LPG, the strait is more important. India consumed 31.3 million tonne of LPG in 2024-25, of which only 12.8 million tonne were produced domestically, with the remainder imported. Of the imported quantity, 85-90 per cent come from countries like Saudi Arabia that rely on the Strait of Hormuz for transit. The Strait has been effectively blocked following a week-old escalation in the region, after US and Israeli strikes on Iran prompted Tehran to retaliate against US bases in neighbouring countries.

To augment domestic supplies, the government on Friday invoked sparingly used emergency powers to direct oil refineries to ramp up LPG production.(PTI)

Air India, IndiGo

scheduled flights have been planned to operate to and from Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Muscat, Ras Al-Khaimah and Sharjah on 7 March, to fly the stranded passengers back to India. Air India’s services to Europe & North America are operating normally through safe alternative routings.”

According to the airline, Air India Express and Air India together will operate around 50 services on March 7 connecting India with six Gulf cities — Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Jeddah, Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah.

These services include both regular scheduled flights and additional non-scheduled flights arranged after airspace over Saudi Arabia and Oman reopened, enabling airlines to partially resume operations.

The flights will connect several major Indian cities, including Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kochi, Kozhikode, Mangaluru and Thiruvananthapuram with destinations across the Gulf.

Air India said the additional services have been introduced specifically to assist passengers stranded in the region during the crisis. The airline added that the special flights are being operated after obtaining the necessary clearances from Indian authorities and aviation regulators in the Gulf region.

IndiGo has also announced a limited restart of Middle East flights, operating services to five destinations in the region on Saturday.

The airline said it understands that many travellers are still trying to reach their destinations and has planned a limited schedule while monitoring the evolving situation.

However, the disruption remains severe. IndiGo has cancelled 144 international flights scheduled for March 7 due to airspace restrictions across the region.

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T20 WC India Won't Be Bothered By Record Of Previous Losses In Ahmedabad, Says Doull

IAN S

NEW DELHI: India will not be bothered by their previous record of defeats in ICC events at Ahmedabad and will instead draw strength from a packed home crowd in their quest to win a record third Men's T20 World Cup title against New Zealand, said former Black-caps player Simon Doull.

India's not-so inspiring record in Ahmedabad has another layer of intrigue ahead of the final to be played at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Sunday. Their last two ICC white-ball defeats came at this venue – losing by six wickets to Australia in the 2023 ODI World Cup final and a 76-run loss to South Africa earlier in the Super Eights of the ongoing competition.

"Oh, look, I don't think Ahmedabad's a psychological issue for India at all. They will thrive on the environment and thrive on the fact they won't be looking at the numbers and saying they've lost two games there. I don't think that will bother them at all. I don't think they'd even be talking about that."

"It's probably only the journalists or the New Zealanders that might try and poke the bear a little bit and remind India of that. But they go there with an enormous amount of confidence - that there's going to be 1,00,000 plus probably cheering for them. You might spot the odd black jersey or black shirt somewhere supporting New Zealand.



"But they will get drowned out by the crowd and the noise that the fans will make for the Indian team. So New Zealand won't be looking to exploit any venue problems that India have at all, because I don't

think they have one. They'll just be looking to play their best brand, their best game of cricket and hope on the day that it's good enough against a very good Indian side," said Doull in an exclusive conversation with IANS on the eve of the final.

Defending champions India have already made history by becoming the first team to reach the final in successive editions. Victory in the final at

the Narendra Modi Stadium on Sunday would make them the first side to win back-to-back titles, the first host nation to lift the trophy, and the first team to claim three Men's T20 World Cup crowns.

But the challenges are still aplenty - India have never beaten New Zealand in a Men's T20 World Cup game, losing all three previous encounters despite holding an 18-11 advantage in overall T20Is. Doull acknowledged India's formidable all-round strength but said the weight of expectation would sit squarely on their shoulders rather than on New Zealand.

"This Indian side is a terrific side. They've got all bases covered, whether it be the quick bowling - Arshdeep and

Bumrah are backed up nicely by Hardik. The spinners are superb; they've got all the batting talent and depth that any team could want. I would think they are probably the ones under more pressure. If you ask 100 people, I think 95 percent of them would say that India will win that final.

"So New Zealand aren't facing any pressure. They'll have belief, there's no doubt about it. New Zealand don't go into any game believing that they're going to lose. They will have an enormous amount of belief in their ability and the fact that they can topple India. The fact is, if it's played 10 times, India will probably win it seven. New Zealand will just hope that one of those three is this final," he elaborated.

...National Selection Trials

Panwar, Chaudhary Win 10M Air Rifle; Anish Wins 25M Rapid Fire Pistol

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Divyansh Singh Panwar and Khyati Chaudhary secured the top spots in 10m Air Rifle men's and women's events, respectively, in the National Selection Trials 3 (Group A), being held at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Olympian Anish Bhanwala won the T3 final of the 25m Rapid Fire Pistol event. In the 10m Air Rifle men's finals, Tokyo Olympian Divyansh finished on top of the eight-man final with a score of 252.5. Parth Rakesh Mane finished in second place with a final score of 251.5, while Shahu Tushar Mane took third place with a score of 230.9.

The top spot in the women's finals was decided in an exciting shoot-off where Khyati prevailed over Mahit Sandhu after both athletes were tied at 251.4 after the completion of 24 shots. In the shoot-off, Khyati shot an outstanding 10.9 to secure the top spot ahead of Mahit, who shot 10.2. Mehuli Ghosh took third place with a final score of 230.1.

Earlier in the men's qualification, Dhanush Srikanth qualified for the finals in top spot with a score of 633.2, followed by Mahesh Babu Bathula, who shot 632.6. National record holder Himanshu Dhillon and Niraj Kumar shot 632.1 to qualify in third and fourth places, respectively. Parth Mane, Divyansh, and Shahu

qualified in the next spots after shooting 631.8, 630.6, and 630.4, respectively. National Champion Kiran Ankush Jadhav completed the top eight with a score of 630.3.

Mehuli qualified for the finals in top spot with a score of 633.4, followed by Sonam Uttam Maskar, who scored 633.2 in the women's event. Tilottama Sen qualified in third place with a score of 632.0, followed by Khyati and Mahit, who shot 630.7 and 629.7, respectively. Vidarsa K. Vinod (629.4), Sakshi Sunil Padekar (629.3), and Isha Anil Taksale (629.1) completed the top eight.

Olympian Anish Bhanwala continued his dominance in the 25m Rapid Fire Pistol event, securing the top spot in T3 with a score of 33 in the finals. Rajkanwar Singh Sandhu took the second place with a score of 31, while Bhavesh Shekhawat survived a shoot-off with Vijayveer Sidhu to finish in third place with a score of 29. Vijayveer finished in fourth with 23 hits.

Bhavesh, who was leading after Stage 1 of qualification, qualified in the top spot with a combined score of 583-17x, followed by Rajkanwar, who hit a combined score of 581-20x. Adarsh Singh qualified in third place with a score of 580-15x, and Anish shot 578-15x. Neeraj Kumar (576-16x), Vijayveer (576-15x), Omkar Singh (575-18x), and Pradeep Singh Shekhawat (575-15x) completed the top eight.

...T20 WC

New Zealand Will Be At Their Best Regardless Of Soil Used For Ahmedabad Pitch: Doull

NIHARIKA RAINA

NEW DELHI: Former New Zealand pacer Simon Doull thinks the Black Caps will not be fazed by the nature of the soil in the pitch for Sunday's Men's T20 World Cup final against India, to be played at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

In an exclusive conversation with IANS, Doull also talked about how the pacers can adjust their plans for bowling more slower balls, any possibility of tinkering with the combination, support for Mitchell Santner in the spin bowling department, their tactical shrewdness, and the casual contracts system.

Q. How dramatically does the choice of potentially playing the final on a mixed soil pitch shift the tactics for both sides? Also, will dew make the toss an important one to win?

A. All of the soils play slightly differently across India. The black soil plays slightly differently in one area of the country than it does in the next, as well, because of the humidity, heat, lack of sunshine, or more rain. So they all play differently across. When you go to Ahmedabad, no matter what pitch it's played on, it will be a good surface.

We've seen in IPL finals and international games there - it's just a good pitch. New Zealand won't be concerned with whether it's red or black soil - they'll know that it's going to be a good surface and they just have to make sure that they're at their best, particularly on that surface.

We haven't probably seen as much dew in Ahmedabad as we have in a couple of the other places. One thing is, we saw it a little bit in Dubai and Abu Dhabi during the T20 World Cup, where it was basically almost a foregone conclusion that once you won the toss, you would just about win the game.

You don't want to see that, and I don't think that will be the case from the final point of view. If there's a lot of dew, I'd like the umpires to step in and make sure that the ball's changed every two or three overs. You just want both sides to have a fair crack at it, whether you win the toss or lose the toss.

I've been sort of crying for that thing to



happen for a long, long time, because the dew is something that is out of your control. If you have to bowl with a soaking wet ball, it is a real disadvantage, and you're already at an advantage batting second.

If there's a lot of dew, the surface is going to slide on a bit more anyway. But you add a wet ball to that, and it becomes impossible. So, as I say, we haven't seen as much in Ahmedabad as we have in other parts of the country. Let's hope it doesn't play a role at all for either side.

Q. The data for Ahmedabad shows that slower balls from pacers have a better economy and bring wickets at a faster rate than pace-on deliveries. How do you see New Zealand pacers like Henry, Ferguson, and potentially Duffy adapt their plans as per the surface?

A. Well, New Zealand had that one outing there against South Africa, which didn't go well for them. So they will have learnt a lot from that match and possibly how to bowl, what options to use for slightly bigger ground from a bowling point of view, so that certainly assists.

You can use the square boundaries a little bit more with those off-pace, slower balls. The wicket was holding a touch more than sliding on, but you generally get a very, very good surface in Ahmedabad, and it's a great stadium. So it's just about adapting to the conditions and the situation, the noise in and around which you do know there's going to be plenty of that.

Henry's highly skilled up front, but New Zealand probably need him to pick up one or maybe two overs. If he picks

up one in the power play with that newish ball, then you can see when he does that, the side really gets on a roll with him, and he gets that confidence as well. Ferguson's been used with the new ball, and through the middle.

The selection dilemma, I guess, is whether they go with Jacob Duffy, who has been brilliant for 18 months, but just was slightly off the boil in that India series before the World Cup. That means he's just majorly warmed the bench for the tournament. If they do decide to go with that extra genuine seam bowler, then he's got an opportunity to sort of prove himself; he's got it at the elite level, which is that World Cup level.

Q. Talking of Duffy, he's the leading T20I wicket-taker in the powerplay since 2025. But he has an economy of 10.1 in this World Cup. New Zealand didn't play him in the semi-final. Do you bring him back for the final or persist with Neesham?

A. The selection dilemma is that you've got Sodhi and Duffy, who are probably the two that they would look at. If they thought the surface was going to turn a bit more, a la what happened in Sri Lanka, then they might look for Ish Sodhi. If they thought it was going to be a bit more pace-friendly, they might look at Duffy.

Neesham's got a lot more to offer with the batting; he lengthens that batting line-up, which allows the freedom for the Allens and the Seiferts and the Phillips and Chapmans and even Rachin Ravindra to go a little bit harder, because he lengthens the batting order.

PSCB Inter-Unit Hockey: BPCL Remain Undefeated, Win Second Game



IAN S

PUNE: Defending champs Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and runner-up Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) bagged full three points each on the second day of the 41st PSPB Inter-Unit Hockey Tournament at the Major Dhyanand Hockey Stadium in Pune on Friday.

With this win, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) jumped into the sole lead in the standings with six points (2 Wins), while Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) trails in second position, along with Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) with three points (1 Win) after Round 2 matches. Engineers India Limited (EIL) are still to open their account, having lost their second consecutive match.

On Friday, BPCL recorded a come-from-behind 4-3 win over Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). BPCL began the game one goal (0-1) in arrears when Gurjot Singh (17') netted a field goal for ONGC.

Thereafter, BPCL netted three goals, which included the equaliser by 2002 Olympic medallist Varun Kumar (22') off a penalty

corner (1-1) and thereafter followed it up with two more field goals through the efforts of 2012 Olympian Tushar Khandekar (37') and Vishwas G (45') to hand their team BPCL a 3-1 score line.

ONGC had Jagwant Singh (52') score and reduced the margin. However, current India international Rajinder Singh (56') added another to make it 4-2 for BPCL. In the second-last minute, ONGC netted their third when Bikash Toppo (59') made it 3-4 and completed the tally.

In the other match of the day, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) downed Engineers India Limited (EIL) 2-0. A goal each by Roshan Minz (14') and Sunil Yadav (54') in either half helped IOCL bag full points.

RESULTS (Day 2)
Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL): 4 (Varun Kumar 22'; Tushar Khandekar 37'; Vishwas G 45'; Rajinder Singh 56') bt Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC): 3 (Gurjot Singh 17'; Jagwant Singh 52'; Bikash Toppo 59'). HT: 1-1

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL): 2 (Roshan Minz 14'; Sunil Yadav 54') bt Engineers India Limited (EIL): 0. HT: 1-0

■ T20 WC

Kumble Worried Over Varun's Form, Says It'll 'Put Extra Pressure On Bumrah' In Final

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Former India spinner Anil Kumble noted that Varun Chakaravarty's slump in form could increase the pressure on Jasprit Bumrah to do well in the upcoming encounter as the Men in Blue gear up for a high-stakes summit clash of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup against New Zealand on Sunday.

Chakaravarty, the top-ranked T20I bowler, was among India's stand-out bowlers in the group stage, taking nine wickets in four matches at an economy rate of 5.2. However, since the Super Eight phase, his returns have been concerning, with just four wickets in as many games, and his economy rate has increased to 11.6.

In the Super Eights games, Chakaravarty has faced a challenging period. Before this, he had maintained consistent performances, regularly securing key breakthroughs.

"Yes, it is a bit of a concern for India



because he's been their go-to bowler, he's been their wicket-taking bowler in the middle overs. Obviously, starts putting extra pressure

on Jasprit Bumrah. So, it's not easy when the opposition sort of now look at India and say, 'okay, it's only Jasprit Bumrah's four overs

that we need to be worried about, not necessarily Varun'. Not easy from an Indian captain's perspective," Kumble said on ESPNcricinfo.

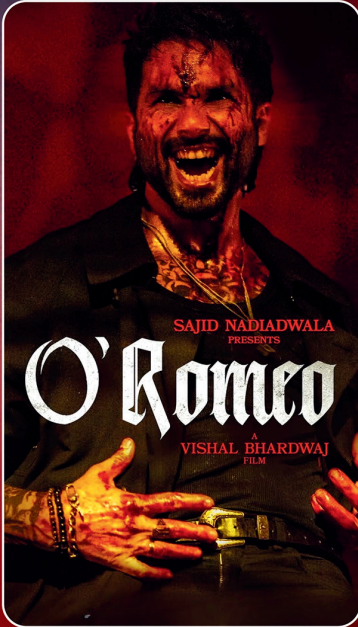
In the semi-final against England at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, Chakaravarty, who was the joint top wicket-taker in the tournament, ended up with figures of 1-64. This was his most costly T20I performance and tied for the second most expensive in tournament history. Additionally, eight of Chakaravarty's 11 most expensive T20I spells have occurred since December 2025.

Speaking of the final, India have never beaten New Zealand in T20 World Cups, and the recent history of ICC events in Ahmedabad hasn't been kind to the Men in Blue. The Kiwis, meanwhile, are yet to win a T20 World Cup title. The stage is set for a thrilling final, and Ahmedabad braces for a showdown that promises to be one for the ages.

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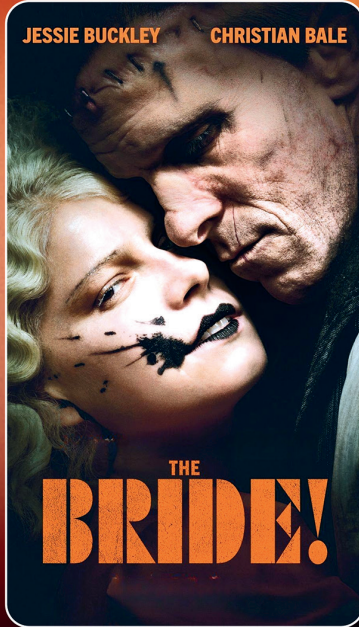
Movies Schedule
Sunday, 8th March



O' ROMEO (A)
HINDI - 11:30 AM, 03:00 PM



HOPPERS (U/A)
3D ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES - 05:30 PM
3D HINDI - 12:00 PM



THE BRIDE
ENGLISH ATMOS WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
02:30 PM, 06:30 PM

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