

# Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

Lok Bhavan Jammu & Kashmir  
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Every family must rise, ensuring that chronicles remember Udhampur's united stand, united fight, united triumph and a legacy of a narcotics-free tomorrow dedicated to nation-building: Lieutenant Governor

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## Direct Jmu-Sgr Train To Boost Tourism, Capacity Must Rise: CM



REHAN QAYOOM

**JAMMU:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said the direct Jammu-Srinagar train service would significantly improve connectivity and give a major push to the tourism sector, while asserting that the frequency and carrying capacity of trains should be enhanced further to meet public demand.

Speaking to reporters here, CM Abdullah, said the direct rail link between Jammu and Srinagar is an important development for the Union Territory, which would ease travel for residents as well as tourists and help economic activity.

When asked how much the tourism sector would benefit from the train service, Omar said, "It will make a difference."

The CM said he had repeatedly raised the issue of inadequate passenger capacity on the rail route. "I have repeatedly said that the frequency and carrying capacity of the train has been very low. Only 8-bogie trains were running between Katra and Srinagar. Now there will be 20-bogie trains. More passengers will travel on these trains. It is a good thing. It should happen," he said.

Abdullah said more needs to be done to fully utilise the potential of the service. "We want the train frequency and capacity" •P-06

Urges citizens to recognize Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan as our shared war against narcotics

Says no authority can wage this battle against drug abuse alone; it must ignite within every heart.

Let every household stand as a vigilant bastion, I call upon each resident to enlist as a warrior in this cause

Every section of society must embrace the spirit of Nasha-Mukt J&K Abhiyan so that history records that on April 27

Let us commit to shaping a Jammu Kashmir where young people carve free destinies, aspirations blaze anew

## J&K Rising With Renewed Strength To Reject Drug Menace: LG Sinha

Joins Padyatra In Udhampur For Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** In the war against drugs, unity will be our shield, resolve our weapon. Let us commit to shaping a Jammu Kashmir where young people carve free destinies, families remain whole, communities thrive strong, and aspirations blaze anew. We stand unwavering for our youth, for our future," Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Monday.

He said the battle against drug menace demands unity beyond all divisions. As citizens of Jammu Kashmir, we should pledge to stand together, bound by our common duty to protect our youth, strengthen families, and secure prosperity.

The Lieutenant Governor



was speaking at Nasha-Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan at Udhampur. The Lieutenant Governor had joined thousands of residents in Padyatra and urged every citizen to recognize Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan as our shared war

against narcotics and he said that together we must win this battle.

"Jammu Kashmir is now rising with renewed strength to reject the drug menace that corrodes our society. We vow to shield our youth from its grip. I

assure the people that the spirit of our land will not be stifled. This is the hour for society to awaken, to fight and to prevail," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said that no single authority can wage this battle against drug abuse alone and it must ignite within every heart.

"Let every village, hamlet, and city of Udhampur become fortresses of resistance; let every household stand as a vigilant bastion. I call upon each resident to enlist as a warrior in this cause," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that every section of society must embrace the spirit of Nasha-Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan so that history records that on April 27, the flame of hope, unity, and determination was kindled in Udhampur.

"Every family must rise, ensuring that chronicles remember Udhampur's" •P-06

**JAMMU KASHMIR IS NOW RISING WITH RENEWED STRENGTH TO REJECT THE DRUG menace that corrodes our society. We vow to shield our youth from its grip. I assure the people that the spirit of our land will not be stifled. This is the hour for society to awaken, to fight and to prevail,"** the Lieutenant Governor said.

## CM Emphasizes Leveraging Of AI In Tourism

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday inaugurated the 11th National Conference and Exhibition on Emerging and Innovative Trends in Engineering Technology (NCEITEET) at Government College of

Engineering and Technology (GCET), Jammu, underscoring the need to harmonize technological advancement with cultural heritage while fostering innovation-driven growth among youth.

The two-day event is being organised by GCET Jammu in •P-06

## NSA Doval Discusses Regional Situation With UAE President



AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI:** National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval called on UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan last evening and discussed the current political and security situation in the region and measures to deepen strategic partnership. This is the second high level visit of an Indian official to the Emirates in the past ten days. Earlier External Affairs

Minister S Jaishankar paid a visit to Abu Dhabi and held talks with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed on whole range of issues including the closure of Strait of Hormuz and the Iran conflict.

The discussion focused on recent developments in West Asia and their implications for regional and international security and stability, along with global energy security concerns. During, Mr Doval also •P-06

## Siraj-Ul-Uloom Sealed In Shopian; Entry Banned Under UAPA Provisions

Restricted Access Enforced At Imam Sahib Seminary; Violators To Face Strict Legal Action

JAHANGEER GANAIE

**SRINAGAR:** Authorities in South Kashmir's Shopian district on Monday sealed the premises of Darul Uloom Jamia Siraj-ul-Uloom at Imam Sahib after it was declared a "notified place" linked to an unlawful association under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967.

The action, follows an order issued by the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, under Section 8(1) of the Act, declaring the institution as being used for the purposes of an unlawful association. The notification was based on a dossier submitted by the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Shopian and other material on record.

Subsequently, District Magistrate Shopian, Shishir Gupta (IAS), invoked Section 8(4) of the



UAPA to impose a prohibitory order, effectively banning entry into the seminary premises with immediate effect from April 27.

As per the order, no individual who was not a resident of the notified premises at the time of the declaration shall be allowed to enter or remain within the compound without prior written permission from the District Magistrate.

"The restrictions are being enforced in the interest of public

safety and national security," the order reads, adding that the institution has been linked to activities prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of the nation, including alleged radicalisation of youth and financial irregularities.

The administration has, however, provided limited exemptions under the law. Close relatives of individuals residing at the institution at the time of notification •P-06

## Ahead Of HM's Visit, Ladakh Gets 5 New Districts



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Ahead of Union Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Ladakh, the administration of the Union Territory on Monday created five new districts, taking the total number of districts in the UT to seven.

In a post on X, LG of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, announced the creation of five new districts.

"A historic day for Ladakh. I have approved the notification for the creation of five new districts in Ladakh, fulfilling the aspirations and long-pending demand of the people of Ladakh," the LG

announced.

The LG said the creation of five new districts — Nubra, Sham, Changthang, Zaskar, and Drass — means Ladakh will now have seven districts, up from the existing two.

"The development is aligned with Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of a developed and prosperous Ladakh. This transformative decision, already approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs in August 2024 under the leadership of Hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs Shri Amit Shah ji, will strengthen grassroots governance, decentralise administration" •P-06

## From Pahalgam To Beyond, PM Modi Crushed Terrorism With 'Iron Fist': Shah

Says Modi Govt Ensured Decisive And Strong Response To Terrorism Nationwide

SAJID RAINA

**SRINAGAR:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi dealt a decisive blow to terrorism by taking bold steps like abrogation of Article 370, surgical strikes and Operation Sindoor.

Addressing an election rally in West Bengal, Shah, said, "PM Modi crushed terrorism which no previous leader or regime could. Operation Sindoor after the Pahalgam terror attack sent a clear message to the adversary that terrorism won't be tolerated. The government had acted firmly against terrorism and crushed it with an iron fist."

He also attacked West Bengal Chief Minister



Mamata Banerjee, accusing her government of being soft on terrorism. "The PM Modi led regime has taken decisive action against terror,

particularly in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Shah cited the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, stating that the move had strength-

ened the country's fight against terrorism and integrated Jammu and Kashmir more closely with the Union.

The Union Home Minister said the Centre's approach marked a shift from previous governments, asserting that strong measures had been taken to counter terror threats.

"Modi Ji ended Article 370, which was protected by the Congress and its ally TMC. Modi Ji dealt a decisive blow to terrorism through a surgical strike, airstrike, and Operation Sindoor. But the TMC and the Congress fed biryani to terrorists when they were in power," Shah said.

He also hit out at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge over remarks against PM Modi. •P-06

## Chouhan Announces Mega Package Of Rs 4,568 Cr For J&K

REHAN QAYOOM

**SRINAGAR:** Asserting that no village in Jammu & Kashmir will be left behind in the race for development, Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday announced a mega package for the Union Territory, including Rs 4,568 crore rural livelihood funding, 330 new roads, housing assistance and major horticulture initiatives.

The Union Minister began a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir on Monday. During his visit he will launch various development projects.

Addressing a press conference here, Chouhan, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to the progress of Jammu & Kashmir and wants every remote village to be connected with development.

He said the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)-IV Batch-II will be formally launched on April 28 at SKICC Srinagar in the presence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and •P-06

## Focus On Zero Tolerance For Terrorism Rajnath Singh To Lead Indian Delegation At SCO Meet In Bishkek

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh arrived in Bishkek on Monday to lead Indian delegation at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' Meeting, where regional security, terrorism and the geopolitical fallout of the West Asia crisis are set to dominate discussions when the conclave opens Tuesday.

According to a government statement on Monday, Singh will "highlight India's commitment towards global peace, amidst the prevailing global security challenges," while firmly underlining New Delhi's "zero tolerance for terrorism & extremism" before the 10-member grouping that spans much of Eurasia's strategic arc.

Singh is also expected to hold bilateral meetings on the sidelines with counterparts from key participating nations.



The Bishkek meeting comes at a fraught geopolitical moment. With the US-Israel and Iran confrontation and wider West Asia instability threatening energy routes, economic corridors and regional security calculations, SCO members are expected to deliberate on ways to limit broader strategic disruption.

At last year's SCO defence ministers' meeting in Qingdao, held in the immediate aftermath of the •P-06

Udhampur Road Accident

# LG Sinha meets the injured at GMC Udhampur



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**UDHAMPUR:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday visited Government Medical College, Udhampur to inquire about the health and well-

being of those who sustained injuries during the unfortunate road accident in Ramnagar, Udhampur on April 20.

The Lieutenant Governor was briefed by a team of senior doctors on

the health condition of the injured undergoing treatment at the hospital. He directed the Hospital Administration to ensure the best possible medical care for their early recovery.

# DC Sgr leads plantation drive under Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:-** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Monday led a plantation drive at Lasjan-Panathachowk integrating environmental conservation with social reform and reinforcing the message of a cleaner, greener and drug-free society under ongoing 100-day intensive Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan.

The plantation drive was organized by the District Administration Srinagar in collaboration with the Urban Forestry Division, signifying a collective responsibility towards environmental sustainability and a shared commitment to achieving the objectives of a drug-free society.

The event witnessed the participation of Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiaz Ul Aziz; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; District Social Welfare Officer, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad; DFO Urban, Dr. Mehraj Ud Din Sheikh; other senior Officers from the District Administration and Forest Depart-



ment, as well as enthusiastic College and School students.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner planted a deodar sapling and highlighted the importance of such initiatives in increasing green cover, mitigating the effects of climate change and fostering environmental awareness among citizens.

The DC emphasized that the plantation drive reflects the administration's sustained commitment to realizing the objectives of the Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, while also reaffirming its shared responsibility towards

fostering greener surroundings and enhancing the overall well-being of society. He further stated that the initiative promotes environmental sustainability and reinforces continued efforts towards achieving the goals of the 100-day Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan.

The plantation drive witnessed overwhelming support from the local community, environmental volunteers and social activists, who joined hands with officials at the venue, adding a spirit of collective responsibility and public enthusiasm to achieve the objectives of a Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan.

District NCORD meeting

# DC, SSP Sgr Call for intensified crackdown on Drug Networks

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Monthly District Level Committee on Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) was held Monday, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex to assess the effectiveness of ongoing enforcement and preventive strategies being implemented in the district.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Dr. Sandeep Chakravarty was also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, it was emphasized that intensified enforcement actions must be taken against drug peddlers and their networks. The participants called for strengthened inter-agency coordination among enforcement, regulatory, and health departments to ensure sustained action against drug-related activities.

At the outset, the Committee conducted a comprehensive review of ongoing enforcement measures particularly under the ongoing 100 days campaign of Jammu and Kashmir Nasha Mukta Abhiyan.

The Committee emphasized intensified enforcement actions against drug peddlers and their networks calling for a sustained crackdown on drug peddling and its networks. It also stressed stringent enforcement, stronger strategy to combat narcotics trafficking in Srinagar



district, besides more NDPS-linked confiscations to crush the drug networks.

The Committee strongly emphasized the need to intensify Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, particularly in educational institutions and coaching centres, to effectively sensitize youth about the severe and far-reaching consequences of drug and narcotic substance abuse. It further called for a sustained awareness drive to build resilience among young people against drug addiction.

Directions were also issued to actively promote sports and recreational activities among youth, especially in identified drug-sensitive and hotspot areas, as a proactive preventive strategy to channelize their energy in constructive pursuits and safeguard them from the menace of substance abuse.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need to further strengthen inter-agency coordination among enforcement, regu-

latory, health departments and other stakeholders to ensure sustained, coordinated and effective action against drug-related activities in the district. He highlighted the critical need to systematically dismantle the logistical and support networks facilitating drug peddling operations.

The DC also directed the RTO, Drug Controller and Police authorities to continue strict and resolute action against the persons found involved in drug trafficking or facilitating drug peddling, making it clear that no leniency would be tolerated. He further called for the comprehensive approach comprising focused enforcement, preventive awareness campaigns, and robust rehabilitation interventions to effectively address and eradicate the drug menace in Srinagar district.

He stated that the District Administration is fully committed to safeguarding society, particularly the youth from the adverse impact of drug abuse.

The SSP Srinagar on

the occasion, asserted that stringent action against identified drug hotspots will be further intensified and that drug peddlers will be dealt with firmly through criminal prosecution and all other punitive measures available under law, with zero tolerance and no leniency.

The Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Kashmir and Deputy SP Headquarters also apprised the meeting regarding recent decisive enforcement actions taken against drug peddlers in the district.

During the meeting, it was informed that amid ongoing 100 days Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir campaign, the District Administration in coordination with the Police and other stakeholder departments has launched a massive crackdown on drug peddlers and trafficking networks.

The NCORD meeting was informed that District Police has registered 26 FIRs and arrested 39 involved persons so far. Additionally nine Hotspot areas have been identified

across the District and regular Naka checking / patrolling is being conducted on these hotspot areas and proper surveillance is being kept in order to prevent drug peddling in the District.

Moreover, 157 CCTVs cameras are installed on identified hotspots in District Srinagar for proper monitoring and surveillance.

Similarly, the Regional Transport Office (RTO) Kashmir, as part of its anti-drug enforcement efforts, has disqualified 73 vehicle licences and seized 65 vehicles under the NDPS Act.

The Drug Control Department has also carried out large-scale inspections of pharmaceutical and chemist shops across various areas of Srinagar and suspended six drug licences under the relevant provisions of the Act.

Likewise, the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) has also undertaken multiple enforcement actions against offenders and registered multiple cases under relevant provisions of law.

The meeting was attended by Regional Transport Officer Kashmir, Qazi Irfan, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Aadil Fareed, Dy SP Shah Sleeth, SDM West, Iefan, Bahadur, SDM East Zubair Ahmad and officers from Excise, Drug Control Organisation, heads of Anti-Trafficking Forces and other concerned departments.

Bharat Darshan Tour 2026

# Budgam Students Return After Delhi-Agra Exposure Visit

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM:** The Bharat Darshan Tour, organized to broaden the horizons of 20 students from Below Poverty Line (BPL) families of Budgam district, concluded Monday. The six-day tour, which ran from April 22 to April 27, covered key destinations including Srinagar, Delhi, and Agra.

Upon their return, the students were warmly received by the Commanding Officer of 43 Battalion CRPF and other unit officials at the District Police Lines, Budgam.

Interacting with the touring students, the CRPF officers congratulated them for making the most of this opportunity and gaining valuable exposure by visiting sites of histori-



cal importance and other contemporary places of interest.

The students exhibited tremendous enthusiasm and confidence after completing the journey. They described the tour as a great success, asserting that it provided them with a new life experience, vast exposure, and helped them become more self-assured while deepening

their knowledge about the places they visited.

The students further opined that the tour played a vital role in celebrating India's rich heritage, fostering cultural exchange, and strengthening the spirit of national integration. They added that the experience inspired young minds to dream bigger and feel more connected to the nation.

# Five New Districts Created in Ladakh; Total Reaches Seven

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Lieutenant Governor's Office in Ladakh on Monday announced the creation of five new districts—Nubra, Sham, Changthang, Zaskar and Drass.

The notification for the new districts has been approved, taking the total number of districts in the Union Territory from two to seven.

The post stated that the decision addresses a long-pending demand of the people and aims to strengthen governance at the grassroots level.

It further mentioned that the move is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for Ladakh.

The LG Office, in the same post, referred to the role of the Ministry of Home Affairs and mentioned Union Home Minister Amit Shah, stating that the decision had already been approved by the Ministry in August 2024 under his leadership.

According to the post,



the creation of new districts will help decentralise governance and ensure faster delivery of public services, especially in remote areas.

It added that the move is expected to create opportunities for growth, employment and entrepreneurship.

In the post on X, the LG Office said, "A historic day for Ladakh... I have approved the notification for creation of five new districts... This decision, already approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs in August 2024 under the leadership of Hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs Shri Amit Shah, would strengthen grassroots governance and ensure faster delivery of public services."

# Hindware expands retail footprint with new Brand Store launch in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Hindware, India's leading bathware brand, has launched a new Brand Store in Srinagar, taking its total tally in the city to three and its presence across Jammu & Kashmir to 15 Brand Stores. Located at Alamgari Bazar, Shrihat, opposite Machami Sahib, the store MANS TRADING CO., operates as a Hindware Premiere Store for Bath & Tiles and as an Exclusive Store for appliances.

The store showcases Hindware's wide product range across faucets, sanitaryware, tiles, and appliances, including brands such as Hindware, Hindware Italian Collection (HIC), QUEO, Hindware Smart Appliances, and HIC Tiles. The integrated store format allows customers to explore a comprehensive range of contemporary designs, advanced technologies, and functional innovations under one roof.

Srinagar is witnessing steady growth in residential development, driven



by urban expansion and increased renovation activity. Alongside this, there is a gradual shift towards well-designed, durable, and reliable home solutions. The launch of this new Brand Store is aligned with these evolving consumer preferences, offering customers direct access to trusted brands and quality-driven products backed by strong after-sales support.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Nirupam Sahay, Chief Executive Officer, Hindware Limited, said, "Srinagar is an important market for us, with a growing preference for well-designed, high-

quality home solutions. Expanding to three stores here is a conscious decision that reflects our confidence in the city's long-term potential and the strength of local demand. For us, it's about being closer to our customers, improving their overall experience and providing Sukoon in their lives, and continuing to build our presence in markets that are shaping the future of India's home solutions space."

"Hindware was built on a simple belief, that quality should never be a luxury. Decades later, that belief continues to guide

## CORRECTION

I have changed my name from (RAFAQAT HUSSAIN, son of Manzoor Ahmad Mir, resident of Iqbal Colony, Baramulla, to RAFAQAT HUSSAIN MIR (new name), son of Manzoor Ahmad Mir, resident of Iqbal Colony, Baramulla (As per Aadhar). In future i will be known as RAFAQAT HUSSAIN MIR. If anybody is having any objection in this regard, he or she may contact passport office Srinagar within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice; no objection will be accepted after that.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of the general public that I intend to correct my Name in my passport bearing no M6455307 which was wrongly mentioned as Parveena Akhtar whileas my correct name is Parveen Akhtar and address from Qureshi Mohalla Nowshera Srinagar to Qureshi Mohalla Doctors Colony Lal Baza Srinagar as per my Aadhar Card bearing no. 484542170037. In this regard if anybody have any objection he/she may file the same with Passport Officer Srinagar within 7 days. No Objection will be entertained afterwards.

## OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER GANDEBAL NOTICE

Whereas, an application for Re-registration/Transfer of Ownership has been received from Mr. NEERAJ KHULLAR, Son of MAHESH KHULLAR, Resident of: 720 SEC 17A GURUGAON HR 122001 in Respect of LMV MOTOR CAR, Bearing Reg No. HR05AW2040 Chassis No MAITA2S1XJH2J33983 Engine No. SH4J12940 In favour of: ISHAQ AHMAD WANI Son of: MANZOOR AHMAD WANI Resident of: CHECK WANI MOHALLA WATALBAGH GANDEBAL JK 191131 (Transferee). Now, therefore, it is notified for the information of the general public that the representation/objection, if any in connection with proposed Re-registration/Transfer will be received within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice to the address of undersigned. No representation/objection shall be considered unless it is made in written and shall be submitted within the aforesaid period. No. JK/ARTOG/ Sd/- Dated: 26-04-2026 Assistant Regional Transport officer Ganderbal

## OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER GANDEBAL NOTICE

Whereas, an application for Re-registration/Transfer of Ownership has been received from Mr. SATINDER WALIA Son of JATINDER WALIA, Resident of: 48 SULTANPUR MEHRAULI GURGAON ROAD, NEW DELHI in Respect of LMV MOTOR CAR Bearing Reg No. DL3CAH2329 Chassis No MA3EWE1S00690679 Engine No. K10BN4639066 In favour of: IRSHAD AHMAD BHAT Son of: ABDUL AHAD BHAT Resident of: RANGIL GANDEBAL JK- 190006 (Transferee). Now, therefore, it is notified for the information of the general public that the representation/objection, if any in connection with proposed Re-registration/Transfer will be received within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice to the address of undersigned. No representation/objection shall be considered unless it is made in written and shall be submitted within the aforesaid period. No. JK/ARTOG/151/MVD/GBL Sd/- Dated: 27.04.2026 Assistant Regional Transport officer Ganderbal

# LG Sinha dedicates Indoor Stadiums to youth of Marh, Jourian

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday inaugurated the state-of-the-art Baba Jitto Indoor Stadium at Marh and Indoor Sports Stadium at Jourian, Akhnoor.

Dedicating the sports facilities to the youth, the Lieutenant Governor said that new indoor Sports Stadiums, equipped with modern shooting ranges and versatile indoor courts, are designed to inspire excellence and cultivate the champions of tomorrow.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Jammu & Kashmir is emerging as a sports powerhouse where world-class facilities are no longer restricted to major cities but



are reaching the grassroots.

He also interacted with the youth of Marh and Akhnoor through virtual medium and reiterated his commitment to ensure inclusivity in sports development and encourage greater participation among young aspirants.

The Lieutenant Governor also called upon all sections of society, particularly women and the youth to lead the movement for a 'Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir'.

The Lieutenant Governor urged citizens to report sub-

stance abuse and actively support the rehabilitation of victims. He said the police and civil administration are working tirelessly to dismantle the drug smuggling network.

The indoor sports stadiums, developed by District Administration Jammu in collaboration with HDFC Bank under its CSR initiative, are equipped with world-class amenities. These include a modern rifle shooting range, top-quality badminton and table tennis courts, dedicat-

ed rooms for indoor games such as carrom and chess, and a well-furnished reading room for the youth and locals.

Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; Dr Rakesh Minhas, Deputy Commissioner Jammu; Shri Vidhu Shekar, Additional Deputy Commissioner Jammu and representatives of HDFC Bank attended the inaugural ceremony at Lok Bhawan.

Shri Surinder Bhagat, Member of Legislative Assembly Marh; Shri Mohan Lal Bhagat, Member of Legislative Assembly Akhnoor; senior officials, prominent citizens and locals from Marh and Jourian also joined through virtual mode.

# Sopore admin turns to Tanga in unique anti-drug awareness drive

BILAL DAR

**SOPORE:** In a unique awareness drive against drug abuse, the district administration here in north Kashmir's Sopore has turned to the traditional 'Tanga' (horse-cart) as an unconventional tool to reach out to the public, especially the youth.

The innovative programme, organised by the civil administration on Monday, drew maximum public attention to the anti-drug message. The event saw participation from civil society and chemists' associations, officials said.

"The objective is to disseminate the message about the ill-effects of drugs to as many people as possible, especially the youth," Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sopore, Shabir Ahmad Raina, told media.

He said the district administration, following government directions, has a daily schedule of



outreach programmes. "We have a programme in every panchayat to spread awareness about how harmful drugs are for society," Raina said, adding that line departments are working together. "Our aim is that young people should understand — I want to save my health, my community, and my future."

Earlier in the day, the Chemists and Druggists Association took out an anti-drug rally through

the town. The main event, which started from Dak Bungalow Sopore and culminated at Clock Tower Sopore, was attended by ADC Raina, Drug Inspector Baramulla, and members of the Chemist Association Sopore.

Speaking on the occasion, Tehsildar Sopore, Sheikh Tariq, said the fight against drug peddlers would continue until the menace was eradicated from ground zero. He fur-

ther said that everyone needed to come forward and support the administration.

Showkat Mohiddin Lone of the Chemist Association Sopore said, "We always support such causes. This is the need of the hour."

Locals appreciated the administration's unique use of the Tanga. "It was a kind of unique push to spread awareness about drugs and how to save lives," the locals said.

# Rural economy, livestock sector key focus of govt policies: Javid Dar



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir Veterinary Doctors Association, Jammu, Monday organized a one-day technical conference at the Convention Centre, Jammu, on the theme "Veterinarians: Guardians of Food and Health."

Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar was the chief guest on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister lauded the indispensable role of veterinarians in safeguarding the animal and public health. He highlighted that veterinary professionals render critical services across diverse domains including field operations, farms, clinics, laboratories and aquaculture, thereby ensuring livestock well-being and strengthening food safety systems.

Emphasizing the sector's economic significance, the Minister stated that healthy and productive livestock are key towards enhancing food production, increasing farmers' income, generating employment and fostering sustainable economic



growth. He underlined that a robust and well-equipped veterinary network is vital for strengthening the rural livelihoods and building resilience within the agricultural ecosystem.

Javid Dar further stated that under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the government is consistently formulating policies aimed at the growth and development of the rural economy, with a strong focus on the livestock sector.

The Minister assured that the issues and demands raised by various speakers during the conference would be addressed on a priority basis.

Earlier, the Minister inspected exhibition stalls set up at the venue and interacted with the veterinary doctors and other stakeholders, appreciating their contributions and innovations in the field.

The conference witnessed participation from veterinary experts, professionals and stakeholders, who deliberated on the emerging challenges and explored innovative solutions in the livestock sector, reaffirming the pivotal role of veterinarians as true guardians of food and health.

# Dy CM chairs Sub-Committee meet on Gair Mumkin Khads in Jammu

Committee asserts on identification of chronic areas to address public concerns

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Monday chaired a meeting of the Sub-Committee constituted to examine the issues related to Gair Mumkin Khads in Jammu and Kashmir at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu.

The Committee stressed on protection of all flood zone areas, however, asserted on identification of chronic areas of Gair Mumkin Khads to effectively address the long-standing public concerns across all districts.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javid Ahmad Rana and Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar, as members of the Sub-Committee.

Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, Shaleen Kabra, briefed the Sub-Committee on the current status of Gair Mumkin Khads.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed that chronic areas of Gair Mumkin



Khads be identified on priority. Stressing on protection of all flood prone areas, he instructed the concerned departments to submit detailed reports in a time-bound manner. He further sought inputs and suggestions to address the issues faced by the public concerning Gair Mumkin Khads.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief

Minister underscored the importance of pro-public and practical decision-making to ensure the amicable redressal of genuine grievances. He directed the concerned authorities to expedite and ensure timely completion of zone-wise mapping, particularly in chronic areas.

The Sub-Committee held detailed deliberations on the existing status

of Gair Mumkin Khads, daryas and nallahs, along with related concerns, with the objective of providing relief to the public wherever warranted.

The Deputy Chief Minister also called for sensitization of all stakeholders and emphasized the need for scientific mapping of Gair Mumkin Khads, nallahs and adjacent non-cultivable waste lands.

The members of the Sub-Committee put forth valuable suggestions and highlighted various public concerns requiring urgent attention.

Putting forward his suggestions, Minister of Irrigation and Flood Control Department, Javid Ahmad Rana said that coordinated efforts are required by the concerned departments to ensure timely resolution of public concerns.

Speaking at the outset, Minister Agriculture Production, Javid Ahmad Dar asserted on addressing the genuine concerns of the public. Among others, the meeting was attended by Secretary Revenue Rajeev Ranjan, Chief Engineer I&FC, Special Secretary Revenue, and other concerned officers.

# Senior Army Officers, Paras Hospital delegation call on CM Omar

discussed issues of mutual interest, with particular focus on the security scenario and developmental priorities in the region.



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant General Prashant Srivastava, General Officer Commanding (GOC) 15 Corps, and Lieutenant General Balbir Singh, GOC (Designate), called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday.

During the meeting, they

discussed issues of mutual interest, with particular focus on the security scenario and developmental priorities in the region.

Separately, a deputation of Paras Healthcare Limited met the Chief Minister and apprised him of various healthcare-related matters.

# JKRO rebuts news regarding ration distribution among migrants

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** The Relief Organisation, J&K government, has strongly refuted the news item published in a local daily on April 26, 2026, regarding the ration distribution in terms of the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants.

"The report presents an incomplete picture and creates an unwarranted propaganda regarding implementation of the scheme," clarified the organisation while issuing an official rebuttal in this regard.

The organisation further clarified that ration distribution is being carried out by the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department in accordance with the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants notified vide Government Order No. 15-JK(FCS&CA) of 2026 dated 05.03.2026, from all 32 designated ration depots in Jammu district, including Mini Township Jagti which houses 5,252 migrant families.

All Relief Ration Card holders, whether PHH, NPHH, or Special Category, continue to receive 11 kg of free ration per person per month along with 1 kg of sugar, while migrants under the non-relief category such as pensioners, categorized as

NPHH, are entitled to ration at government-approved NFSA rates. The Government of J&K, through S.O. 392 and S.O. 393 of 2024 dated 13.08.2024, has amended the J&K Food Security Rules, 2021 and the Targeted Public Distribution (Control) Order, 2023 to integrate migrant ration cards into the NFSA database, thereby enabling the migrants to avail benefits of various social sector schemes. Further, Government Order No. 27-JK(DMRRR) of 2025 dated 16.05.2025 has clarified that the existing scale of ration distribution and norms for inclusion, deletion, bifurcation, conversion and corrections will continue under the Relief Organisation without change.

These clarifications have been widely communicated through public notices and information campaigns and approximately 450 migrant families have already availed benefits of social security and welfare schemes after this integration.

The department reiterated that the integration of migrant ration cards on the NFSA database scheme is being done in compliance with the relevant Government Orders and rules and the concerns raised in the said article are unfounded, misleading and contrary to facts, published without obtaining official version.

# Dev Boost for Kashmir: Shivraj to Launch PMGSY-IV Batch-II in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu & Kashmir is set to witness a significant milestone in its development journey tomorrow, as Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, will launch Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)-IV, Batch-II at a special programme at SKICC, Srinagar. The event will also be attended by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, and other senior dignitaries, making it not just an administrative occasion but a major public platform symbolizing a collective commitment to development.

Since 2000, under PMGSY, Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed the construction of 3,328 roads, creating a road network of 19,851 kilometers, along with 257 bridges. Building on this progress, PMGSY-IV, Batch-II will further accelerate development with the construction of

330 new roads covering 1,600 kilometers, at a project cost of ₹3,550 crore, benefiting 363 habitations across the region. Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan stated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the initiative reflects the Government's commitment to moving beyond announcements and delivering tangible development on the ground. He emphasized that the focus is on ensuring that roads, services and other facilities reach even the remotest villages. He also underlined that infrastructure development is being viewed as a key driver to further integrate Jammu & Kashmir into the national development mainstream.

The programme, scheduled to begin at 11:00 AM on April 28, will also see the Union Minister handing over the approval letter for PMGSY-IV, Batch-II to



the Chief Minister. In addition, approvals under DAY-NRLM will be released, reaffirming the Centre's commitment to creating 'Lakhpati Didis' in Jammu & Kashmir. The visit reflects a broader focus that goes beyond road construction, encompassing rural economic growth, women's self-help groups, and social empowerment. Currently, nearly 96,000 Self-Help Groups, 7,500 Village Organizations, and 650 Cluster-Level Federations are actively strengthening the rural livelihoods ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir. Through the efforts

of thousands of Community Resource Persons, along with initiatives in skill development, entrepreneurship, and women-led leadership, a new environment of confidence and income generation is being fostered in rural communities.

From the perspective of the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, farmers in Jammu & Kashmir are being supported through multiple flagship schemes, including PM-Kisan, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, Horticulture Mission, Farmer Producer Organizations, e-NAM, and micro-irrigation initiatives. In this broader context, Shivraj Singh Chouhan's visit also carries a strong message of trust, participation, and results-oriented governance for farmers, horticulturists, rural families, and women's groups.

# HC quashes PSA detention of AAP MLA Mehraj Malik

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court on Monday quashed the preventive detention of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Mehraj Malik under the Public Safety Act (PSA), holding that the grounds for invoking the stringent law were not sustainable.

Malik, who represents the Doda constituency, was detained on September 8, 2025, on allegations related to public order. He was initially lodged in Bhande-

wah jail and later shifted to Kathua district jail.

The legislator had approached the High Court through a habeas corpus petition, challenging the detention order as arbitrary and violative of his legal rights. A division bench, after hearing the matter, set aside the order, paving the way for Malik's release from preventive custody.

The case had drawn attention as it involved the detention of a sitting MLA under the PSA in the Union Territory. (KNS)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

## Rural Roads For Real Development

**F**ora family in a high-altitude hamlet in the Kashmir Valley, a new road isn't just "infrastructure"—it's the difference between reaching a hospital in time or losing a loved one. It's the difference between a farmer's apple crop reaching the market at its peak or rotting in the shed because of a mudslide. While the gleaming new tunnels and high-speed rail lines make for great headlines, the real heartbeat of progress is felt in the quiet, remote villages that have been cut off by snow and isolation for generations. More Than Just Asphalt

The recent 3,566 crore allocation announced by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is a massive investment, but to the people on the ground, it's a promise of dignity.

**For the Student:** It means the walk to school doesn't involve trekking through knee-deep slush.

**For the Farmer:** It means their livelihood is no longer at the mercy of a seasonal dirt track.

**For the Elderly:** It means a doctor is finally within reach, even in the dead of winter.

Turning Policy into Peace of Mind

As the baton passes to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's administration to implement this "gift" from the Prime Minister, the focus has to shift from the ledger to the landscape. A project this size lives or dies by its integrity. It's not just about laying gravel; it's about ensuring that every rupee translates into a road that can survive a Himalayan winter. The local communities deserve:

**Honesty in the Work:** Every bit of funding should reach the soil it was intended for.

**Real Durability:** Building roads that don't wash away with the first spring thaw.

**Urgency:** Treating these "missing links" with the same priority as a national highway.

The Bottom Line

True development isn't measured by how fast a train can zip through the valley; it's measured by how easily a villager can connect with the rest of the world. If executed with heart and transparency, this funding won't just build roads—it will build a future where no Kashmiri resident feels left behind in the cold.

# Imam And His Unpaid Dignity



SYED MAJID GILANI

**I**t was the day before yesterday. I was on my way when I noticed a man standing quietly by the roadside. His appearance suggested he was a Maulana, simple clothes, a calm face, and a certain dignity that needed no introduction. He raised his hand gently, asking for a lift. I stopped. He sat beside me, and for a few moments, there was silence. Then, as often happens in simple journeys, a conversation began. He spoke about his life, years spent in madrasas, immersed in books and discipline. Step by step, he had completed his religious education. Today, he serves as an Imam and Khateeb in a mosque.

We spoke of ordinary things, family, children, daily life. He told me his children go to school. He lives in a rented room in Srinagar, far from his native place. Like so many others, he is simply trying to build a life. Then I asked him a simple question: how much do you earn?

He paused, not long, just enough for the silence to deepen. Then he said quietly that his monthly income was around seven thousand rupees. His words were simple, but they did not pass so easily. Everything around us remained unchanged, the road, the traffic, the people moving past us. But within me, something shifted. I looked at him again.

Here was a man who leads prayers five times a day. He teaches children how to read the Qur'an. He reminds people of what is right, speaks about living peacefully, serving humanity without any bias, and emphasizes universal brotherhood. And yet, he lives with so little. He even mentioned that most



imams, in his experience, live the same way. I had no reply. When we reached his destination, he smiled, thanked me, and stepped out. Within moments, he disappeared into the crowd. But his words did not leave me.

That night, I lay in bed, but sleep refused to come. I kept thinking, he is not just an Imam. He is a father, a husband, someone's son. He has responsibilities, rent, food, children's education, health care, social obligations, no different from anyone else. We respect people like him. We greet them with honour. We listen when they speak. We call their role noble, even sacred. But perhaps, without realising it, we do not always think about their lives beyond the mosque.

Our mosques are beautiful, clean, peaceful, well maintained. Carpets are replaced, walls repainted, lights renewed. But the one who stands there every day, what does his life look like when he returns home? Why is it that those who guide us, show us, and teach us the way for a peaceful, humane living are often left to struggle in silence? Why is there so little stability in their lives?

Why does a profession that shapes hearts and minds not carry the same security as many others?

In many places, their positions are uncertain. A small disagreement, a change in the mohalla or masjid committee, or even a difference of opinion can take away their livelihood. And when that happens, it is not just one person who suffers, it is an entire family. Homes change, children's education is disrupted, and life begins again under a shadow of uncertainty.

In other private sector professions, there is at least some structure, leave, job security, support during illness. But here, often, there is none. And still, they continue. They continue to stand before us, to guide, to teach, to remind.

And I wondered, what if the issue is not a lack of resources, but a lack of collective will? In most mosques, there are resources, quiet streams of income from shops, rooms, or land attached to the masjid. Yet much of this is spent on beautification and renovation, while the one who is the soul of the mosque, the Imam, often remains underpaid, despite being a qualified Aalim, Molvi, Fazil, or Mufti who has

earned his knowledge through years of dedication and hard work.

There is also a need to think ahead. Religious institutions like Darul Uloom could equip their students with additional skills, technical training, and computer education, so that alongside serving as Imams and Khateeb, they can earn with dignity and independence in today's world.

As for those who serve solely in this role, we must ensure their dignity by providing fair salaries and a sense of job security. And where mosque resources fall short, the solution may not be far. In almost every locality, there are a few people who have enough, who are capable of helping. Not everyone, but a few.

What if just a handful of them came together? Quietly, respectfully. Not as charity, but as responsibility. Even a small, regular contribution, if managed properly, could bring meaningful change. It could offer stability, ease, and peace of mind. Because this is not just about money. It is about dignity. It is about respect. It is about ensuring that those who serve the community are able to live without constant worry.

And perhaps, beyond support, there is also a need to empower, so that those who dedicate their lives to faith are not left dependent, but are given the means to stand with strength and independence. That night, sleep did not come. Perhaps because it was not just his story.

It felt like something we all see, but rarely stop to truly notice. Since that day, whenever I pass by a mosque, I do not just see a building. I remember a man, sitting beside me, speaking softly about his life. He only asked me for a lift that day. But he left me with a thought that still has not let me sleep.

*Syed Majid Gilani is a Government Officer, storyteller, and opinion writer focusing on family, faith, resilience, and human values. He can be contacted at syedmajid6676@gmail.com*

## Rich Schools, Poor Teachers: The Education Paradox

Why Glossy Campuses Can Hide An Uncomfortable Truth—And Why Fixing It Is In Everyone's Interest

DR. REYAZ AHMAD

**W**alk past many private schools today and you may feel you are looking at a corporate headquarters rather than a place of learning. Tall gates, air-conditioned corridors, smart boards, glossy brochures, international affiliations, and a fee structure that signals prestige. Parents often interpret these visible signals as proof of quality. In many cases, private schools do deliver good outcomes—structured routines, strong discipline, and competitive results.

But behind this polished image lies a contradiction we rarely discuss in public: many teachers in private schools remain underpaid, overworked, and professionally insecure.

On the other side of the spectrum, government schools in many regions may struggle with infrastructure constraints—crowded classrooms, limited resources, aging buildings, or inconsistent facilities. Yet government teachers, by and large, enjoy job security, regulated pay scales, retirement benefits, and social dignity that private school teachers often lack.

This is the education paradox of our time: some schools look rich, while their teachers live poor; some schools look poor, while their teachers live secure. The question is not about praising one sector and blaming the other. The question is more fundamental: Are we valuing education—or just appearances?

**The hidden economy of "low-cost" teaching**  
Let us speak plainly. A teacher's salary is not just a personal matter—it is an education quality issue. When private schools keep salaries low, they may reduce costs and increase margins or invest in marketing, infrastructure, or expansion. The school's brand rises, but the teacher's status remains fragile.

In many places, private school teachers face conditions that would surprise those who pay premium fees. They are asked to take extra classes, manage administrative duties, handle co-curricular programs, write reports, pre-



pare "inspection files," support admissions, and participate in weekend events—often without additional compensation. Many work under short-term contracts, and the fear of non-renewal becomes a silent tool of control.

A teacher who feels insecure is less likely to innovate in the classroom. A teacher who is underpaid may take tutoring after hours just to manage household expenses. A teacher who is exhausted cannot deliver joyful learning. Over time, these pressures do not stay confined to staff rooms—they spill into the learning experience of children.

In any profession, sustained high performance requires stability and dignity. In teaching, it is even more important because the "product" is not a commodity; it is the growth and confidence of young minds.

**The "salary on paper" problem**  
Another uncomfortable reality is that salary practices in some private schools are not always transparent. Reports have circulated for years about cases where salaries are shown on paper as compliant with regulations, paid formally through cheques or bank transfers, and then a portion is allegedly taken back in cash. Even where such practices are not widespread, the perception itself damages trust and discourages talented educators from staying in the profession.

Whether these cases are occasional or common, they point to a structural vulnerability: the teacher in a private school often lacks bargaining power and lacks institutional protection. Job insecurity makes it difficult to raise concerns. Teachers fear being labelled "non-cooperative" or "not aligned with the school

culture." In a profession built on moral authority, this is a painful contradiction.

**Government schools: modest buildings, stable lives**

Government schoolteachers are not automatically "better" teachers, and government schools are not automatically "worse" schools. The reality is varied. Yet, one cannot deny that government teachers typically operate within clearer service rules and pay structures. This stability supports long-term professional planning: training, upskilling, and continuity in career.

That said, government schools also carry challenges—bureaucratic processes, transfer policies, political pressures in some areas, and sometimes a mismatch between policy design and classroom reality. Still, when the system provides basic dignity and predictable compensation, it strengthens the idea that teaching is a respected career.

So why does the private sector—often charging higher fees—struggle to ensure comparable respect and security for its teachers?

**The myth: "Parents pay for facilities, not teachers"**

Many private schools invest heavily in what parents can immediately see: buildings, buses, uniform branding, digital platforms, and extracurricular programs. Teacher welfare is less visible. It does not appear on billboards. It cannot be shown in a brochure the way an auditorium or smart lab can.

But parents should remember a simple truth: a school is not a building; it is the people inside it. A smart board cannot replace a motivated teacher. A well-designed campus cannot compensate for high staff turnover. A premium fee does not

guarantee premium learning if the teacher is stressed, underpaid, and fearful.

In education, the "software" matters more than the "hardware." The teacher is the software.

**NEP 2020: visionary, but silent where it hurts**

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is widely appreciated for its vision—holistic development, foundational literacy and numeracy, flexibility, vocational integration, teacher education reforms, and a renewed focus on learning outcomes. It talks about teacher training and professional standards. Yet many observers have noted that it remains largely quiet on the concrete issue of teacher salaries and service conditions in private schools.

This silence matters. Because without enforceable minimum standards for pay, workload, and job security, teacher development becomes a slogan rather than a lived reality.

A nation cannot claim to transform education while leaving a large portion of its teaching workforce in uncertainty. If we want quality education, we must treat teacher welfare as a core pillar, not an optional add-on.

**Why this is not just a teacher issue**

Some may argue: "If teachers are unhappy, they can switch jobs." But education is not like a typical corporate sector where switching is easy and stable. The cost of teacher instability is paid by children and parents.

When teachers leave frequently, students lose continuity. Learning becomes fragmented. School culture becomes transactional. Even the best curriculum fails without stable delivery. Moreover, low pay discourages talented graduates from entering the profession. Over time, teaching becomes a "last option" rather than a respected aspiration.

That is how a country quietly underinvests in its future.

The paradox also creates an ethical tension: when schools charge high fees but compensate teachers poorly, a trust gap emerges. Parents feel they are paying for quality; teachers feel they are carrying the burden without recognition. No educa-

tion system can sustain itself on such imbalance.

**A way forward: four reforms that can start now**

If we are serious about solving this paradox, we need practical steps—not only moral appeals.

1) Fair pay as a minimum standard

Governments and regulatory bodies should ensure that private school teacher salaries meet clear minimum benchmarks aligned with qualifications and experience. "Cost-saving" should not mean "teacher exploitation."

2) Transparent salary structures

Schools should publish salary bands and service rules, just as many organizations publish pay scales. This will reduce under-the-table practices and build credibility with both teachers and parents.

3) Stronger monitoring and grievance mechanisms

Regulation should not be limited to infrastructure, safety, and examination results. It must include teacher welfare audits, anonymous complaint channels, and meaningful penalties for non-compliance.

4) Professional dignity and job security

Contracts should protect teachers from arbitrary dismissal and ensure reasonable workload limits. A teacher who lives under constant fear cannot build confidence learners.

**The conclusion we must not avoid**

A strong education system cannot be built on weak foundations—and teachers are the foundation.

If we want better learning outcomes, better values, and better futures, we must treat teaching as a dignified profession in every sector: private or government. Fancy infrastructure can impress visitors, but only a respected teacher can shape a generation.

So, the real question remains: Will we keep celebrating schools for their appearances, or will we start measuring schools by how they treat their teachers?

Because a nation that underpays its teachers is not saving money. It is underinvesting in its future.

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Love In The Time Of Loans

# The Hidden Sorrow Behind The Celebration



DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

In India, marriage in poor families is often a paradox of joy and hardship, where cultural pride meets economic struggle. For many low-income households, a wedding is not just a personal milestone but a social obligation that demands enormous financial sacrifice. The pressure to host a respectable ceremony, feed guests lavishly, and provide gifts or dowry often forces families into debt. Even in rural areas, where simplicity was once valued, the influence of urban lifestyles and social media has raised expectations.

Poor families feel compelled to imitate the grandeur of wealthier weddings, fearing that a modest celebration will invite gossip or diminish their social standing. The emotional burden is immense. Parents, especially fathers, spend years saving for their daughters' marriages, often at the cost of education, healthcare, or basic comforts. Mothers silently bear the anxiety of arranging jewelry, clothing, and household items for their daughters, knowing that each rupee spent is hard-earned. In many cases, loans are taken from local moneylenders at high interest rates, trapping families in cycles of poverty long after the wedding festivities end. The dowry system, though legally banned, continues in subtle forms, adding another layer of financial strain.

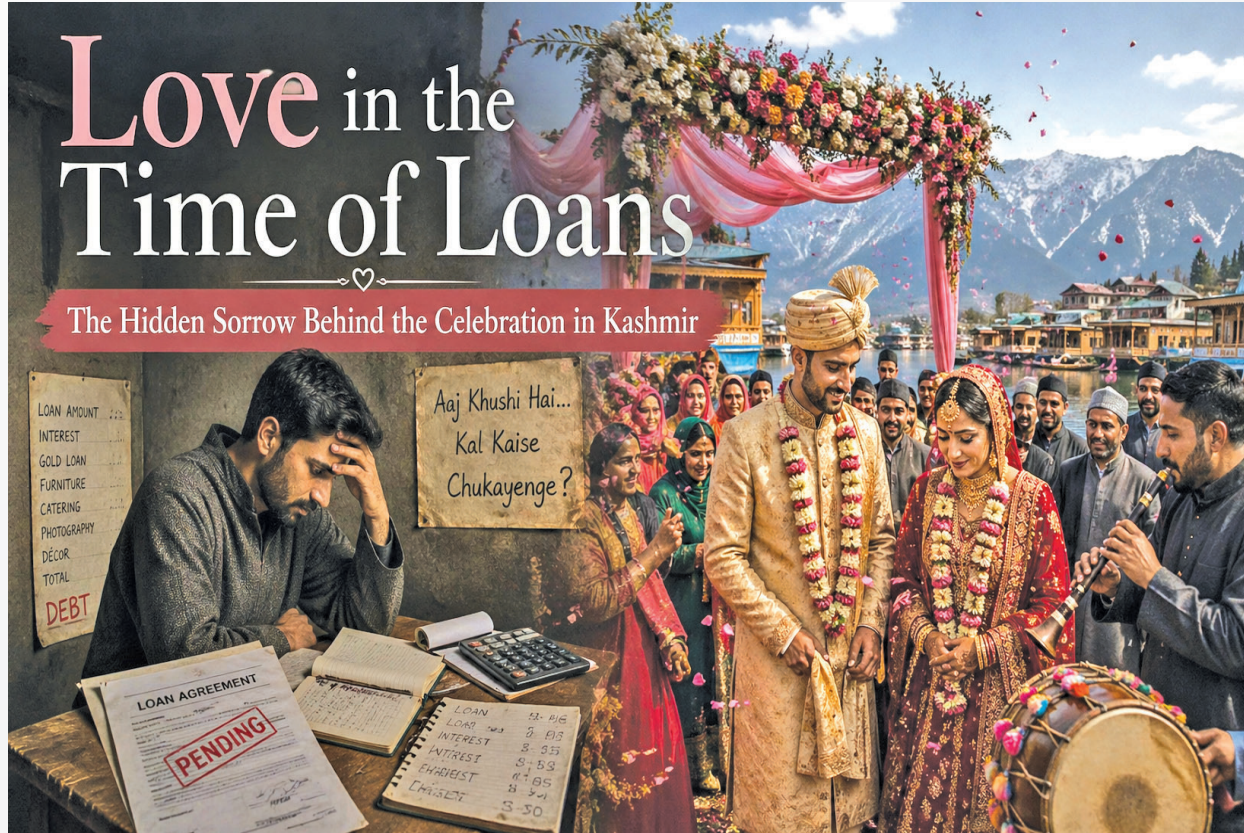
For the daughters themselves, marriage becomes both a dream and a dilemma. While they look forward to companionship and a new life, they are painfully aware of the burden their marriage places on their parents. In some communities, girls are married off early to reduce expenses or avoid the stigma of remaining unmarried. This often curtails their education and limits their opportunities for independence. The social expectation that a daughter's marriage defines family honor leaves little room for choice or delay. Despite these hardships, the spirit of celebration persists. Poor families pour their hearts into making weddings beautiful within their means. Villagers contribute food, labor, and music; neighbors lend utensils and decorations; and community solidarity often replaces material luxury.

The rituals—whether Hindu, Muslim, or Christian—retain their emotional depth, emphasizing blessings, unity, and faith. Yet, the underlying inequality remains stark. The contrast between the glittering wedding halls of the rich and the humble courtyards of the poor reflects the broader divide in Indian society.

The Indian scenario of marriage in poor families is thus a story of resilience amid adversity—a testament to how love and tradition endure even when weighed down by economic hardship. It calls for empathy and collective responsibility, reminding society that the sanctity of marriage lies not in its cost but in its sincerity.

Kashmiri marriage culture is a continuous flow of rituals, emotions, and community participation that has evolved over centuries yet retains its essence of sanctity and celebration. A wedding in Kashmir is not simply the union of two individuals but a collective affirmation of heritage, faith, and social bonds. The ceremonies stretch across several days, each moment layered with symbolism, music, and feasting, creating an atmosphere where tradition and festivity merge seamlessly.

The engagement, known as Kasamdry, marks the formal agreement between families, often accompanied by horoscope matching, prayers, and the exchange of gifts. A special rice pudding called Var is prepared by the aunts of both families, symbolizing sweetness and prosperity. From this moment, preparations begin in earnest, and the homes of both bride and groom undergo Livun, a ceremonial cleaning and decorating process. Mud floors are polished, ovens are prepared, and walls are adorned with fresh paint or floral motifs, reflecting the belief that marriage is a sacred transition requiring purification of both body



The Hidden Sorrow Behind the Celebration in Kashmir

and space. In the evenings leading up to the wedding, women gather for Wanjun, singing folk songs and playing instruments like the tumbaknaer. These gatherings are filled with joy, laughter, and dance, reinforcing community ties and creating a festive atmosphere. The bride's home is decorated in Krol Khanun, with flowers and lights, while the Maanziraat or mehndi ceremony sees her hands and feet adorned with henna, accompanied by playful teasing and music. These rituals are not only aesthetic but deeply symbolic, representing fertility, joy, and the blessings of elders. The wedding day itself is a blend of solemnity and festivity. Among Kashmiri Muslims, the Nikah is conducted by a qazi, with Quranic verses recited and the consent of both bride and groom emphasized.

Among Kashmiri Pandits, the rituals are Vedic in nature, involving offerings to deities, chanting of mantras, and blessings from elders. Attire plays a central role: brides wear richly embroidered pherans or lehengas, often in shades of red and gold, while grooms don achkans or sherwanis. Jewelry, especially gold, is considered auspicious, and the bride's adornments often include heirloom pieces passed down through generations.

The feast, known as Wazwan, is perhaps the most celebrated aspect of Kashmiri weddings. Prepared by master chefs called wazas, it is a multi-course meal featuring delicacies like rogan josh, yakhni, tabak maaz, and gushtaba. The meal is served on large copper plates called tramis, shared by groups of four, symbolizing unity and equality. The communal act of eating together reinforces the idea that marriage is not just about two families but about the larger social fabric. The artistry of Wazwan lies not only in its flavors but in its presentation, with dishes arranged in a sequence that reflects Kashmiri culinary philosophy.

Post-wedding rituals carry equal weight. The bride's departure, known as Ruksati, is an emotional moment, marked by tears and blessings. At the groom's home, she is welcomed with warmth and rituals that signify her new role in the household. In Kashmiri Pandit tradition, the Ghar Atchun ceremony involves the bride lighting a lamp in her new home, symbolizing the arrival of prosperity and light. These acts are not mere formalities but deeply rooted in the cultural understanding of marriage as a transformative journey.

Ultimately, the struggle of marriageable daughters reflects the tension between tradition and modernity, between collective honor and individual freedom. It is a plight that demands empathy, reform, and a reimagining of cultural values so that daughters are not seen as burdens to be married off but as individuals with dreams, rights, and the power to shape their own destinies. The rising cost of marriage has become one of the most pressing challenges for poor families, turning what should be a joyous occasion into a source of anxiety and financial strain. In many communities, weddings are expected to be lavish affairs, with elaborate feasts, ornate decorations, and expensive gifts. Social competi-

tion often drives families to spend beyond their means, fearing that a modest celebration will be seen as a sign of weakness or failure. For poor households, this creates a cycle of debt and hardship, as parents feel compelled to borrow money, sell land, or mortgage property simply to meet societal expectations.

The burden falls most heavily on daughters, who are often perceived as financial liabilities because of dowry demands and the costs associated with their weddings. Families may delay or compromise on education and healthcare for their daughters in order to save for marriage expenses, reinforcing inequality and limiting opportunities for young women. The emotional toll is equally severe: parents live with constant worry about how they will afford the ceremonies, while daughters may feel guilt for being seen as the cause of financial distress.

The cultural emphasis on grand feasts, particularly in regions like Kashmir where the Wazwan is central to wedding celebrations, magnifies the problem. Hiring master chefs, preparing dozens of dishes, and hosting hundreds of guests is considered essential, even though it can drain the savings of a poor family. Jewelry, clothing, and venue costs add further layers of expense. What begins as a sacred union often becomes a showcase of wealth, where families compete to outdo one another, leaving the poorest most vulnerable. This escalating cost of marriage perpetuates social inequality.

Wealthier families can afford extravagance, while poorer ones

poetry, and embroidery. It underscores spirituality, with prayers and blessings woven into every stage. At the same time, modern influences have introduced changes: weddings today may feature DJs alongside traditional singers, designer outfits alongside pherans, and banquet halls alongside ancestral homes. Yet, the essence remains intact—the belief that marriage is a sacred bond celebrated through community, culture, and continuity.

Despite political upheavals, migration, and globalization, these rituals continue to thrive, often becoming even more symbolic in times of uncertainty. For Kashmiri Pandits displaced from the Valley, weddings serve as cultural anchors, preserving identity in diaspora. For Kashmiri Muslims, weddings remain occasions to reaffirm faith and community solidarity. Oral traditions, folk songs, and culinary practices are passed down, ensuring that each generation inherits not only the rituals but the meanings behind them. In essence, Kashmiri marriage culture is a living heritage, where every song, dish, and ritual carries centuries of meaning.

Marriage is a celebration of love, but also of resilience, artistry, and collective memory. The continuity of these traditions ensures that each wedding is not just a personal milestone but a reaffirmation of Kashmiri identity itself. The laughter of Wanjun, the aroma of Wazwan, the solemnity of Nikah or Vedic chants, and the tears of Ruksati together weave a narrative that is both timeless and evolving. To witness or



struggle to maintain dignity under the weight of expectations. In some cases, daughters remain unmarried because their families cannot afford the expenses, leading to social stigma and emotional suffering. The practice of dowry, though legally prohibited, continues in subtle forms, adding another financial burden.

Beyond rituals, Kashmiri marriage culture reflects deeper values. It emphasizes hospitality, as weddings are open to extended networks of relatives and neighbors. It highlights artistry, through music,

partake in a Kashmiri wedding is to step into a world where tradition and modernity coexist, where community and individuality balance, and where the sacred and the celebratory merge into one continuous flow of cultural expression.

The plight of marriageable daughters in many societies is a complex issue shaped by cultural expectations, economic realities, and social pressures. For countless young women, the period of life when they are considered "marriageable" becomes less a celebration of

choice and more a burden of obligation. Families often view daughters through the lens of marriage prospects, measuring their worth by beauty, education, dowry, or social standing. This reduces individuality to a checklist and places immense pressure on women to conform to ideals that may not align with their own aspirations. The anxiety of parents about securing a "good match" often translates into restrictions on daughters' freedom, limiting their education, career opportunities, and personal choices.

The emotional toll is profound: daughters may feel trapped between filial duty and personal desire, silenced in decisions that most directly affect their lives. The stigma of remaining unmarried beyond a certain age further intensifies the plight, as society often labels such women as failures or burdens, regardless of their achievements in other spheres.

Marriageable daughters also face scrutiny over their physical appearance, behavior, and reputation. Every gesture is monitored, every choice judged, with the fear that a misstep could jeopardize marriage prospects. This constant surveillance erodes confidence and autonomy, leaving many women unable to express individuality. In patriarchal settings, the emphasis on marriage as the ultimate goal overshadows the importance of self-fulfillment, education, and independence. Even when women pursue careers or higher studies, they are often reminded that these achievements are secondary to the "real" milestone of marriage.

Yet, amidst these challenges, there is resilience. Many daughters negotiate these pressures with quiet strength, asserting their right to choose partners or to delay marriage until they are ready. Some families are beginning to recognize the importance of supporting daughters' ambitions beyond marriage, though such shifts remain uneven. The plight of marriageable daughters is not simply about weddings but about the larger question of agency—whether women are allowed to define their own lives or are compelled to live within the boundaries set by tradition and societal expectation.

Yet, there are voices calling for reform. Some communities are beginning to advocate for simpler weddings, emphasizing the spiritual and communal aspects over material display. Religious leaders, social activists, and progressive families encourage ceremonies that focus on blessings and togetherness rather than competition. Such movements, though slow, offer hope that the culture of costly marriages can be reshaped into one that values dignity over extravagance.

The plight of poor families in the face of rising marriage costs is not

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## Direct Jmu-Sgr Train

to increase," he said. The Chief Minister said he would place certain suggestions and concerns during the April 30 function in the presence of the Railway Minister.

He also spoke on economic growth and entrepreneurship, saying Jammu and Kashmir was working towards creating a strong startup culture to generate opportunities for youth. "It is very important to have a startup culture. There is nothing hidden in this. Many states have started this before us. We are a little behind them, but we get to learn from their experience. We do not need to repeat their mistakes," he said.

Omar said the government had already taken policy measures in this direction. "That is when the startup policy was announced in 2024. After that, funding was provided in the budget. We are trying to create an ecosystem for start-ups," he said.

He said institutions were also showing interest in innovation and incubation support. "Government College of Engineering Technology has asked for an incubation centre. We will work on that this year," he said.

Replying to a question regarding the reported attack on former US President Donald Trump, the Chief Minister condemned violence in politics and said disagreements should never translate into physical harm. "Thank God, he survived. No one wants anything to happen to him. Politics is a very bad thing. No matter how many disagreements you have, it is okay. Express them verbally. It is not right to harm anyone," he said.

He said Jammu and Kashmir had suffered the consequences of political violence for decades and therefore understood its human cost better than many others. "Who knows this better than us in Jammu and Kashmir? In the last 30-35 years, people from all parties, including National Conference, BJP, Congress, PDP, CPM or you take the name of any party, our workers, our leaders, have been targeted with bullets and terrorism. It should not happen," Omar said.

He further said that wars create avoidable suffering, and durable peace must remain the priority. "No one has been able to explain to us why this war is needed. Whatever happened, you did it. You did it wrong. Organise a lasting peace," he said—(KNO)

## CM Emphasizes

technical collaboration with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur and in association with World Consortium of Universities.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also inaugurated the newly constructed School of Architecture (SoA) building at GCET, developed at a cost of 19.71 crore, and extended his best wishes to the faculty and students. Emphasizing the significance of architecture, he urged students to adopt a forward-looking approach while staying rooted in the region's cultural and historical identity.

"While it is important to embrace modernity, it is equally important to remember where we come from. Not every building needs to be made of glass and steel. Our structures must reflect our heritage and preserve our cultural ethos," he said, expressing concern over the declining focus on heritage conservation in both public and private construction across Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting the conference theme, the Chief Minister described it as relevant and thought-provoking, particularly for its focus on emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning. He termed the deliberations as an "eye-opener," especially in the context of tourism.

Reflecting on his experience as Tourism Minister, he noted that leveraging AI could significantly enhance visitor experience, destination management and service delivery in Jammu and Kashmir. However, he cautioned that technological integration must be balanced with employment generation.

"In a region like ours, where unemployment remains a concern, we must ensure that technology complements human effort rather than replacing it. Tourism is not just an economic driver but also a major source of livelihood across regions and sectors," he said.

The Chief Minister emphasized that while attracting tourists to Jammu and Kashmir is not difficult, ensuring repeat visits requires delivering a consistently enriching experience. He cited diverse tourism segments including pilgrimage tourism such as Mata Vaishno Devi, border tourism at places like Suchetgarh, and leisure tourism across the Valley and other regions, stressing the need to enhance infrastructure and services across all segments.

Addressing infrastructure gaps at GCET, the Chief Minister announced that funds shall be provided this year for the construction of an auditorium to provide better facilities for students and academic events.

He also responded positively to a student's request for an incubation centre, assuring that the government would make every effort to establish such a facility within the institution and for which work to be started from this year. He underscored the importance of nurturing a startup ecosystem and enabling youth to become job creators.

"We may not be able to provide jobs to everyone, but we can certainly create an environment where our youngsters become entrepreneurs and innovators. It

is our responsibility to support those who dare to dream and execute," he said.

Reaffirming the government's commitment, he assured that all necessary steps would be taken to strengthen institutional infrastructure and support systems, ensuring that GCET continues to evolve as a premier institution.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister released the e-proceedings of the conference, comprising 28 shortlisted research papers along with messages. He also visited various exhibition stalls showcasing innovative models and projects by students from engineering, technology and management institutions across Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country. Interacting with participants, he took keen interest in their ideas and even keenly observed demonstrations given by students.

He also visited exhibitions put up by power companies and toured various facilities of the institution, including the School of Engineering.

Speaking at the event, Minister for Education Sakeena Itoo emphasized the critical role of innovation and research in shaping the future of education. "Innovation today is not a luxury but a necessity. Our institutions must evolve as centres of excellence, research and innovation," she said.

She further stressed the need to empower students as job creators rather than job seekers. "We want our youth to become leaders, innovators and contributors to nation-building," she added, noting that the newly inaugurated School of Architecture would play a vital role in shaping not just infrastructure but communities and lifestyles.

MLA Nagrota Devyani Rana, Organizing Chairperson from Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur Prof. Raja Dutta, and Principal/Director GCET Sameru Sharma also addressed the gathering, highlighting the significance of collaborative research, academic excellence and innovation-driven growth.

Two alumni of GCET also shared their professional journeys, inspiring students to pursue innovation and perseverance in their careers.

The conference brought together academicians, researchers, industry experts and students from across the country, serving as a platform for exchange of ideas on emerging trends and technologies shaping the future of engineering.

## J&K Rising With

united stand, united fight, united triumph and a legacy of a narcotics-free tomorrow dedicated to nation-building.

In the coming 83 days, let us reshape society's perception and treat those trapped in addition as sufferers who deserve compassion and not condemnation. Rehabilitation must restore their dignity and reintegrate them into the community. Let collective energy drive the Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir campaign. Transform awareness into accountability, ensuring public participation deepens and highlight the vital role of women and youth in leading this fight," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that this war against drug menace will unfold in phases, each demanding courage and devotion. He further added that awareness campaigns must enlighten families about drug addiction symptoms and dangers of narcotics and they should be reminded that the threat is not distant, but among us.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor flagged off an Anti-drug awareness Bike rally and launched Mini-Olympics under the Nasha Mukta J&K Campaign. He also handed over sanction letters to individuals recovered from substance abuse, and felicitated the winner of Nasha Mukta Ideas Championship.

## Cloudy Weather, Rain

spell of generally cloudy weather with light rain or thundershowers at scattered places is likely between May 3 and 4, while the period from May 5 to 8 is expected to remain mostly dry, with isolated brief showers.

The MeT department has issued an advisory asking farmers to suspend farm operations on April 28 in view of the expected weather activity.

At the same time, hot and dry weather conditions are likely to persist in parts of the Jammu division, particularly in Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Reasi and Udhampur districts, over the next 24 hours. The department warned of heat wave conditions at isolated places on April 27 and advised people to avoid heat exposure during peak hours and stay hydrated.

Temperature data released by the department showed that Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 28.5 degrees Celsius, which is 5.4 degrees above normal, while the minimum settled at 11.9 degrees Celsius.

In Jammu, the maximum temperature settled at 38.5 degrees Celsius, around 2.8 degrees above normal, indicating prevailing hot conditions, while the minimum was recorded at 22.0 degrees Celsius.

Among other places, Qazigund recorded a maximum of 27.8 degrees Celsius, Pahalgam 24.2 degrees Celsius and Kupwara 25.3 degrees Celsius. Gulmarg, a popular tourist destination, recorded a maximum temperature of 18.2 degrees Celsius.

The MeT department said the changing weather patterns may lead to localised disruptions and urged residents to follow advisories issued from time to time—(KNO)

## NSA Doval Discusses

conveyed President Prime Minister Narendra Modi good wishes.

The meeting was also attended by Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, and Ali bin Hammad Al Shamsi, Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for National Security.

Discussions centered on regional instability, the security of maritime routes in the Strait of Hormuz, and enhancing intelligence sharing. The meeting also addressed developments in the Middle East and their serious implications for regional and international security and stability, as well as global energy security, said officials of the UAE.

Earlier, Ajit Doval made a high-level visit to Saudi Arabia, meeting top officials including the Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdul Aziz bin Salman, Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and National Security Advisor Dr Musaed Mohammed Al Aiban.

## Siraj-Ul-Uloom Sealed

may be allowed entry, subject to approval from the authorities. Additionally, any person granted access must strictly adhere to the conditions imposed by the district administration.

Officials warned that any violation of the prohibitory order would invite strict penal action under relevant provisions of the UAPA and other applicable laws. "Any person found entering or being present within the notified place in contravention of this order shall be liable to be removed and prosecuted," the directive states.

Officials said the sealing of the premises is part of a broader legal and administrative process following the declaration of the institution as an unlawful entity. Increased monitoring and enforcement measures around the site are expected in the coming days to ensure compliance with the order—(KNO)

## Ahead Of HM's Visit,

, and ensure faster delivery of public services to the people of Ladakh, especially those in remote and far-flung areas," the LG said.

He added that the creation of new districts, apart from bringing governance closer to citizens, will create new avenues for growth, employment, and entrepreneurship.

"I reaffirm my commitment to ensuring that every citizen of Ladakh benefits from this historic decision, as we move together towards a brighter, stronger, and more prosperous future," he said—(KNO)

## From Pahalgam To

"PM Modi who ended terrorism, Congress's president calls him a terrorist. Due to his proximity to Rahul Gandhi, the public conduct of Kharge Ji has deteriorated. Form a BJP government in West Bengal, and we will end terrorism here too," he said.

"Kharge Ji, the more you abuse Modi Ji, the more the lotus will bloom," Shah added.

The Home Minister said there is a strong wave in favour of the BJP and once voted to power, it would "push back all infiltrators"—(KNO)

## Chouhan Announces

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary.

"Under the scheme, 330 roads covering nearly 1,600 kilometres will be constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 3,566 crore, benefiting 363 habitations across Jammu & Kashmir," he said.

He said the roads will mainly connect far-flung and mountainous villages with all-weather access to schools, hospitals, markets, and employment opportunities. Approval letters for the projects will be handed over during the function, he added.

Highlighting past progress, Chouhan said that since the launch of PMGSY in 2000, Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed the construction of 3,328 roads, a 19,851-kilometre road network and 257 bridges. He said the programme has transformed rural connectivity in the region.

The Minister further said Rs 4,568.23 crore would be released as the Central share under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) for 24 States and Union Territories, with the release process taking place from Srinagar.

He said the step reflects the Centre's resolve to strengthen women-led Self Help Groups and promote rural entrepreneurship.

Chouhan also said Jammu & Kashmir currently has 96,000 Self Help Groups, 7,500 Village Organisations and around 650 Cluster-Level Federations.

He said these institutions are playing a major role in women's empowerment, savings and income generation.

The Minister said under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), nearly 5 lakh families in Jammu & Kashmir have been surveyed or have applied for housing assistance.

After physical verification, eligible families living in kutcha houses will be provided permanent homes, he said. "No poor family should remain without a roof," Chouhan added.

The Union Minister also announced a Clean Plant Centre worth over Rs 100 crore in Jammu & Kashmir to provide dis-

ease-free and quality planting material for apple and fruit growers.

He said many orchards in Kashmir have become old and productivity has declined, making scientific replantation necessary.

He also announced support for private nurseries, including Rs 2 crore for small nurseries and Rs 4 crore for large nurseries, along with a team of scientists for saffron, apple, and other crops.

Chouhan said a team of agricultural scientists will also visit Jammu & Kashmir to study the decline in saffron production, low orchard productivity, suitable crops for the local climate, ways to increase farmer income and the expansion of modern horticulture.

He said necessary steps would be taken in coordination with the UT government.

On concerns over imported apples and tariffs, Chouhan said the Centre remains committed to protecting domestic growers.

He said India produces around 26 lakh metric tonnes of apples, but domestic demand remains higher. "We will always safeguard the interests of our farmers," he said.

The Minister said the Centre is simultaneously focusing on roads, agriculture, irrigation, skill development, employment, and rural enterprise.

He said schemes such as PM-Kisan, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, e-NAM, MGNREGA and micro-irrigation projects are being strengthened in Jammu & Kashmir.

Chouhan said the aim is to create sustainable opportunities for youth and women while building a developed and self-reliant Jammu & Kashmir—(KNO)

## Rajnath Singh To Lead

Pahalgam terror attack, India sharpened its anti-terror pitch by demanding an unequivocal regional stance against cross-border terrorism and refused to endorse the joint statement after concerns over the attack were not adequately reflected.

Singh also reiterated that connectivity initiatives must respect sovereignty and territorial integrity, language widely seen as a pointed reference to projects such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, right, being welcomed by Ambassador of India to the Kyrgyz Republic Birender Singh Yadav upon arrival at Manas International Airport to attend the SCO Member States Defence Ministers meeting, in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic.

"No room for terror or double standards": Defence minister Rajnath Singh at SCO meet

Established in 2001 by China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the SCO was originally conceived as a Eurasian security bloc to counter terrorism, separatism and extremism. It has since expanded into one of the world's largest political-security groupings, with India and Pakistan joining as full members in 2017, Iran in 2023 and Belarus later.

India's entry was strategically significant, giving it a direct seat in a forum dominated by China-Russia influence while also opening a structured channel into Central Asia.

Kyrgyzstan, the current host, holds particular strategic value in India's Connect Central Asia policy.

Defence ties between New Delhi and Bishkek have strengthened steadily through military training, counter-terror cooperation and the annual "Khanjar" special forces exercise, which has become a cornerstone of bilateral military engagement. India also supports Kyrgyz capacity-building through training programmes and strategic exchanges, part of a broader push to retain influence in a region where China's footprint has expanded rapidly.



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# PM Modi meets Padma awardees, distinguished personalities in Gangtok

SIANS

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said he interacted with Padma awardees and several distinguished personalities during his visit to Gangtok, describing the exchange as engaging and wide-ranging.

Taking to X, the Prime Minister wrote: "In Gangtok earlier this evening, interacted with Padma awardees and people who have distinguished themselves in different fields. It was wonderful discussing a wide range of issues."

He also shared a photograph from the interaction. Earlier on Monday, Gangtok witnessed a large public turnout during PM Modi's roadshow in Sikkim for the closing ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the state's statehood.

Thousands of people from across Sikkim gathered to catch a glimpse of the Prime Minister and take part in the occasion. The streets of the capital city were packed from early morning, reflecting the public response to the Prime Minister's visit. Residents from remote



and far-flung areas travelled long distances to be part of the event, turning the roadshow into a large public gathering with visible participation across the city.

Bikash Basnet, Political Secretary to the Chief Minister of Sikkim, told SIANS the turnout was unprecedented. "Everyone here in Gangtok was so excited. People started gathering since morning. It's been almost a year since we have been waiting for his presence. People from far-flung areas of Sikkim gathered here in Gangtok. Every corner of the city was filled with people. We could see

the excitement on people's faces. It was historic and a proud moment for every Sikkimese," he said.

The Prime Minister's visit coincided with celebrations linked to the state's golden jubilee year, adding to the significance of the event.

Kunzang Gyatso, an Everest climber and President of the Sikkim Sports Climbing Association, said the visit had inspired the younger generation. "We are very delighted to see the Prime Minister, especially our young generation. I would like to thank Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang for inviting him

for the golden jubilee celebrations," he said.

Residents described the visit as a moment of pride for the state.

Subedar Ranjit Khaling, a former Army personnel, said, "We were so excited to see the Prime Minister here that we cannot describe it in words. Such a big leader coming to our small state in the Northeast is a very proud moment for us."

After the roadshow concluded, celebrations continued across Gangtok, with people seen gathering in groups, singing and moving through the streets, reflecting the festive atmosphere in the city.

# NIT Srinagar hosts INYAS Science outreach at BHSS Soura

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** In a significant initiative to promote scientific temperament and innovation among young learners, the Indian National Young Academy of Science, in collaboration with National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar Monday organized a Science Outreach Programme on "Materials Science and Technology for Society" at Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Soura.

The programme, held under INYAS's nationwide outreach initiative, aimed at encouraging creative thinking and fostering curiosity among school students. Over 100 students and faculty members participated in the event.

Dr. Vijay Kumar, Member INYAS and Assistant Professor, Department of Physics, NIT Srinagar, delivered an engaging lecture titled "How Materials Glow: The Science Behind LEDs and Light," explaining fundamental concepts of material science in an



accessible manner. Another session was conducted by Dr. Mohd Zubair Ansari, who spoke on recent advancements in solar cell research and emerging trends in material science, highlighting the role of innovation in sustainable technologies.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. Vijay Kumar and Dr. Mohd Zubair Ansari, while local arrangements were managed by senior lecturer Mohammad Ibrahim of BHSS Soura.

Vijay Kumar said that outreach programs are essential for inspiring students to pursue careers in science and technology.

He noted that INYAS remains committed to reaching out to students, particularly in remote areas, to nurture scientific curiosity and innovation.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia, in his message, said that initiatives like these play a crucial role in bridging the gap between higher education institutions and school-level learning.

He stressed that early exposure to scientific research and practical knowledge helps in shaping future innovators and problem-solvers.

Registrar NIT Srinagar, Dr. Atikur Rehman, also lauded the programme, stating that such outreach activities strengthen the foundation of scientific education at the grassroots level.

He added that NIT Srinagar will continue to support and collaborate on programmes that promote academic excellence and innovation among youth.

# Bengal polls: Video of firebrand police officer goes viral in South 24 Parganas

SIANS

**KOLKATA:** The Election Commission has appointed IPS officer Ajay Pal Sharma, known as the 'encounter specialist' of Uttar Pradesh, as the new police observer of South 24 Parganas district.

This step is seen as a measure to maintain law and order in various sensitive areas of the state ahead of the second phase of voting.

In this situation, a video of Ajay Pal Sharma has gone viral on social media, sparking a new political debate.

In the video, he is seen going to the house of Trinamool Congress candidate Jahangir from the Falta area and directly scolding him and ordering him to follow the law.

In the video, he can be heard telling Jahangir to reform, or he will face consequences later. As soon as the incident came to light, there was a sensation in political circles.

However, various questions have already started to arise about the authenticity and context of the video.

Opposition political parties are trying to increase pressure on the ruling party by using this incident as a tool.

On the other hand, the Trinamool Congress has claimed that the entire incident is being spread intentionally and that, through this, an attempt is

being made to create confusion before the elections. The Election Commission has not yet made any official comment on this video.

However, according to Commission sources, strict vigilance has been ordered for observers to ensure free and peaceful elections in the state.

It has also been said that prompt action will be taken if any allegations of law violation are made against any candidate or political party.

According to political analysts, the presence of an officer with a tough image like Ajay Pal Sharma can play an important role in controlling the law and order situation before the elections.

However, it goes without saying that his every move will be interpreted politically.

Recently, the Election Commission released a list of 11 new police observers.

At the top of that list is Ajay Pal Sharma.

He is known as the 'Dabang officer' due to his tough administrative role and daring steps during his tenure in Uttar Pradesh.

His tough stance in combating crime and ability to make quick decisions have set him apart from others.

Ajay Pal Sharma is a 2011-batch Indian Police Service officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre.

He is currently serving as the Additional Commissioner of Police, Prayagraj.

# Global confidence in Andhra increasing: Vice President CP Radhakrishnan

SIANS

**VISAKHAPATNAM:** Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan on Monday took part in the Centenary Celebrations of Andhra University in Visakhapatnam and recalled the words of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that "Viksit Bharat can only be realised through Viksit States".

As cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar shared the stage, the Vice President highlighted the increasing global confidence in Andhra Pradesh, referring to the interest and investments by leading technology companies such as Google.

Mentioning that success takes time, the Vice-President said that even the "God of Cricket," as Sachin Tendulkar is fondly called, had to wait to achieve his century of centuries. He emphasized that patience is essential to achieving success.

He noted that Visakhapatnam is emerging as a key growth hub, particularly in sectors such as data centres, IT, tourism, electronics, and digital infrastructure, with major projects including hyperscale data centres and IT investments.

He said it was a privilege to be part of the historic occasion marking a century of excellence of Andhra University, an institution that has not only witnessed history but has also helped

shape it.

He noted that over the past hundred years, the University has served as a melting pot of ideas, nurturing generations of students who have contributed significantly to nation-building.

Recalling with deep respect the legacy of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, former Vice-Chancellor of the University and one of India's most distinguished philosophers and statesmen, the Vice-President highlighted his vision of education as a means to cultivate both intellect and character.

He said that this vision continues to resonate strongly even today.

The Vice-President congratulated the people of Andhra Pradesh on Amaravati being declared the permanent capital of the State following the passage of the relevant Bill in Parliament.

He noted that he had the privilege of presiding over the Rajya Sabha during the passage of the Bill and witnessed the joy and pride of the people. He described the decision as a reflection of the collective aspirations of the people and one that will provide clarity, stability, and direction for the State's administrative future.

Vice President also released a commemorative coin, a commemorative stamp, and a coffee table book on the occasion.

# Jordan joins India-led ISA, CDRI and Global Biofuel Alliance

SIANS

**NEW DELHI:** Jordan on Monday joined the India-led global initiatives, including the International Solar Alliance (ISA), the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA).

"Jordan confirms its Membership of the global initiatives spearheaded by India - International Solar Alliance (ISA), the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA), Ambassador of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Mr. Yousef

Abdelghani, today formally handed over documents of Jordan's Membership of ISA, CDRI and GBA to Secretary (South), Dr. Neena Malhotra, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal posted on X.

The ISA is a collaborative initiative between India and France aimed at uniting efforts to combat climate change by implementing solar energy solutions. It was conceptualised on the sidelines of UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris in 2015. Following a 2020 amendment to its Framework Agreement, all UN member states are

now eligible to join the ISA. Currently, more than 100 nations are signatories, with over 90 nations having ratified to become full members, according to the official statement.

Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the presence of heads of state and leaders' of eight countries at the G20 Leader's Summit in New Delhi in 2023, the GBA is a multi-stakeholder alliance that brings together governments, international organisations, and industry. With 33 countries and 14 international organisations as members, the GBA aims to position biofuels as a key

solution to the global energy transition and contribute to socio-economic growth, an official statement detailed.

CDRI is a global coalition committed to strengthening infrastructure resilience against climate and disaster risks. The CDRI has 53 member countries and 12 partner organisations. It includes national governments, international bodies, and businesses collaborating to exchange knowledge, drive research, and invest in disaster resilient infrastructure. Members have access to global expertise, funding, technical support, research opportunities, innovative solutions, and international best practices.

# GCW Nawakadal organizes Awareness Rally, Marathon under NMA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Under the banner of Nasha Mukta Abhiyan, an Awareness Rally and Marathon were organised Monday by the College Wellbeing and Anti-Substance Cell (CWASC) in collaboration with the College Sports Committee and NCC Unit of Government Degree College for Women (GCW), Nawakadal, Srinagar.

The programme com-

menced with an awareness rally from the college campus to Safakadal Chowk, aiming to disseminate a strong message against drug abuse and promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle among the youth.

This was followed by a marathon in which students and faculty members participated with great enthusiasm, showcasing their collective commitment to the cause.

The event was attended

by Nodal Officer CWASC, Dr. Nuzhat Jan; Convenor College Sports Committee, Rukhsana Shawl; NCC Officer, Prof. Humeera Yousof, along with faculty members from CWASC and the Sports Committee.

On the occasion, the Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Huda Galzai, appreciated the efforts of the organisers and participants. In her message, she underscored the importance of collective responsibility

in combating drug abuse and encouraged students to act as ambassadors of a drug-free society. She further highlighted that such initiatives play a vital role in building awareness and fostering a culture of health, discipline, and social responsibility among the youth.

The event concluded with participants taking a pledge to support and uphold the vision of a drug-free society.

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**  
**PWD(R&B) DIVISION QAZIGUND**  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**  
**NIT NO 03 OF R&B/ Qazigund/2026-27 /E-TENDERING/520-35 DATED:25-04-2026**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders (In Single Cover) are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Ceiling Amount (Rs in lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rs)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Head of Account	Time of Completion	Class of Contractor
1.	Stage Contract for Sub- Division Qazigund.	15.00	600/=	30000/=	3054-M&R	March-2027	BEE, CEE and DEE Class
2.	Stage Contract for Sub- Division Vessu.	5.00	200/=	10000/=	3054-M&R	March-2027	DEE Class

Position of AAA: Chief Engineer PW (R&B) Department South Kashmir's Authorization No. ARD/CESK/2026-27/03 Dated: 09-04-2026 dully endorsed by Superintending Engineer PW (R&B) Circle Kulgam's No. SE/Kul/Pig/282-85 Dated: 18-04-2026  
 The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any) , bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

S. No.	Particulars	Dated
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	25-04-2026
2	Period of Downloading of biddendocuments	From 27-04-2026 (11:00 AM) To 11-05-2026 (04:00 PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 27-04-2026 (11:00 AM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 11-05-2026 (04:00 PM)
5	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	12-05-2026 (11:00 AM)

In the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Qazigund.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt (Under MH- 0059 PWD) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division QAZIGUND [Tender Inviting Authority] (Name of Work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt)(Refer Govt. order No. O.M No. A/24 (2017)-651 Dt.07-06-2018 (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and EMD (2% of advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division QAZIGUND (Tender receiving Authority).
- All the Bidders have to submit Earnest Money/Bid Security (EMD@ 2%of Ceiling amount) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG. Non submission of Earnest Money/Bid Security shall render the bidder as No-responsive.
- The 1st lowest responsive (Successful) Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of Ceiling amount as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division QAZIGUND (Tender receiving authority) within 03 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after successful completion of Defect Liability Period(DLP) of the work. Failure to produce Performance Security shall render the L1 as non-responsive and case for debaring of the Contractor for a period of 01 Year be forwarded to Higher Authorities.
- The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD@2% of Ceiling amount) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG of the successful Bidder shall be released after receiving Performance security@5% of the ceiling amount in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG and same shall be released after successful completion of Defect Liability Period (DLP) of the work. The bidders are requested to quote their rates excluding GST. GST @18Percents shall be added to the contract value by the allotting authority at the time of issuance of allotment.
- The date and time of opening of Bid shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Qazigund
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of Opening of Technical bids.
- The Earnest Money/Performance Security shall be forfeited If:
  - Any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in the terms and conditions of the bid.
  - Failure of successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within specified time period before issue of letter of intent.
  - Successful Bidder fails to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
  - If at any stage of work, the Bidder back up from the contract, again the Performance security/EMD as well as work done claim will be forfeited.
- The tender / bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT.
- All financial rules and conditions as laid down in GFR 2017, Manual for procurement of works, procurement of goods and Engineering manual (latest) shall be applicable.
- Performance Security shall be released after DLP is over successfully.
- All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

Sd/-  
 Executive Engineer,  
 PWD (R&B) Division Qazigund

No.520-35  
 Date: 25-04-2026  
 DIPK-802-26  
 DT: 27/04/2026

# Thomas & Uber Cup Final: Indian men enter quarterfinals; Sindhu loss dents women's chances

AGENCIES

**HORSENS (DENMARK)** Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu squandered a dominant position as India were pushed to the verge of elimination in the Uber Cup even as the men's team stormed into the last-eight of the Thomas Cup with a 5-0 sweep of Australia here on Monday.

Sindhu looked set for a statement win before letting slip a 18-12 lead in the decider to go down 16-21, 21-19, 19-21 to world No. 2 Wang Zhiyi in the opening singles, with India trailing China 0-1 in a must-win Group A tie.

The task only gets tougher against the defending champions and 16-time winners China, who boast the likes of Olympic champion Chen Yufei and world No. 1 pair of Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning.

Earlier, India, the 2022 champions, sealed a place in the Thomas Cup Finals quarterfinals with a commanding 5-0 victory over Australia in a Group A tie.

India and China occupy the top spots in the group. The 2022 champions had opened with a 4-1 win over Canada, while China blanked Australia 5-0 and beat Canada 4-1 earlier in the day.

The two sides will clash in their final group tie on Wednesday to decide the group topper.

Paris Olympian and Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen set the tone with a 21-14, 21-16 win over Ephraim Stephen Sam to hand India an early lead.

US Open champion Ayush Shetty, who recently finished runner-up at the Badminton Asia Cham-



pionships, doubled the advantage with a dominant 21-8, 21-6 victory over Shrey Dhand.

India's top doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, the Asian Games champions, made it 3-0, defeating Rizky Hidayat and Jack Yu 21-14, 21-16 to clinch the tie.

HS Prannoy, a bronze medalist at the 2023 World Championships and Asian Games, extended the lead with a 21-11, 21-17 win over Rishi Honda Boopathy in under 30 minutes.

In the second doubles, Hariharan Amsakarunan and M.R. Arjun outplayed Andika Ramadiansyah and Ephraim Stephen Sam 21-12, 21-10 as India completed a flawless outing without dropping a match.

In the Uber Cup, India had opened with a 2-3 loss to hosts Denmark before bouncing back with a 4-1 win over Ukraine.

However, following Sindhu's defeat, it will take a miraculous effort for India to go through to

the knockouts.

Priya Konjengbam and Shruti Mishra are set to face Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning in the first doubles, while Isharani Baruah will be up against Chen Yufei.

The pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand will take on Luo Xu Min and Zhang Shu Xian, and Devika Sihag is slated to meet Xu Wen Jing in the third singles.

**Sindhu vs Wang**

Sindhu recovered from an early 4-7 deficit in the first game, drawing level at 9-9 before reeling off five straight points to take an 11-9 lead at the interval. She maintained control with sharp net play and attacking smashes to move to 14-10, but Wang raised her intensity late, using deception and precise placement to claw back.

From 16-16, the Chinese edged ahead and closed out the game with a series of winners.

The Indian responded aggressively in the second

game, opening up a 9-4 lead with a barrage of smashes. Wang fought back with her trademark angles and deception to level at 10-10, but Sindhu held her nerve in the closing stages. Leading 18-16, she earned two game points and converted on the second with a powerful smash to force a decider.

Sindhu carried the momentum into the third game, racing to a 9-3 lead and extending it to 11-6 at the break. She continued to dictate play, stretching the advantage to 18-12 with relentless attacking strokes.

However, the momentum swung dramatically thereafter. Wang mounted a remarkable comeback, stringing together six consecutive points to level at 18-18. The Chinese then edged ahead 19-18 before Sindhu drew level once again. Wang earned match point with a steep smash and sealed the contest when Sindhu found the net, completing a stunning turnaround. (PTI)

# RCB pacers unleash powerplay carnage to flatten DC, cruise to nine-wicket win

AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI:** Royal Challengers Bengaluru rode a storm of sheer pace fury to annihilate Delhi Capitals by nine wickets in their IPL clash here on Monday, after unleashing a powerplay spell so vicious that it virtually ended the contest within the first three overs.

It was carnage of the highest order, a powerplay ambush so brutal that the Delhi Capitals never quite recovered as RCB unleashed a devastating new-ball spell to script one of the most dramatic openings in the IPL history.

Josh Hazlewood (4/12) and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (3/5) turned the powerplay into a demolition act, ripping through Delhi with two ruthless three-over bursts that left the hosts gasping at 13 for six.

Only Abhishek Porel (30), David Miller (19) and Kyle Jamieson (12) reached double-digit scores. The home team scored eight fours and a six.

All Delhi could manage was 75 in 16.3 overs but eventually deflected the ignominy of posting lowest IPL score. RCB had managed 49 in 2017 against Kolkata Knight Riders.

Chasing a modest target, RCB openers Virat Kohli (23) and Jacob Bethell (20) ensured a smooth start.

There were no hiccups except that Bethell was done in by an exceptional catch by T Natarajan off Kyle Jamieson.

Devdutt Padikkal scored a fluent 34 as some solid RCB batting took the game away from Delhi in no time.

Kohli's trademark composure combined with Padikkal's free-flowing strokeplay made the chase a mere formality as the duo raced past the finish line



with ease in 6.3 overs, capping off a dominant night for the visitors.

The packed house came to watch their favourite batter but Kohli didn't get the opportunity to enthrall his fans much due to a small target. The local boy, ended the match with consecutive sixes off T Natarajan.

From the dizzying high of piling up 264 in a batting spectacle that still somehow ended in defeat against Punjab Kings, the fall for Delhi was dramatic.

The same batting unit that was brimming with intent suddenly appeared tentative, brittle, and out of answers, undone by relentless pressure and

disciplined bowling.

It was a stark reminder of the format's unforgiving nature, where dominance can swiftly give way to disarray, and confidence can evaporate almost overnight.

The RCB bowlers reduced Delhi to survival mode inside the first three overs, their relentless accuracy and movement turning the contest one-sided almost instantly.

The mayhem began as early as the second ball of the innings when Bhuvneshwar Kumar produced an in-dipping yorker to uproot debutant Sahil Parakh's middle stump, setting the tone for what followed: abso-

lute destruction.

If that was a warning shot, Hazlewood turned it into a full-blown collapse. The Australian quick sent shockwaves through the packed stadium by removing last-match centurion KL Rahul (1) and Sameer Rizvi (0) off successive deliveries.

Rahul miscued a pull after the ball grew big on him, while Rizvi edged one as he played away from his body without any visible footwork.

There was no respite. Bhuvneshwar, in complete command of swing and seam, returned to deepen Delhi's misery by dismissing Tristan Stubbs (5). Stubbs tried to jab at a length delivery and the outside edge flew safely into the hands of Devdutt Padikkal at slip.

Moments later, the carnage reached its crescendo. Delhi skipper Axar Patel (0) fell without troubling the scorers, nicking a teasing outswinger behind as stunned silence engulfed the home crowd.

In the blink of an eye, the Capitals were reduced to an unthinkable 8 for 5 in just three overs and soon 9 for 6, a collapse so surreal it felt scripted for drama rather than sport.

The RCB pacers had not just struck but dismantled, humiliated, and completely outplayed a batting line-up that looked shell-shocked and bereft of answers.

Only one boundary, coming from the bat of Stubbs, was managed in the Powerplay as the hosts reeled at 13 for six, with Nitish Rana (1) being another victim of Hazlewood.

It was only apt that the Aussie quick ended the Capitals innings by casting Porel. (PTI)

# 5th T20I: Wolvaardt's unbeaten 92 helps South Africa beat India, win series 4-1



FIANS

**BENONI:** Laura Wolvaardt continued her record-breaking form with an unbeaten 92 off 56 balls to help South Africa women hand India Women a 23-run defeat in the fifth T20I and completed a 4-1 victory in the five-match series at the Willowmoore Park in Benoni on Monday.

Electing to bat first, Wolvaardt hammered 11 boundaries and two sixes as she came up with another brilliant performance, raising 75 runs for the partnership for the opening wicket with Sune Luus, who contributed a run-a-ball 23, hitting two boundaries and one six in the fifth and final match of the series.

Chasing a modest total, India lost early wickets and despite a fighting 40 by Bharti Fulmali, could manage only 132, losing the match by 32 runs.

Wolvaardt kept one end going for South Africa Women, scoring runs at a brisk pace even though she lost partners at the other end. Her knock of 92 took her series tally to 330 runs — the most by any batter in a women's T20I series.

India fought back after the opening partnership between Wolvaardt and Luus, claiming wickets in a heap to restrict them to a modest 155/8 in 20 overs.

For India, Renuka Singh, Shree Charani and Arundhati Reddy claimed two wickets apiece as India Women halted the rampaging South African Women from putting up a The hosts then came back and prevented India Women, who had won the fourth ODI riding on a fine all-round performance and had a great chance of making it 2-3 in the series, from winning the fifth and final match.

India lost Shafali

Verma, their best batter in the series, for four runs off five balls, handing a sharp catch to Chloe Tyson off Eliz-Mari Marx. From 12/1 it became 38/3 in the eighth over as Jemimah Rodrigues (1) and Anushka Sharma (17) fell to Ayabonga Khaka,

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (22) and Bharti Fulmali (40) fought a lone battle to keep India's hopes alive. But neither could guide the team to victory, and they were both out as India slumped to 99/5. They eventually managed only 132/8 in their 20 overs and lost by 23 runs.

Brief scores: South Africa Women 155/6 in 20 overs (Laura Wolvaardt 92 not out, Sune Luus 23; Renuka Singh 2-21, Shree Charani 2-22) beat India Women 132/8 in 20 overs (Bharti Fulmali 40, Richa Ghosh 25 not out; Nonkululeko Mlaba 2-18, Nadine de Klerk 2-26) by 23 runs

# Movies Schedule

Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April



**Dhurandhar: The Revenge (A)**

Hindi - 10:45 AM, 06:05 PM

**BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+)**

Hindi Atmos - 11:15 AM, 02:30 PM

**Lee Cronin's The Mummy (A)**

English with English Subtitles - 11:00 AM

**Ginny Weds Sunny 2 (U/A16+)**

Hindi - 03:15 PM

**Michael (U/A 13+)**

English with English Subtitles - 02:00 PM, 05:00 PM

INOX Srinagar official

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