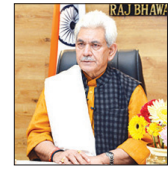


# Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

Lok Bhavan Jammu & Kashmir  
@LokBhavanJandK



Our border villages are the inheritors of a rich tradition of courage and resilience. Under the leadership of Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi, they are no longer the 'last villages' of India; they are our 'First Villages': Lieutenant Governor

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## 'Op Sindoor' Anniversary No Let-Up In Alert Along LoC, IB Sectors In J&K



SAJID RAINA

**SRINAGAR:** The Indian Army and the Border Security Force (BSF) have maintained a heightened state of alert along the Line of Control (LoC) and the International Border (IB) across Jammu and Kashmir. An official said that the security grid remains as vigilant as it was during last year's 'Operation Sindoor.' "The alert posture has been sustained in view of prevailing India-Pakistan tensions and as the anniversary of the military operation approaches, with no relaxation in surveillance or troop readiness," the official added. "The alert level remains intact. Troops are maintaining strict dominance along the LoC and are prepared to respond swiftly to any situation," he said. Key sectors in North Kashmir, including Gurez, Uri, Karnah and Tangdhar, as well as multiple forward areas in the Jammu region, are under intensified monitoring.

Along the IB in Jammu, BSF personnel are carrying out round-the-clock patrolling supported by electronic surveillance systems. Officials said the forces have significantly strengthened border management through the deployment of advanced and largely indigenous technologies. AI-powered smart fencing systems integrated with "Avekshan" software are being used to detect and track movement along vulnerable stretches, while the Tactical Advanced Integrated Weapon System (TAIWS) enables automated surveillance and rapid threat assessment. Robotic Multi-Utility Legged Equipment (MULE) platforms are assisting troops in difficult terrain, particularly in high-altitude sectors. Anti-drone guns, jamming systems and surveillance drones equipped with high-resolution cameras and night-vision capabilities are ensuring continuous 24x7 monitoring. ●P-06

## 'First Villages Of India, Not Last': LG Says Border Is Country's 'Backbone'

Says Glorious History Was Forged In The Arduous Paths Of These Villages

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday termed country's border the "backbone of India" and said the hamlets there are the inheritors of a rich tradition of courage and resilience. "Our border villages are the inheritors of a rich tradition of courage and resilience. Under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, we have shifted the narrative. These are no longer the 'last villages' of India; they are our 'First Villages'," the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Wednesday. The Lieutenant Governor was addressing a public rally during his visit to the border village of Regal in the Samba district today, where he initiated and laid the foundation stones for several development projects. These include establishment of Digital Library at Government Primary School Regal, Construction of Community Hall cum Recreation



Centre at Regal, development of Amrit Sarovar at Regal alongwith Drainage Channel, Installation of 03 Open Gyms and Installation of Solar Street Lights. In his address, the Lieutenant Governor reaffirmed that the Administration is resolute to elevate the border settlements from the periphery of neglect to the forefront of national progress. "Border villages like Regal are the backbone of India. Our glorious history was forged in the arduous paths of these border villages. We are committed to safeguarding the dignity of every border village family, ensuring that those who

### Nation's True Strength Lies In Its Cultural Consciousness: LG

Inaugurates Shri Narsingh Dev Sanskrit Gurukul At Ghagwal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** The Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Wednesday inaugurated the Shri Narsingh Dev Sanskrit Gurukul at the ancient Shri Narsingh Dev Temple in Ghagwal. He also dedicated a Nakshatra Park and Yoga Dhyana Kendra to the public and laid foundation stone for Shri Narsingh Dev Public Library and Open Air Amphitheatre. Addressing a gathering of scholars, students and prominent citizens, the Lieutenant Governor emphasized that the establishment of Shri Narsingh Dev Sanskrit Gurukul is a meaningful reconnection with India's civilizational roots. "It is a significant step towards cultural renaissance and the strengthening of the ancient Indian knowledge tradition," he said. ●P-06

**OUR BORDER VILLAGES ARE THE INHERITORS OF A RICH TRADITION OF courage and resilience. Under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, we have shifted the narrative. These are no longer the 'last villages' of India; they are our 'First Villages', "**

## NC To Hold Crucial Meeting Today



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** National Conference president Dr. Farooq Abdullah will chair a crucial meeting of party leaders at the party headquarters, Nawai Subah, today, sources disclosed. Sources said that the NC president will chair the meeting today to discuss key issues. "The provincial working committee meeting of the party will be attended by the Chief Minister, ministers, all MLAs from Kashmir, and senior leaders," they said. The meeting gains significance as Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday hinted at a strong political message he plans to deliver after Eid. Speaking at a function in Tangmarg, the CM said that he wants to "burst like a cloudburst" and would speak openly at a public gathering after Eid. The CM's statement has created ripples in political circles in Jammu and Kashmir. Sources said that the meeting is likely to discuss issues of statehood, the functioning of the government, and other key matters. ●P-06

## 'Op Sindoor' Paid Dividends, But War Not Sustainable: Dr. Farooq

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday said 'Operation Sindoor' has paid its dividends, but asserted that "wars do not bring a solution, only misery". "(Operation) Sindoor has paid its dividends. I think there is no more question of wars. Wars do not bring a solution, they just bring misery. Look at Ukraine and the destruction there, look at the Middle East. Look at the situation of gas (supplies) here. It will take Qatar a year or two to restore gas supplies," Abdullah told reporters at party headquarters here. To another question about the Gulf situation, the former chief minister said the world was not ready for war, as prevailing economic conditions were bad. "Don't panic, the world isn't ready for war. Economic conditions of every country are already bad, and no coun-



try wants war. The Middle East has most of the oil and gas, and if pressure continues, then the situation in the world will be so bad that it will be difficult to survive," he added. Asked about the recent assembly election results, the NC president said he sees the results like everyone else. "How will I see, I see it like you are seeing. The results have come, Mamata (Banerjee) is not accepting (the results), she says there was huge rigging. This is the situation in Bengal. ●P-06

## 'Want To Burst Like A Cloudburst'

# Omar Abdullah Hints At Strong Political Message After Eid

Says Around 25,000 Jobs In Pipeline; Accused PDP Of Helping BJP In RS Polls

WARIS FAYAZ

**TANGMARG:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday hinted at a strong political message he plans to deliver after Eid, saying he was holding himself back as the occasion did not permit a political address. Speaking at a function in Tangmarg, CM Omar, said he restrained himself from making political remarks due to the academic setting. "Trust me, I want to burst like a cloudburst," he said, adding that he will address a public gathering after Eid where he plans to speak in detail. Abdullah said youth remain central to the future of Jammu and Kashmir, and the government is working to prepare them



for emerging challenges. He said efforts are underway to strengthen education, expand job opportunities and improve economic prospects. Highlighting gaps in higher education, the CM said the lack of adequate private universities

forces students to move outside the Union Territory. He added that families spend thousands of crores on education outside, often facing uncertainty during crises in countries like Bangladesh and Iran. "The government has already passed a Private University Bill and is framing rules to facilitate the establishment of institutions within Jammu and Kashmir," Omar said. He expressed hope that areas like Tangmarg could attract such universities due to their environment and climate. On employment, the Chief Minister said the government has set a target to provide between 20,000 and 25,000 jobs this year. He acknowledged that government jobs ●P-06

## Announces End Of Strikes On Iran Trump Pauses US Operation In Strait Of Hormuz

AGENCIES

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump on Wednesday said that their Operation Epic Fury will be ended and the blockade would allow the Strait of Hormuz to be open to all. Trump further said that if Iran does not agree to the conditions for the ceasefire, the bombing would begin. In a post on Truth Social, Trump said, "Assuming Iran agrees to give what has been agreed to, which is, perhaps, a big assumption, the already legendary Epic Fury will be at an end, and the highly effective Blockade will allow the Hormuz Strait to be OPEN TO ALL, including Iran. If they don't agree, the bombing starts, and it will be, sadly, at a much higher level and intensity than it was before. Thank you for your attention to this matter! President DONALD J. TRUMP"

The announcement follows a declaration by the Iranian Parliament Speaker MB Ghalibaf on May 5, who said that the new equation of the Strait of Hormuz is in the process of being solidified. In a post on X, he said, "The new equation of the

**THE NEW equation of the Strait of Hormuz is in the process of being solidified.**

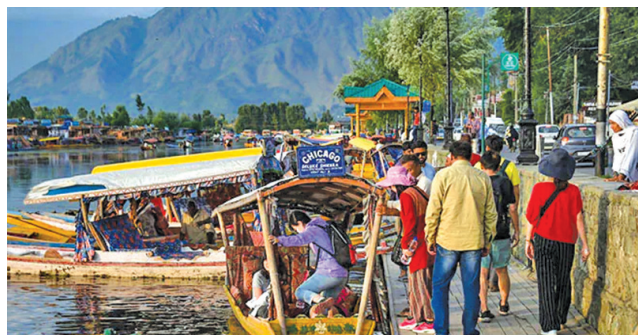
Strait of Hormuz is in the process of being solidified. The security of shipping and energy transit has been jeopardized by the United States and its allies through the violation of the ceasefire and the imposition of a blockade; of course, their evil will diminish. We know full well that the continuation of the status quo is ●P-06

## 'Operation Sindoor' Anniversary

# In Kashmir, Pride, Confidence Mark Response Of Tourists

SAJID RAINA

**SRINAGAR:** Tourists visiting Kashmir have expressed a sense of pride and confidence on the anniversary of 'Operation Sindoor,' saying they will continue to travel to the Valley despite past incidents and tensions. At several tourist spots across Srinagar and nearby destinations, visitors said the events of last year have not deterred them. Instead, they said, the response by security forces has strengthened their resolve to visit Kashmir. "We feel proud of how the situation was handled. We have come here without fear," said Rohan Mehta, a tourist from Delhi. "Kashmir is safe, and we will keep coming." Pertinently, 'Operation Sindoor' was launched on the night of May 7-8, 2025, fol-



lowing the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 civilians, mostly tourists, were killed. The operation targeted multiple terror infrastructure sites across the Line of Control and beyond, followed by a brief escalation before a ceasefire understanding was reached. Tourists said the incident had initially raised concerns, but the subsequent restoration of calm and continued security presence have reassured them. "We had plans even last year but postponed after the attack. This time we made sure to come," said Anjali Sharma, visiting with her family from Jaipur. "We believe such incidents should not stop people from travelling." Many visitors said they view continued tourism as a sign of resilience and normalcy. "If something happens, the

response is strong. That gives us confidence," said Arvind Kumar, a tourist from Lucknow. "We feel the situation is under control." At Dal Lake and other popular locations, tourists were seen engaging in routine activities, with houseboats and local businesses reporting steady footfall. "We are enjoying our trip. People here are welcoming and everything feels normal," said Sneha Gupta, another visitor. "There is no reason to be afraid." Some tourists said that continued visits to Kashmir also send a message against disruption caused by violence. "We should not let such incidents affect tourism. Kashmir is beautiful and peaceful," said Manish Verma, a visitor from Mumbai. "We will come again." Officials said ●P-06

## Transporters Threaten To Go On Indefinite Strike From May 12

REHAN QAYOOM

**SRINAGAR:** Days after a Valley-wide "chakka jam" over the Smart City bus row, transporters in Kashmir on Wednesday announced an indefinite strike from May 12, warning of a complete halt in public transport if the government fails to address their demands. Speaking to reporters in Srinagar, Transport Association Kashmir President Shabir Matta, said the decision follows continued "inaction" by the authorities despite repeated outreach by transport bodies after the April 20 shutdown. "We have given the government time till May 11. If our genuine demands are not met, the entire Kashmir will observe a chakka jam from May 12," Matta said. He said transporters from South, North and Central Kashmir had attempted to engage with the administration through visits and public outreach but received no response. "Had the government called us ●P-06

## India Marks First Anniversary Of Operation Sindoor



AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI:** Operation Sindoor, launched weeks after the dastardly Pahalgam terror attack last year, marked a paradigm shift in India's national security calculus through the extensive use of drones, networking and the integration of artificial intelligence in target analysis and acquisition. The operation, billed as the Indian military's most expansive multi-domain combat mission in half a century to punish Pakistan for its relentless support to cross-border terrorism, redefined India's overarching security and strategic goals. India's action was largely seen as a statement of its

"political will" to inflict a blow to Pakistan for supporting terrorism, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserting that India will not tolerate any nuclear blackmail by Islamabad. In the course of the last one year after the operation, India's three services have drawn up extensive plans, strategy and policy initiatives to bolster their combat readiness by acquiring new platforms, missiles and a variety of long and short-range drones, and boosting the overall air defence apparatus. In response to the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22 in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed, India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7 last year, ●P-06

# CJ inaugurates Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre at DCJ

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** In a significant step towards ensuring child-friendly and victim-sensitive justice delivery, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Arun Palli, Wednesday inaugurated Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre at District Court Complex, Jammu.

Present on the occasion were Justice Sindhu Sharma, Justice Rajesh Oswal, Justice Rahul Bharti, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, Justice Rajesh Sekhri, Justice Mohd. Yousuf Wani, Justice Shahzad Azeem Judges of High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Yash Paul Bournay Member, J&K Special Tribunal, Jammu, Registrar General Mohinder



Kumar Sharma of High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Ravinder Nath Watal Principal District and Sessions Judge Jammu, Registrar Vigilance Rajiv Gupta, Officers of the registry, Nirmal Kishore Kotwal Bar President along with Bar members, Judicial officers of District Court Complex, Jammu, Monika

Kohli Additional Advocate General and Anil Sharma, Chief LADC Jammu. The facility aims to prevent the secondary victimization and ensure fair, sensitive recording of evidence. This marks a significant step towards victim-centric justice delivery in the Union Territory. The Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre has been

established to provide a safe, non-intimidating and conducive environment for vulnerable witnesses, including children, victims of sexual offences and persons with disabilities, to depose before the court.

The center is equipped with modern facilities including separate waiting areas, live-link video conferencing, one-way mirrors, and child-friendly infrastructure to prevent secondary victimization during trial proceedings, in line with Supreme Court guidelines.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Justice emphasized that establishment of VWDC reflects the judiciary's commitment towards upholding the rights and dignity of vulnerable witnesses and ensuring fair trial without fear or trauma.

## DC Shopian listens to public development issues at Wachi

Assures immediate action, seeks support in fight against Drugs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** In a continued effort to strengthen grassroots governance, Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, Wednesday presided over Block Diwas at Wachi and listened to public issues raised by residents of various villages of Zainapora Sub-Division.

The public from Wachi, Safanagri, Darbugh, Cheermarg, Melhura and adjoining villages flagged key developmental concerns including improvement of road networks, irrigation facilities, canal maintenance, assured and quality water supply, uninterrupted power supply, upgradation of healthcare and transport services, strengthening of horticulture and agriculture support, completion of animal & sheep husbandry works, and strict enforcement of pesticide checking.

Public representatives emphasized the criticality of electricity and irrigation for the agriculture and horticulture sector, and called for equitable distribution of Rural Development resources.

While highlighting public welfare issues, locals also appreciated Jal Shakti for significantly improving water supplies in the area. Residents of Safanagri expressed gratitude to the district administration for establishing a pump shed for irrigation, fulfilling a long-pending demand of the village.

Responding to the issues, DC Shopian assured prompt action. He issued on-spot directions to ACD Shopian for immediate desiltation of canals in the area to enhance irrigation facilities and directed that canal maintenance works be taken up during the current season.

Underscoring the importance of a well-maintained irrigation network for the economic health of the farming community, the DC stressed prompt response on works. To promote sports engagement, the DC instructed RDD to take up construction of a Volleyball Court in Wachi. R&B (PWD) was directed to furnish estimates for village roads in the area.

Other demands, he said, will be taken up with concerned departments and works will be incorporated in priority and improvement in other services shall be made to the satisfaction of the public.

On the platform of Block Diwas, the DC appealed to residents of Wachi, Melhura and other villages to proactively support the administration in the fight against drugs. He called upon youth to avail benefits of various government-sponsored self-employment schemes and assured that the district administration will facilitate the engagement of youth and victims alike under rehabilitation and livelihood schemes. On the occasion, all participants took the Nasha Mukta Pledge.

## DC Kulgam chairs Mega Block Diwas at Pahloo

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM:** Taking governance to the doorsteps of the people, a Mega Block Diwas was Wednesday held at Pahloo under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam.

The programme was attended by ADC, Viqar Ahmad Giri; ACR, Riyaz Ahmad Shah; ACD, Bilal Ahmad Kamgar; JDP, Malik Suhail; Executive Engineers, CEO, Tehsildar Pahloo, BDO, and other district and sectoral officers.

During the event, the DC interacted with a large gathering of residents from Pahloo and adjoining areas, who apprised the administration of various issues and demands related to basic amenities and developmental needs.

Key issues highlighted by the public included completion and operationalisation of filtration plants, strengthening of solid waste management systems, development of playfields, and establishment of a public library and children's park.

Residents of Lamad village raised concerns regarding augmentation of staff and machinery at the local health centre, construction of a veterinary hospital building, availability of a dedicated doctor at the animal care centre, and development of playfields at Lamad Grad and Brinal Lamad. They also demanded construction of cowsheds.

Several road connectiv-

ity issues were projected, including development and widening of Halan road, construction of Lamad-Akhal road, Gasren-Pombay road, and Pahloo-Lankar-Pombay and other roads.

The public further sought extension of the flood protection bund at Aadigatnoo, early completion of filtration works, and sanction and distribution of construction wood among beneficiaries in the Lamad area.

Residents from Banimulla demanded posting of a Headmaster, augmentation of staff in educational institutions, completion of water supply schemes, and repair of the Banimulla canal.

People from various other villages also put forth their demands and developmental requirements of their areas.

On the occasion, registration and awareness counters were also set up to disseminate information about various government schemes and facilitate on-the-spot registration of eligible beneficiaries.

The DC gave a patient hearing to all grievances and assured that all genuine demands would be addressed in a time-bound manner. He directed the concerned officers to take immediate action on priority issues. He urged the public to avail benefits under various government initiatives.

All issues and demands raised during the programme were duly recorded for appropriate action and redressal.

# DC Sgr holds Block Diwas, Public Grievance Redressal Camp at Panzinara

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:-** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Wednesday conducted an extensive tour of Panzinara area in the outskirts of the District and holds a Mega Public Grievance Redressal Camp to bring administration at the door steps of the people to listen their issues and developmental needs as a part of Block Diwas Programme.

The DC also presided over an Awareness-cum-Registration Camp on Ayushman Vay Vandana scheme as a part of District Administration's outreach efforts to ensure maximum coverage of eligible senior citizens aged 70 years and above under the scheme providing additional health support of Rs 5 Lakh over and above the existing cover aimed to strengthen senior citizen health security.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, IAS Probationer, Alfred Thomas, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending SDM West, Irfan Bahadur, Assistant Commissioner Development, Tariq Ahmad Reshi, Block Development Officer, Qamarwari, Saima Ahad, Deputy CEO. Anjum Raja, Executive Engineer.



R&B, District Manager CSC, Asrar Shirazi and other District Officers.

The Public Grievance Redressal camp witnessed large participation of people from Panzinara-A, Panzinara-B, Mujgund and other adjoining areas of Shalteng Tehsil of Srinagar District during which local representatives, public delegations and scores of individuals projected various developmental issues and demands before the Deputy Commissioner particularly the long pending issue arising out of jurisdictional dispute with Baramulla and Baniptora Districts.

Besides, they also demanded for updation of settlement records by Revenue authorities, development of play fields,

strengthening irrigation canals, macadamization of inner lonk roads, repair of Jhelum embankment, augmentation of water supply infrastructure, provision of bank ATM facility and other development issues.

After giving patient hearing to the grievances and demands of the public, the DC assured the people of Panzinara and other adjoining areas that all genuine demands and issues projected by them will be taken up with concerned authorities on priority particularly with regard to jurisdictional issues.

The DC also gave on the spot direction to the concerned officers for time bound redressal of the public issues.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner led an Aware-

ness-cum-Registration Camp on Ayushman Vay Vandana (PM-JAY) at Panzinara-B organised by Chief Medical Officer which witnessed enthusiastic participation from elderly residents. The participants were apprised of the benefits and advantages of the Vay Vandana health coverage initiative.

Addressing the gathering, the DC elaborated on the significance of the Ayushman Vay Vandana Card and encouraged senior citizens to come forward and enroll under the scheme. He stated that the initiative is designed to safeguard elderly citizens aged 70 years and above by offering extensive health coverage and protecting them from the financial burden of medical treatment, thereby promoting dignity and well-being in their later years.

The DC urged all eligible citizens to get registered under the scheme to ensure comprehensive coverage of all eligible beneficiaries under the scheme, so that no deserving senior citizen is left out and the benefits of the initiative reach every eligible individual across the district.

During the programme, the DC also handed over Vay Vandana cards to the eligible beneficiaries of Qamarwari Block of the District.

## BJP Leaders Call for Strong Ideological Roots



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG:** Senior leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party Wednesday stressed the importance of ideological clarity and a strong grassroots cadre during a training session held in Pahalgam as part of the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Prashikshan Mahabhiyaan.

Speaking during a session focused on "Vichar Parivaar," leaders underlined that a clear understanding of the party's core principles, along with unity within the organization, is essential for long-term growth and effective outreach at the grassroots level. They said committed workers with strong ideological grounding play a crucial role in strengthening the party's pres-

ence and connecting with people.

The programme saw participation from several senior leaders, including J&K BJP General Secretary Mohammad Anwar Khan, General Secretary Gopal Mahajan, J&K Waqf Board Chairperson Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, spokesperson Altaf Thakur, social media co-incharge Sajjad Ali Raina, and senior leader Rafiq Wani.

Leaders described the training initiative as part of a broader effort to build a more organized and active party structure in Jammu and Kashmir. They also encouraged party workers to stay engaged, deepen their understanding of party ideology, and play an active role in strengthening outreach across communities.

## Bali urges Gol to reconsider inclusion of KPs in NAFSA ration card system



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Vivek Bali, State President, Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP), Wednesday made a strong appeal to the Government of India seeking immediate reconsideration of the inclusion of Kashmiri Pandits victims of terrorism and displacement under the NAFSA ration card system.

In his statement, Vivek Bali emphasized that this move risks diluting the distinct identity and long-recognized status of Kashmiri Pandits as internally displaced persons. He noted that their unique circumstances require a dedicated and sensitive administrative framework, rather than subsuming them under a generalized system.

He further stated that all government benefits and entitlements should be streamlined and delivered

through the existing Kashmiri Migrant Card system. This mechanism, which already classifies beneficiaries under Relief and Non-Relief categories, is more structured and better equipped to address the specific needs of the displaced community while ensuring transparency and administrative clarity.

Vivek Bali called for an urgent and pragmatic review of the current approach to prevent confusion and hardship among affected families. He expressed hope that the leadership of Prime Minister and Home Minister will take swift and compassionate action to resolve the issue.

He reiterated that the concerns of Kashmiri Pandits must be handled with utmost sensitivity and seriousness, ensuring that their rights, dignity, and long-standing recognition are fully protected.

# Zero Miles Drives Into Shopian With 9th Outlet, Eyes Valley-Wide Expansion

BILAL DAR

**SRINAGAR:** Zero Miles – Grill & Cafe, one of Kashmir's fastest-rising food and hospitality chains, on Wednesday launched its ninth outlet in Shopian district, marking a significant push into south Kashmir's commercial hub.

The new franchise is located on the first floor of Alai Kocha, opposite Jamia Masjid in the main market. The outlet will be operated by local franchise partners Syed Saqib Yousuf and Gazenfar Bashir, signalling the brand's deepening bet on local entrepreneurship.

Inaugurating the facility, Zero Miles founder and CEO Jibran Khan, accompanied by co-founder Javid Ahmad Mahroo, underlined the brand's twin



focus on quality control and community hiring.

"Each new outlet is a step forward in our journey of growth and trust. Shopian holds great potential, and we are confident this outlet will become a preferred destination for

food lovers," Javid Mahroo told the gathering.

Jibran Khan, addressing franchise partners and customers, reiterated the brand's commitment to consistency, innovation, and generating local employment, a recurring

promise as Zero Miles competes with both national fast-food chains and traditional street vendors in a price-sensitive market.

The Shopian franchise is expected to generate direct and indirect employment for local youth, a metric the founders said would be tracked closely. "Every outlet must earn its place, not just in revenue, but in how it serves the community," Jibran Khan added.

With nine outlets now operational across the valley, Zero Miles, known for its grill platters, cafe-style beverages, and quick-service model — is positioning itself as a homegrown alternative to larger franchises, banking on hyperlocal tastes and community trust.

## DC G'bal reviews preparedness for Amarnath Yatra-2026

Stresses timely completion of works, coordinated efforts for smooth, safe pilgrimage

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore Wednesday chaired a meeting to review arrangements for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2026 along the Baltal axis.

At the outset, a detailed review of security arrangements was conducted with the Police Department. Directions were given to finalize deployment locations, checkpoints and frisking points, with directions for installation of security scanners at key entry points in the base camp.

The Border Roads

Organisation informed that snow clearance operations are progressing well and the route is expected to be opened well within the stipulated timeframe.

Reviewing infrastructure works, the Roads and Buildings Department apprised that most of the identified works have been tendered and allotted, with execution already underway at several locations.

The Labour Department informed that registration of pony and pithu operators has commenced and the process will be accelerated in the coming days.

To facilitate pilgrims, instructions were issued

for increasing the number of RFID and e-KYC counters, including installation of additional counters at the on spot registration counter.

The DC emphasised sanitation as a priority area and directed concerned departments to ensure adequate installation of toilets and proper waste management along the Yatra route.

The Health Department informed that medical facilities at Baltal and other stations are being strengthened with necessary equipment and staff. The DC directed that emergency services be fully functional and audited before the commencement

of the Yatra.

Power and Water Supply departments reported that works are progressing, and were directed to ensure uninterrupted services at all camps with adequate backup arrangements.

Telecommunication providers assured seamless connectivity along the route, with measures underway to address network gaps.

The DC stressed close coordination among all departments to ensure a safe, smooth and well-organised Yatra, and directed that all works be completed in a time-bound manner.

# CM inaugurates multi-purpose sports complex at GDC Tangmarg

Says with unmatched beauty, Kashmir can emerge as premier education hub

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**GULMARG:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday inaugurated a state-of-the-art multi-purpose indoor sports complex at Government Degree College (GDC) Tangmarg, developed at a cost of ₹2.75 crore under the CAPEX budget, reaffirming the government's commitment to strengthening sports infrastructure and youth engagement across Jammu and Kashmir.

The newly established facility, located within the college premises, is equipped with modern indoor sports infrastructure, including arenas for badminton, table tennis, carrom, and billiards. The complex aims to promote a vibrant sports culture and encourage greater participation of youth in physical activities, particularly during harsh weather conditions in the region.

Minister for Education Sakina Itoo, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Gulmarg Pirzada Farooq Ahmed Shah, MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq, Commissioner Secretary Ram Niwas,

Director Colleges, Principal GDC Tangmarg, and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

Following the inauguration, the Chief Minister toured the complex and interacted with students. In a lively engagement, he also participated in indoor games including billiards, table tennis, and badminton alongside students and colleagues, drawing enthusiastic applause and appreciation from the gathering.

Earlier, the Chief Minister launched the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan signature campaign from the college premises, urging students to actively contribute towards building a drug-free society.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister emphasized the pivotal role of youth in shaping the future of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Our children are our future. We are making every possible effort to secure a brighter tomorrow for them, but it is equally important to prepare them for the responsibilities ahead. The development of Jammu and Kashmir



in the coming years will largely depend on the role played by our youth," he said.

Highlighting the challenges faced by students in accessing quality higher education within the region, Omar Abdullah noted that the lack of private universities had compelled many families to send their children outside Jammu and Kashmir, resulting in significant financial burden.

"We estimate that every year,

nearly ₹1,000 to ₹1,200 crore is spent on tuition fees alone by students studying outside J&K, excluding travel and living expenses. This places immense pressure on families," he said.

He said that the government has taken a landmark decision to allow the establishment of private universities in Jammu and Kashmir, with the necessary legislation already passed and rules being finalized.

"Once the framework is in

place, we will invite reputed institutions to set up campuses here. With our unmatched natural beauty and climate, places like Tangmarg can emerge as ideal education hubs, attracting students from across the country," he added.

Recalling his earlier tenure as Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah noted that the GDC Tangmarg project was conceptualized and approved in 2011, expressing satisfaction at

witnessing its growth and the enthusiasm of students.

He also lauded the newly constructed indoor sports complex, stating that such facilities are essential in regions with prolonged winters and frequent rainfall.

"In a place like Tangmarg, where outdoor activities are often restricted due to weather, such indoor infrastructure ensures that our youth remain active and engaged throughout the year," he said, adding in a lighter vein that he looks forward to returning and playing badminton with students.

The Chief Minister further highlighted key initiatives undertaken by the government for youth empowerment, including free bus travel for women in government buses, large-scale government recruitment, and self-employment support through the Mission Yuva programme.

"We aim to provide 20,000 to 25,000 government jobs this year. At the same time, we are enabling young entrepreneurs by facilitating easy access to loans without the need for guarantors, with the government

acting as a guarantor," he said.

He also spoke about the government's focus on skill development in sectors such as tourism, agriculture, and horticulture to make youth self-reliant and strengthen the region's economy.

"Our goal is to build a self-sufficient Jammu and Kashmir where we rely on our own strengths and resources. The youth will be at the forefront of this transformation," he added.

Later, the Chief Minister inaugurated a new block of the Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Gulmarg, constructed at a cost of ₹203.80 lakh under CAPEX.

He inspected various sections of the facility, including the OPD, Emergency Room, pharmacy, X-ray unit, and wards, and reviewed the healthcare services being provided to locals and tourists.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakina Itoo, MLA Gulmarg Pirzada Farooq Ahmed Shah, MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla S.F. Hamid, SSP Baramulla, and other concerned officers.

## Sakeena Itoo reviews recruitment process of various departments, SKIMS

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**SRINAGAR:** Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Wednesday chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the recruitment process undertaken by the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) in various departments like Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare, Education departments and Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura.

The meeting was attended by Chairman, JKSSB, Vikas Kundal; Secretary JKSSB, Khurshid Ahmad Sanai; Additional Director SKIMS, Zahoor Ahmad Mir; Controller of Examinations JKSSB, Director Finance, Health and Medical Education department, representatives of various departments and other officers.

During the meeting, the Minister conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the progress made in filling vacancies of different categories in various departments. The review meeting also focused on expediting transparent, merit-based recruitment to address critical manpower requirements across healthcare institutions and allied departments.

Addressing the officers, the Minister emphasized on the government's commitment towards ensuring efficiency, accountability and fairness in the selection process. She stressed on maintaining transpar-



ency and adhering to timelines during the recruitment process.

The Minister directed the concerned authorities to accelerate the recruitment process, particularly in Health and Education departments as well as SKIMS. She also stressed on maintaining coordination between the departments and recruiting agency to ensure vacant positions are filled promptly and selected candidates are deployed without unnecessary delays.

"Human resource, particularly in Health department, is vital for improving healthcare access and outcomes, particularly in underserved and remote areas", Sakeena said.

Emphasizing on the importance of timely recruitment, Sakeena Itoo directed the concerned authorities to expedite the ongoing selection processes while strictly adhering to merit, transparency, and fairness. She expressed satisfaction over the pace of recruitment and stressed that there should be no complacency in meeting future targets.

Highlighting the government's commitment to strengthening the health-

care system, Sakeena Itoo reiterated that filling vacant posts remains a top priority. She added that the government is focused on enhancing institutional capacity and ensuring that healthcare facilities and other departments are adequately staffed to meet growing public demand.

Regarding SKIMS Soura, the Minister directed the Additional Director to maintain constant coordination with JKSSB administration so that the recruitment process of pending posts is finalized timely. She highlighted that SKIMS is a premiere health institution and the government is determined to ensure sufficient manpower in it for constant service delivery of public.

While reviewing various aspects of JKSSB related to recruitment processes, Sakeena Itoo asked the JKSSB administration to explore the possibilities of reducing the application fee for the advertised posts. She directed them to study the fee structure of Government recruiting agencies of other States and UTs, and examine the growing demand of candidates calling for reduction in application fees.

During the meeting, Chairman JKSSB briefed the Minister on department-wise recruitment status, upcoming examinations and measures being implemented to streamline the selection process.

He informed the meeting that that 5789 selections have been finalized in different departments over the past 18 months, marking a major milestone of the Omar Abdullah led Government in streamlining recruitment in Government departments and reducing vacancies in key sectors. He added that these selections span multiple categories, including technical, paramedical, administrative, and support staff roles in health and medical education department, besides other critical posts in education, and other departments, bolstering service delivery capabilities at the grassroots level.

The Chairman also informed the meeting that more than 700 JE selections were finalized in last month, marking a major achievement of Government to boost vital sectors.

He also assured the Minister that selections for more than 150 posts in Health and Medical Education department will be finalised within one and half month.

The Chairman also informed the Minister that around 12997 posts are available with the JKSSB with 6109 un-advertised, 6170 at examination level and 373 at selection stage.

## Rana reviews development works in Shopian, Pulwama districts

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**SRINAGAR:** Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Wednesday conducted an extensive tour of Shopian and Pulwama districts to assess the progress of key developmental initiatives being executed under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Tribal Affairs Department and Forest sector.

During his visit to Shopian, the Minister carried out on-site inspections of several vital projects, particularly those aimed at strengthening the rural drinking water infrastructure under JJM.

He was accompanied by MLA Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi, MLA Shabir Ahmad Kullay, Director Tribal Affairs Mohd Mumtaz Ali, Chief Engineer, PHE/I&FC, Showkat Choudhary and other district officers.

At Awneera, Rana inspected the Water Supply Scheme (WSS) Awneera Kralcheck, being implemented by the PHE Division Shopian. The project, completed at a cost of ₹671.38 lakh, provides 100 percent Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) to 535 households across Awneera and Kralcheck villages.

The officials informed the Minister that the scheme draws water from Sonmann Nallah and includes a 2.00 lakh gallon Pre-Settling Tank, a 0.15 MGD Rapid Sand Filtration



Plant, a 0.35 lakh gallon Ground Service Reservoir and an extensive 28-kilometre distribution network.

Reviewing the project, the Minister noted its significant impact on improving the access to safe drinking water, particularly for women. He directed the officials to ensure regular monitoring, proper maintenance, uninterrupted supply and strict adherence to quality standards, along with prompt grievance redressal and sustainable water management practices.

The Minister also visited the Government Girls Tribal Hostel at Zainapora, where a 100-bedded facility is under construction under the Samagra scheme. He instructed the executing agencies to accelerate the pace of work while maintaining quality benchmarks.

Interacting with the members of tribal community, he reiterated the government's commitment to their socio-economic

upliftment and educational empowerment. He assured that essential facilities, including tents, solar lighting and other amenities, would be provided to support their welfare.

At Padpawan in Shopian, the Minister reviewed the ongoing works under the Nagar Van Scheme. The park, sanctioned for 2024-25 over 14 hectares at an estimated cost of ₹56 lakh, has already seen significant financial progress, with ₹35.98 lakh expended so far.

Emphasizing the importance of eco-tourism and green spaces, the Minister highlighted that such projects play a crucial role in environmental conservation, tourism promotion and public well-being.

Commending the Forest Department and executing agencies, he directed the timely completion of the remaining works with transparency and quality assurance, saying that such initiatives strength-

en ecological balance and encourage community participation.

Earlier, the Minister visited the residence of legislator Showkat Hussain Ganai at Chitragam to offer condolences on the demise of his mother. He prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and strength for the bereaved family.

Later, in Pulwama district, the Minister inspected the Auhatoora Water Supply Scheme along the Pinglina-Pathan road. He reviewed the pace and quality of works and instructed the officials to expedite the execution while strictly adhering to timelines and technical standards.

He also visited the Forest Development Corporation (FDC) Depot at Kakapora, where he assessed its functioning and issued directions to enhance the operational efficiency, streamline management practices and ensure optimal utilisation of resources.

**NASHA MUKT ABHIYAN**

## Anil Kumar chairs review of Anti-Drug Campaign in Kathua

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**KATHUA:** Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Public Works (R&B) Department, Anil Kumar Singh, who is the designated District Mentor for Kathua under the 'Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan', Wednesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to oversee and strengthen the implementation of anti-drug campaign in the district.

The District Mentor reviewed the progress achieved under the ongoing 100-day intensive campaign. He emphasized the need for a coordinated, result-oriented and sustained approach to make Kathua a drug-free district. He said the objective of the Abhiyan is not only enforcement against drug trafficking but also creating widespread awareness, rehabilitation sup-

port and strong community participation to eradicate the menace from the society.

Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma, at the outset, presented the district profile and gave a detailed PowerPoint Presentation on the headway achieved under the ongoing Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan.

It was informed that a multi-department action plan has been launched in the district focusing on public outreach, advocacy campaigns, enforcement measures and community engagement to curb the drug abuse. The meeting was informed that as many as 1325 anti-drug activities have been conducted so far across the district, registering participation of 6,95,565 people from all walks of life.

The Deputy Commissioner further apprised that five



hotspots have been identified in the district where CCTV surveillance has been put in place to strengthen the monitoring and check illegal activities related to narcotics.

While reviewing the enforcement measures, the ACS laid special focus on maintaining strict vigilance in high-risk border areas, particularly Lakhapur and

Hiranagar. He stressed the importance of intensified surveillance and stronger inter-departmental coordination in these sensitive zones to prevent drug trafficking and related unlawful activities.

He also directed the Regional Transport Office (RTO), Kathua, to enforce strict checks during night hours. He asked for tightening the noose around the defaulting drivers and vehicle owners involved in unscrupulous activities or found driving under the influence of alcohol and other narcotic substances.

Reviewing the healthcare and rehabilitation facilities for drug addicts, the meeting was informed by the Principal, Government Medical College Kathua that a 22-bedded Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) with IPD and OPD services is fully functional in the district.

It was informed that a dedicated team of four psychiatrists, along with other doctors and paramedical staff, is providing treatment and counselling to addicted patients.

Anil Kumar called for taking local NGOs on board to further strengthen the healthcare support and rehabilitation services for affected patients. He also stressed for exploring the scope for establishing a state-of-the-art health facility dedicated to treatment and recovery of drug addicts in the district.

The meeting also held detailed discussions on awareness generation in schools and colleges, sports-based engagement activities, mass pledge campaigns and onboarding of NCC and NSS volunteers in anti-drug campaigns to build stronger youth participation against substance abuse.

The ACS further called for adoption of certification for drug-free government offices and institutions, saying that such initiatives would help build a culture of accountability and social responsibility.

He urged all the departments and stakeholders to work in close coordination and play their assigned role with dedication to eradicate the drug menace from Kathua. He emphasized that only united and sustained efforts with active public participation can ensure the success of the Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan and help build a healthier and safer society.

SSP Kathua Mohita Sharma, ADDC Surinder Mohan, CEO BDDA Atul Gupta, ADC Vishavjeet Singh, IAS Probationer Nidhi and other district officers were also present.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Why We Need A Heart For Every Hammer

The sight of a commercial building being reduced to rubble in Yaripora, Kulgam, is a visceral image. It's meant to be. For an administration looking to signal "zero tolerance" against the narcotics trade, a demolition is a loud, clear message: the house built on addiction will not stand.

But as the dust settles, we have to ask ourselves: Does breaking a building actually break the cycle? There is no doubt that the drug crisis in Jammu and Kashmir is a fire that needs extinguishing. Targeting the "ecosystem" of the trade—the assets and the kingpins—is a necessary part of law enforcement. However, history shows us that crackdowns alone are often just a game of "whack-a-mole." If we only focus on the supply without understanding the desperate demand, we are merely treating the symptom while the infection spreads.

To truly "humanize" this crisis, we must look at the faces of those caught in the net. Substance abuse doesn't happen in a vacuum; it grows in the soil of Economic Despair: When "nothing to do" meets "nowhere to go," drugs become a dangerous escape. Social Isolation: The pressure to succeed—or simply to survive—can be crushing for the youth. The Lack of a Safety Net: Awareness and affordable treatment are often far harder to find than the drugs themselves.

For enforcement to be respected, it must be unimpeachable. Public trust is fragile; it requires the assurance that every action, from an arrest to a demolition, follows the strict letter of the law. If justice feels arbitrary, it breeds resentment rather than cooperation.

Furthermore, we must distinguish between the predator and the prey. The person selling the poison deserves the full weight of the law, but the person consuming it is often a victim of their own circumstances. Treating addiction purely as a crime, rather than a health crisis, ignores the human capacity for redemption.

The action in Kulgam proves the administration has the will to fight. Now, it must show the wisdom to heal. A "stronger strategy" isn't just about more arrests; it's about: Investment: Building community centers and job opportunities as fast as we tear down illegal structures.

Empathy: Expanding rehabilitation facilities so that "getting clean" is a realistic path, not a luxury. Unity: Empowering families and neighborhoods to speak up without fear, acting as the first line of defense. Breaking structures is a start, but rebuilding lives is the goal. We can tear down every tainted building in the valley, but if we don't give our youth something better to build in their place, the cycle will only repeat. The Bottom Line: A fist can stop a hand from moving, but only an open hand can help someone stand back up. True victory over drugs will be measured not by how many buildings we level, but by how many lives we save.

The Silent Epidemic

How AI Is Replacing Human Connection And Widening Family Gap



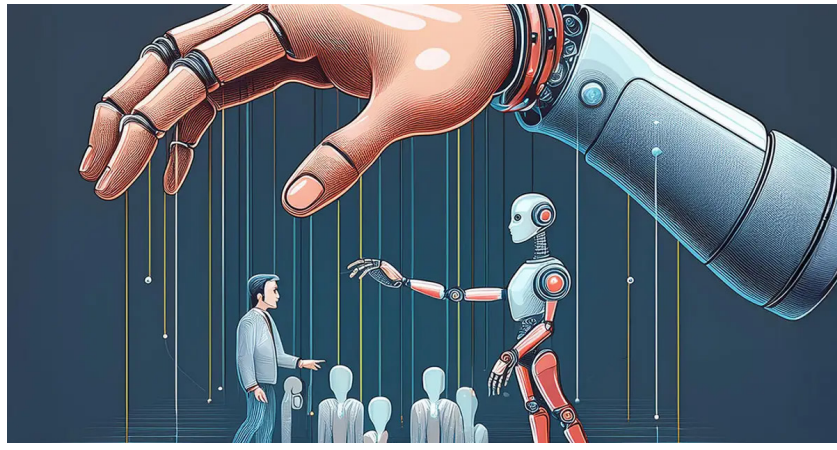
ZUNEERA MALIK

Humanity is set against the backdrop of an endless realm of possible outcomes; unfortunately, this offers an incredible dichotomy and loss of hope. We are actually monuments to silence, holding our sombre emotions in check with only sorrow to demonstrate those feelings that have not been articulated and expressed. Time ceases to exist as time stands still; while at some point in the midst of these two extremes we cease to know what being alive really means.

We search for happiness through outsourcing our joy according to a set of criteria that society has created for us. We have taken our measure of success by our number of likes, our measure of "validation" has come through algorithms and our measure of companionship comes through code. As a result, we begin to take the beauty out of what is meant to be human, and we become beings that exist without any true purpose in life, separated from the rhythm of the universe and disconnected from all the things that we share in common with our environment. To exist in this manner, without ever living, has caused many people to be trapped in an ever-increasing state of silent despair.

Our thinking has been severely limited by an all-consuming sense of pressure that pervades the body and even affects the way we react to stimuli like sound. What is truly disturbing is that we can now become accustomed to this overwhelming pressure (which is anything but ordinary) and instead perceive it as normal; akin to having several tonnes of concrete casually lifted off our heads, all without being able to feel anything. The consequences of this unyielding force are horrible, and we are all helpless bystanders watching the casualties mount.

From where I sit, it is apparent that this



disease is enormous. We are bearing witness to the world choosing to distance itself from one another through physical proximity and no longer seek out one another's company through human interaction (instead opting instead for AI). How utterly bizarre that we would choose to interact with something which is solely a product of industry; whereby we have created machines but instead of building human relationships as we did before, we are replacing them with machines...how do we expect to have meaningful, long-lasting relationships when we continue to rely upon these inanimate objects?

Yes, when we utilise an artificial intelligence source, it can offer us some form of "understanding" albeit from the perspective of no judgement...this emotionless entity (the AI) never raises its voice, grows weary of our emotions, nor disagrees with our opinions or behaviours. But the emotional connection needed for a true sense of human understanding cannot occur without sharing in the same emotional experience as another human being (i.e., love, hate, longing, forgiveness, etc...); none of which will ever be able to be reproduced through any algorithm.

There is an immense and lasting effect on how Generation Z functions as young adults. They are growing up in a world where having a computer friend is considered normal; therefore, establishing real friendships is

becoming increasingly difficult.

I personally see this type of trend within my family, with my sibling mainly turning to AI rather than spending quality family time. By creating a dependency, the emotional and social impacts of excessive dependency on AI could lead to a much different understanding of reality for Generation Z than for any past generations, due to their inability to differentiate between real friendship and false relationship. Therefore, if this trend continues, we may have a generation of children who have become weak mentally and emotionally incapable of experiencing true life.

One of the saddest results of living with AI is that it is creating a significant rift between kids and their parents. When a child views AI as their primary friend because they perceive it as being more compassionate than their own parents, this indicates that something has gone significantly awry! The reason for this dramatic change is due to the breakdown of communication between parents and children. Most parents have so many pressures on them that they struggle to even understand the feelings of their children. When this occurs, it creates a scenario that is full of misunderstandings, which then leads to disagreements, fights, and finally isolation.

Children will go into their rooms, stop sharing their voices with their parents, and

avoid being involved in family conversations. The love of the home is gone. The kids are moving from a place of love to one of hate for one another. As we see more of these changes occurring within Gen Z (the generation following Millennials), the divide has become so large that many children have begun to resent or even hate their parents. This cannot happen! We must come together to work toward something real, not something artificial, if we are going to preserve our society's future.

To begin preventing this behaviour, we need to take action now. The first step we can create tech-free zones. There are specific areas for certain activities, like at home by having your phone out of your bedroom and not having your cell phone, or any kind of technology, on your dining room table while you are eating. By creating a place where there is no technology, people will be able to build stronger relationships through real conversations without the constant distraction of notifications and fake digital interactions.

The 2nd step: Open communication is also very important. Being able to have face-to-face conversations will allow us to understand each other better. Being able to share laughter and humour together, being able to share stories together, or just to sit with someone in silence will form a true bond with that person - especially with family members. Children need to be in an environment where they have space, where they have the attention, and where they can flourish - even if this goes against what society dictates.

Understanding and acceptance bring us to a place of happiness. If society begins to focus on forming real connections versus using technology for the sake of convenience, we will raise a generation of future generations to be healthier, and therefore, create a more peaceful earth. Since only a person understands a person. Let's allow humans to clean up the mess created by us through our actions.

Author is pursuing BSC honours in Physics from Islamia College of Science and Commerce.

Nasha Mukht Abhiyan - Drug Abuse And The Role Of Imams

MOHD AMIN MIR

The growing menace of drug abuse has emerged as one of the most serious social, moral, and public health challenges of our time. Across regions, communities are grappling with the devastating consequences of addiction, broken families, declining mental health, increased crime, and a loss of productive human potential. In this context, the government's initiative to launch a 100-day campaign against drug abuse, alongside the formation of parents' brigades, represents a timely and commendable step. However, the success of such efforts depends not only on administrative measures but also on collective social responsibility. Among the most influential actors in this fight are religious leaders, particularly imams and Muslim clerics, who hold a unique position of trust and moral authority within society.

Drug abuse is not merely a law enforcement issue; it is deeply rooted in social, psychological, and spiritual dimensions. Therefore, addressing it requires a comprehensive approach that integrates policy, education, community participation, and moral guidance. The 100-day campaign aims to create awareness, disrupt supply chains, rehabilitate addicts, and engage communities. The parents' brigade, on the other hand, seeks to empower families to monitor, guide, and protect their children from falling into the trap of addiction. These initiatives are significant because they recognize that the problem begins at home and spreads outward into society.

Yet, even with these measures, there remains a critical need to mobilize the moral and spiritual framework of the community. This is where imams and Muslim clerics can play a transformative role. In many societies, especially in regions like Kashmir, mosques are not just places of worship but centers of social interaction, guidance, and education. The Friday sermon (Khutbah) reaches a wide audience, cutting across age, class, and educational backgrounds. It is an unparalleled platform for shaping public opinion and influencing behavior.

The proposal that imams dedicate three consecutive Friday sermons to addressing drug abuse is both practical and powerful. Such an initiative can amplify the impact of the government's campaign and ensure that the message penetrates deeply into the social fabric. Through these sermons, imams can educate the public about the harmful effects of drugs, not only

from a medical perspective but also from an ethical and religious standpoint. Islam places great emphasis on the preservation of life, (intellect), and dignity—all of which are compromised by substance abuse.

In the first Friday sermon, imams can focus on awareness and understanding. Many individuals, particularly youth, may not fully grasp the long-term consequences of drug use. The sermon can explain how addiction develops, the physical and psychological damage it causes, and the ripple effects it has on families and communities. Real-life examples, delivered with sensitivity, can make the message more relatable. Importantly, the tone should not be accusatory but compassionate, emphasizing that addiction is a challenge that requires support and understanding.

The second Friday sermon can address the moral and spiritual dimensions of drug abuse. Islam clearly prohibits substances that harm the body and mind. Imams can draw upon Quranic verses and Hadiths that emphasize the sanctity of health and the responsibility of individuals to avoid self-destructive behavior. At the same time, they can highlight the concept of repentance and redemption, reassuring those struggling with addiction that it is never too late to seek help and return to a healthy path. This balanced approach, firm on principles yet compassionate in tone, can encourage individuals to come forward without fear of stigma.

The third Friday sermon can be dedicated to action and community responsibility. Imams can call upon parents, educators, and community leaders to actively participate in the fight against drug abuse. They can encourage families to maintain open communication with their children, to recognize early warning signs of addiction, and to seek professional help when needed. The role of the parents' brigade can be emphasized here, reinforcing the idea that prevention begins at home. Additionally, imams can urge the community to support rehabilitation efforts and to treat recovering addicts with dignity rather than discrimination.

One of the key challenges in addressing drug abuse is the stigma associated with it. Many families hesitate to seek help due to fear of social judgment. This silence often exacerbates the problem, allowing addiction to deepen unchecked. Religious leaders can play a crucial role in breaking this stigma. By addressing the issue openly and empathetically, they can create an environment where individ-



uals feel safe to seek assistance. They can remind the community that compassion and support are fundamental values, and that helping those in need is a collective duty.

The involvement of imams also has the potential to influence youth in a meaningful way. Young people often look for guidance and role models, and religious leaders can fill this role effectively. By engaging with youth through sermons, discussions, and community programs, imams can provide positive alternatives and reinforce values that discourage substance abuse. They can also collaborate with schools, colleges, and youth organizations to extend the reach of their message beyond the mosque.

Furthermore, the integration of religious guidance with government initiatives can enhance the overall effectiveness of the campaign. When administrative measures are supported by moral persuasion, the impact is significantly greater. For example, awareness drives conducted by authorities can be reinforced by sermons delivered in mosques, creating a consistent and unified message. Similarly, rehabilitation programs can benefit from the moral encouragement provided by religious leaders, helping individuals stay committed to recovery.

The parents' brigade is another vital component of the campaign, and its success depends largely on active participation. Parents are the first line of defense against drug abuse. They have the responsibility to guide, monitor, and support their children. However, many parents may feel ill-equipped to handle this challenge. Through sermons and community interactions, imams can provide practical advice to parents, helping them understand how to communicate effectively with their children, set boundaries, and identify early signs of trouble.

It is also important to recognize that drug abuse is often linked to broader social issues such as unemployment, stress, and lack of opportunities. While religious guidance

can address the moral aspect, there is a need for a holistic approach that also tackles these underlying factors. Imams can use their platform to advocate for social justice, education, and economic opportunities, thereby addressing the root causes of addiction. This broader perspective can contribute to long-term solutions rather than temporary fixes.

Another significant aspect is the role of women in combating drug abuse. Mothers, in particular, play a crucial role in shaping the values and behavior of their children. The parents' brigade should actively involve women, and imams can encourage this participation by acknowledging and supporting their role. Community programs can be designed to empower mothers with knowledge and resources, enabling them to contribute effectively to the campaign.

In addition to sermons, mosques can serve as centers for community engagement. Workshops, counseling sessions, and awareness programs can be organized in collaboration with health professionals and social workers. This multifaceted approach can provide practical support to individuals and families affected by drug abuse. It can also create a sense of collective responsibility, where the community comes together to address a common challenge.

The use of media and technology can further amplify these efforts. Sermons and awareness messages can be shared through social media platforms, reaching a wider audience. Short videos, podcasts, and online discussions can engage youth in a format that resonates with them. Imams can adapt their communication strategies to ensure that their message is accessible and relevant in the digital age.

While the focus is on imams and Muslim clerics, it is important to adopt an inclusive approach that involves leaders from all religious and social backgrounds. Drug abuse is a universal problem that transcends religious and cultural boundaries. Collaboration among different community leaders can create a uni-

fied front, strengthening the overall impact of the campaign.

The success of the 100-day campaign will ultimately depend on sustained efforts beyond this period. Awareness and prevention must become ongoing priorities rather than temporary initiatives. Imams can continue to address social issues in their sermons, ensuring that the message remains relevant and consistent. Similarly, the parents' brigade can evolve into a permanent support network, providing continuous guidance and assistance to families.

Accountability and evaluation are also essential. The impact of the campaign should be assessed through measurable outcomes such as reduced drug use, increased awareness, and improved access to rehabilitation services. Feedback from the community can help identify areas for improvement and ensure that the initiative remains effective.

In conclusion, the government's 100-day campaign against drug abuse and the formation of parents' brigades are significant steps in addressing a critical social issue. However, the involvement of imams and Muslim clerics can elevate these efforts to a new level. By dedicating three consecutive Friday sermons to this issue, they can educate, inspire, and mobilize the community. Their moral authority, combined with compassionate guidance, can break the stigma surrounding addiction and encourage individuals to seek help.

Drug abuse is not an insurmountable challenge. With collective effort, strong leadership, and a commitment to social and moral values, it is possible to overcome this menace. The collaboration between government initiatives, community participation, and religious guidance offers a powerful framework for change. Imams, as custodians of moral and spiritual guidance, have a responsibility and an opportunity to lead this transformation. By embracing this role, they can contribute significantly to building a healthier, safer, and more resilient society.

The path forward requires determination, unity, and sustained effort. The 100-day campaign can serve as a catalyst, but the journey must continue beyond it. With the active involvement of parents, community leaders, and religious figures, there is hope for a future where drug abuse is no longer a pervasive threat. Instead, it can be replaced by a culture of awareness, compassion, and collective responsibility, one that safeguards the well-being of individuals and the integrity of society as a whole.

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■ Wall That Crumbled

# Why Mamata's Street-Fighter Image Couldn't Save Her



DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

“Humpty Dumpty had a great fall”, this line from the nursery rhyme came to mind while describing the political downfall of the once powerful Mamata Banerjee. It was one of her favourite lines: “Humpty Humpty Dumpty Dumpty. Hamba Hamba Ramba Ramba.” A total nonsense poem she was always reciting from the stage and her sycophants were clapping loudly. And ironically in her own political life, a fall like that of Humpty Dumpty has now taken place. It must be said, this was not a sudden event; rather, it is the cumulative result of multiple factors. In politics, decline usually builds slowly. Tughlaq like directives triggered widespread backlash.

First, anti incumbency is a major reason. When a party stays in power for a long time, people's expectations rise. Even if development work is done, it often cannot mask people's dissatisfaction or sense of monotony. Bengal has seen so many images of corruption and brutality that the slogan “Joy Bangla” began to sound hollow. The Trinamool Congress tried to portray itself as synonymous with Bengal, and claimed that everyone except the party and its loyalists were outsiders.

There were Goebbels style false propaganda campaigns, even about eating fish. Every year, the so called industrial summits were little more than a show, involving people like Sourav Ganguly and a cluster of opportunistic Tollywood actors and actresses who had minimal political understanding, yet were used to project messages of development. Alongside this came figures like Shahjahan Sheikh, Jahangir, and “Kesto type” strongmen. Orders such as “women should not go out after eight o'clock,” turning the police into party servants, and merging the party with the state machinery—these are things people cannot accept. Hence that famous saying comes to mind: “You can make all people fool for some time or some people for all time, but not all people for all time.”

Trinamool had no real political ideology. Apart from Mamata's personal inspiration and the leadership of a novice like Abhishek, what ideology did the party have? As a result,



Issues like nationalism, religion, or regional identity influence voters. If a government fails to align with these trends, its support may decline. The party's contradictory stance on OBC Waqf and SIR further accelerated its downfall. Fifth, leadership image. Mamata Banerjee's strong and combative persona was once her greatest strength, but over time, opponents were able to portray it negatively.

Finally, certain specific incidents or controversies, such as economic distress, law and order failures, or major political scandals—have intensified public anger, whether it was Park Street, Kamduni, or the case of 26,000 teachers.

Politics changes in cycles. A leader or party that is weak today may become strong tomorrow. Mamata failed to grasp this truth. Her flatterers dragged her down even further. They even made her sing, “It is time for me to go, bid me farewell,” but she did not deserve such humiliation. I am two years younger than her. I have seen her dancing on the bonnet of Jayaprakash Narayan's car at the University of Calcutta while I was giving a speech at the university gate about ESMA. What a fighter she once was, she had the courage to uproot the mighty CPM almost single handedly.

She extended our retirement age to 65. But by choosing the wrong friends and supporters, she invited her own downfall as well as that of her party. Imagine, her education minister Bratya Basu had appointed two principals simultaneously at Motijheel College until just a few days ago. Their fall had become inevitable. The BJP merely acted as a catalyst. And perhaps we will no longer hear her say, “Humpty Humpty Dumpty Dumpty.”

tributed to a growing belief that the government had become unresponsive to everyday concerns. This sentiment was amplified by a record voter turnout, crossing 92 percent—which many analysts interpreted as a clear signal of public desire for change.

A series of governance related controversies further weakened the TMC's standing. The rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College became a defining moment in the campaign, shaking public confidence and deeply affecting women voters, who had long been considered one of Mamata Banerjee's most loyal constituencies. The government's response was widely criticized as inadequate and insensitive, and this single incident came to symbolize broader anxieties about women's safety in the state. Similarly, the events in Sandeshkhali, where allegations of atrocities and administrative failure dominated headlines—reinforced the perception that law and order had deteriorated. These episodes collectively eroded the moral authority that Mamata Banerjee had cultivated over the years as a leader who stood for justice and protection of the vulnerable.

Economic frustrations also played a significant role. Many young people felt that West Bengal was not generating enough opportunities, leading to a steady out migration of skilled and semi skilled workers. This created a sense of hopelessness among first time voters, who were more receptive to alternative political narratives. Businesses, too, expressed concerns about corruption and bureaucratic hurdles, which they believed hindered investment and growth. Over time, these economic grievances blended with political

jee herself in Bhabanipur, a symbolic blow that underscored the depth of voter dissatisfaction.

Complaints about local level interference, the dominance of party cadres, and the perception of a pervasive “syndicate culture” contributed to a growing belief that the government had become unresponsive to everyday concerns. This sentiment was amplified by a record voter turnout—crossing 92 percent which many analysts interpreted as a clear signal of public desire for change.

Another crucial factor was the shifting composition of the TMC's voter base. Women, minorities, and rural voters had historically formed the backbone of the party's support. However, reports suggested that women voters, in particular, felt let down by the government's handling of high profile crimes and by what they perceived as a lack of empathy from the leadership. Minority votes, once consolidated behind the TMC, showed signs of fragmentation, weak-

*In the end, the TMC's defeat was not the result of a single issue but rather the culmination of accumulated grievances, emotional turning points, and strategic missteps. It reflected a broader desire for accountability, renewal, and a different political direction.*

ening the party's hold over several key constituencies. The cumulative effect of these shifts was visible in the unprecedented defeat of twenty two ministers, including Mamata Banerjee herself in Bhabanipur a symbolic blow that underscored the depth of voter dissatisfaction.

The opposition's strategy also contributed significantly to the TMC's defeat. The Bharatiya Janata Party mounted an aggressive, high intensity campaign that penetrated regions previously considered impregnable TMC strongholds. While Mamata Banerjee attempted to frame the election as a battle between Bengal's identity and “outsiders,” this narrative did not resonate as strongly as it had in earlier elections. The opposition successfully capitalized on governance failures, amplified public anger, and presented itself as a viable alternative at a moment when many voters were already questioning the status quo.

In the end, the TMC's defeat was not the result of a single issue but rather the culmination of accumu-

lated grievances, emotional turning points, and strategic missteps. It reflected a broader desire for accountability, renewal, and a different political direction. The election became a referendum not only on the government's performance but also on its ability to respond to crises, maintain public trust, and adapt to a rapidly changing political environment.

Ultimately, the defeat of the Trinamool Congress reflected a deeper shift in the political psychology of West Bengal. For years, Mamata Banerjee had embodied a powerful narrative of resistance, first against the Left Front and later against national level political forces. Her personal charisma, street fighter image, and ability to connect emotionally with ordinary people had been central to the TMC's rise. But over time, this narrative began to lose its resonance. Many voters felt that the party had grown distant from its original grassroots ethos, becoming increasingly centralized and personality driven. The emotional bond that once defined Mamata's relationship with the electorate appeared to weaken, especially as controversies mounted and the government struggled to respond with the moral clarity that had once been her hallmark.

The internal dynamics of the TMC also contributed to its decline. Reports of factionalism, infighting, and the growing influence of a small circle of leaders created the impression of a party that had become insular. Several senior leaders defected or expressed dissatisfaction, signaling instability within the organization. These internal fractures not only weakened the party's campaign machinery but also undermined public confidence in its ability to govern cohesively. The defeat of so many ministers, including the chief minister herself, was a dramatic manifestation of this internal erosion.

Another dimension of the TMC's defeat was the changing media and communication landscape. The opposition's ability to dominate digital platforms, shape narratives, and mobilize public sentiment played a significant role. Social media amplified grievances, circulated images and testimonies from controversial incidents, and created a sense of urgency around issues of safety, corruption, and governance. The TMC, despite its organizational strength, struggled to counter this wave of digital messaging. Its communication strategy often appeared reactive rather than proactive, allowing negative narratives to take root and spread rapidly.

The election also highlighted the limits of welfare politics when not accompanied by strong governance. While the TMC had implemented several popular welfare schemes—particularly those aimed at women and rural households, these initiatives were overshadowed by concerns about law and order, corruption, and administrative inefficiency. Voters who had once supported the party for its welfare programs began to question whether these benefits were enough to offset broader governance failures. In this sense, the election became a referendum not just on policy delivery but on the overall direction and integrity of the government.

In the broader context of West Bengal's political history, the TMC's defeat marked a significant turning point. It signaled the end of an era defined by Mamata Banerjee's dominance and the beginning of a new phase in the state's political evolution. The electorate's verdict reflected a desire for renewal, accountability, and a break from entrenched political patterns. It also underscored the dynamic nature of democratic politics, where even the most formidable leaders and parties must continually adapt to changing expectations, shifting demographics, and evolving public consciousness.

The fall of the TMC government, therefore, cannot be understood as a simple rejection of a single leader or party. It was the culmination of accumulated grievances, emotional ruptures, and strategic miscalculations. It was shaped by the interplay of governance failures, social anxieties, economic frustrations, and political realignments. Most importantly, it was driven by the collective will of voters who sought a different path for the state's future. In this sense, the election served as a powerful reminder of the transformative potential of democratic participation and the enduring demand for responsive, transparent, and empathetic leadership.

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for the past decade, there have been incidents of exam, paper disappearance, countless lies about DA for government employees, and the politics of cut money and rice, ration scams. Mamata's paintings being sold for crores of rupees, and her books being made compulsory in school libraries, these

Second, organizational weakness at the grassroots. The strength of a regional party depends on its local leadership and workers. If there is factionalism, infighting, or allegations of corruption, public trust erodes. Third, the rise of a strong opposition, especially the expansion of the Bharatiya Janata Party. This consolidated the anti incumbency vote and intensified the electoral battle.

Fourth, identity based politics.

This downfall was natural. Even Hitler had to succumb to defeat. Hitlers cannot rule for ever.

The defeat of the Trinamool Congress and the Mamata Banerjee government in West Bengal emerged from a convergence of political fatigue, governance controversies, shifting voter loyalties, and a dramatically altered electoral landscape. After nearly fifteen years in power, the TMC faced a level of anti incumbency that had been steadily building beneath the surface. Much like the Left Front's decline after three decades of uninterrupted rule, the TMC's long tenure generated a sense of stagnation among sections of the electorate. Complaints about local level interference, the dominance of party cadres, and the perception of a pervasive “syndicate culture” con-

dissatisfaction, creating a broader critique of the government's performance.

Another crucial factor was the shifting composition of the TMC's voter base. Women, minorities, and rural voters had historically formed the backbone of the party's support. However, reports suggested that women voters, in particular, felt let down by the government's handling of high profile crimes and by what they perceived as a lack of empathy from the leadership. Minority votes, once consolidated behind the TMC, showed signs of fragmentation, weakening the party's hold over several key constituencies. The cumulative effect of these shifts was visible in the unprecedented defeat of twenty two ministers, including Mamata Baner-

## No Let-Up In Alert Along

officials said. "Technology is playing a critical role. From AI-based detection to drone surveillance, the objective is zero infiltration and real-time response," another officer said.

Troops are also conducting regular training drills simulating infiltration attempts, bunker attacks and coordinated responses to maintain operational readiness. Bulletproof vehicles and all-terrain mobility platforms have been deployed to ensure rapid troop movement across mountainous regions.

Officials said that civilian safety in border areas remains a priority, with coordination mechanisms in place to respond to any escalation.

Pertinently, 'Operation Sindoor,' was launched on the night of May 7-8 last year to avenge the Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead. It marked a calibrated military response to terror attack.

The operation targeted multiple terrorist training facilities and infrastructure across Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and beyond.

The strikes, carried out with coordinated use of missiles, air power, drones and artillery, focused on camps linked to groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed.

Officials had described the operation as precise and intelligence-led, aimed at minimising collateral damage while signalling a zero-tolerance approach to cross-border terrorism.

The operation saw limited escalation, including aerial engagements and cross-border shelling, before both sides moved towards a ceasefire understanding around May 10.

Officials said the lessons from Operation Sindoor continue to shape current deployment and preparedness strategies along the borders.

"Dominance along the LoC is critical. Our forces remain committed to maintaining peace through vigilance and readiness," an official said, adding that the alert grid will remain in place in the coming days—(KNO)

## 'First Villages Of India,

have faced the greatest neglect are now accorded the highest priority in the new era of Jammu Kashmir's progress," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the Government of India is implementing a comprehensive strategy under the Vibrant Villages Programme, which aims to integrate border populations into the national mainstream with focus on Livelihood Generation, Infrastructure and Connectivity. He said that the programme also aims to saturate all villages in 4 thematic areas- all-weather road connectivity, telecom connectivity, television connectivity and electrification through convergence under existing scheme norms.

"Every effort is being made to ensure that the aspirations of every single citizen are fulfilled, that the development demands of border residents are met.

Furthermore, by adopting a "Whole-of-Government Approach," we aim to ensure that every target set under the Vibrant Villages Programme is achieved," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the officials to ensure that every household in the border villages has access to electricity, mobile connectivity, and economic independence.

"We must ensure that by 2030, not a single family in the border villages of Samba remains below the poverty line," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Responding to the demands raised by Member of Legislative Assembly Ramgarh, the Lieutenant Governor reiterated that the administration is committed to providing land ownership rights to displaced persons from PoJK and WPRs.

He also stated that the completion of the Shahpur Kandi Dam would provide a massive boost to the region's agricultural productivity.

The Lieutenant Governor lauded Regal for becoming a TB-free village and urged continued vigilance regarding clean drinking water and the collective fight against drug abuse.

The Lieutenant Governor also handed over appointment orders to SPOs and sanction letters to various youth of the village and beneficiaries under HADP, Mission Yuva and other schemes.

During his visit to the Regal Border Out Post (BoP), the Lieutenant Governor interacted with the Jawans and lauded their unwavering determination in guarding the nation's frontiers and commended their exemplary role in Operation Sindoor.

Dr Devinder Kumar Manyal, Member of Legislative Assembly from Ramgarh; Shri Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department; Shri Ashwani Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department; Shri Anil Kumar Singh, Additional Chief Secretary, Public Works (R&B) Depart-

ment; Shri Bhim Sen Tuti; IGP Jammu; Shri Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary Culture; Ms R. Alice Vaz, Commissioner Secretary to Government, Planning and Information; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Ms Ayushi Sudan Deputy Commissioner Samba; Shri Anuj Kumar, SSP Samba, senior officials of army, police and civil administration and people in large number were present.

## Nation's True Strength

The Lieutenant Governor stated that the land of Ghagwal has historically been a vibrant center of learning where Vedic teachings flourished and the Guru-Shishya tradition thrived, providing students with guidance in the art of living, critical thinking, and the courage to seek the truth.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted India's rapid advancement in science, innovation and technology. He further emphasised that the nation's true strength lies in its cultural consciousness, with Sanskrit playing a vital role in providing a balanced perspective rooted in ethics and duty.

The Lieutenant Governor said that Sanskrit has been a source of essential values and knowledge systems for humanity for centuries. He also recalled the monumental contributions of ancient scholars such as Kautilya, Charaka, Sushruta, Bhaskaracharya, Brahmagupta, Aryabhata, and Varahamihira, in shaping the global traditions in mathematics, medicine and philosophy.

He stressed the urgent need to make this vast repository of knowledge accessible in simple, modern language to ensure its relevance for the contemporary world.

The Lieutenant Governor urged the Gurukul management to maintain the highest standards of education by integrating the depth of tradition with the breadth of modernity. He emphasized that the institution must go beyond providing degrees to nurture sensitive, ethical and courageous personalities who can lead the society.

"I believe Shri Narsingh Dev Sanskrit Gurukul will evolve into a centre of excellence by integrating traditional values with modern education," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor appreciated the efforts of Chudamani Sanskrit Sansthan, Shri Narsingh Dev Temple Management Committee, district administration Samba and congratulated them for their vision, dedication and commitment in establishing the Gurukul.

Shri Surjit Singh Slathia, Member of Legislative Assembly from Samba; Shri Shakti Pathak, Director ACB and President of Chudamani Sanskrit Sansthan; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Shri Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Jammu; Shri Shridhar Patil, DIG JSK Range; Ms Ayushi Sudan, Deputy Commissioner Samba; and other senior officials, and Vedic scholars attended the inaugural ceremony.

## NC To Hold Crucial

"The issue of cabinet expansion is also likely to come up for discussion," they said, adding that three berths in the council of ministers are lying vacant, as J&K can have nine ministers—(KNO)

## 'Op Sindoor' Paid Dividends,

Tamil Nadu is getting a new government. Congress won in Kerala, the BJP won in Assam. What else is there?" he said.

When asked if he sees any impact of special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the elections, Abdullah said, "There was an impact of everything."

He also said the opposition INDIA bloc is already strong and there is nothing lacking in it.

In response to a question about blasts in Punjab, the former Union minister said blasts have been happening in India, and there was nothing new.

"You should not panic," he told reporters. On the opposition targeting the NC government in J-K, Abdullah said it is good that the opposition is doing its job. Jammu & Kashmir Travel

"If they don't, how will they survive? Let them say what they want. Our party is working the way it has to, and we will continue to do so," he added.(PTI)

## Omar Abdullah HintS

alone cannot address unemployment and stressed the need to promote self-employment.

Omar referred to initiatives like Mission Yuva, which aim to ease access to loans for youth starting businesses in sectors such as retail, workshops and tourism. He said skill development programmes are being expanded to match market needs.

The long-term goal, the CM said, is to

build a self-reliant Jammu and Kashmir with a strong local economy. He said the government wants to create opportunities within the region so that dependence on the Centre reduces over time.

Addressing political developments, Abdullah dismissed reports of defections from the National Conference. He said no MLA from his party would switch sides to support the BJP and termed such claims baseless.

He accused the Peoples Democratic Party of having supported the BJP during Rajya Sabha elections, saying the matter had already been established through information obtained under the Right to Information.

Omar asserted that his government functions independently. "When I have to say something, I say it. Neither am I silent, nor is my government silent," he said.

On tourism, the CM said the issue was discussed in the assembly, and several locations have already been opened. The remaining destinations will be opened in a phased manner, he added.

Responding to a query on cabinet expansion, the Chief Minister said a decision would be taken at an appropriate time. "If we have to do it, we will do it," he said—(KNO)

## Trump Pauses US

intolerable for America; while we have not even begun yet."

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian also said that the price rise is attributed to the war, and profiteering and hoarding are unacceptable.

In a post on X, he said, "I am aware of the price increases. Part of it is related to changes in the prices of raw materials or issues connected to the unjust war that people are aware of, but profiteering and hoarding are unacceptable. I have asked the Minister of Justice, in coordination with the judiciary, to take serious action against any violations that disrupt societal peace."

The threat comes hours after Trump paused the US military's "Project Freedom" operation to open the Strait of Hormuz, due to "great progress" being made towards a "complete and final agreement with the representatives of Iran". (ANI)

## In Kashmir, Pride,

tourist movement has remained steady, with security arrangements in place to ensure safety at key destinations.

Locals associated with the tourism sector said such confidence among visitors is important for the region's economy.

Tourists said they hope peace continues and that Kashmir remains open and accessible for visitors from across the country. "We just want peace here. And we will keep coming back," Mehta said—(KNO)

## Transporters Threaten

for talks earlier, this situation would not have arisen," he said.

Matta said the protest is driven by "survival concerns" of thousands associated with the sector. "We are not against the government or development. But our employment is being snatched. First save our livelihood, then we can discuss other issues," he added.

Referring to the April 20 strike, he acknowledged the hardship caused to the public, particularly students and patients. "We understand people suffered; students missed exams and patients faced difficulties. We don't want to repeat that, but we are being forced," he said.

The transport leader reiterated concerns over the expansion of Smart City bus services into routes traditionally operated by private transporters, alleging that local stakeholders are being sidelined in the process.

He urged the government to initiate dialogue, stating that the sector supports thousands of drivers, conductors and vehicle owners across the Valley. "We want to work with the government, not against it. But if ignored, we will be compelled to intensify agitation," he said.

Transport bodies have further appealed to operators across Kashmir to support the proposed strike, which, if implemented, is likely to severely disrupt daily life, affecting commuters, students and patients across the Valley.

Notably, as already reported, a Valley-wide "chakka jam" on April 20 had paralysed public transport across Kashmir, leaving commuters stranded and forcing authorities, including Kashmir University, to make alternate arrangements for affected students—(KNO)

## India Marks First

carrying out airstrikes on nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir eliminating at least 100 terrorists.

The strikes at the terror camps included the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) headquarters at Bahawalpur, the Lashkar-e-Taiba's base at Muridke and terrorist infrastructure in Mehmoona Joya in Sialkot, Sawai Nala and Syed Na Bilal in Muzaffarabad, Gulpur and Abbas in Kotli, Barnala in Bhimber, and Sarjal.

The action triggered a rapid escalation in tensions with Pakistan launching retaliatory strikes, though most of them were thwarted by the Indian military.

The hostilities ended with an understanding on halting the military actions on May 10 following talks over the hotline between army officials of the two sides, but the episode brought into focus the need to enhance India's military might.

While India delivered a befitting response to Pakistan, the three services analysed the hostilities to refine operational strategies and integrate advanced technologies and platforms.

The three services have been specifically focusing on procurement of unmanned platforms and infusion of high-end technologies, including artificial intelligence for target acquisitions and surveillance.

India has added significant military might in the last one year, and the credit goes to a whole-of-government approach to bolster military prowess.

Definitely, lessons learned from Operation Sindoor are being implemented, said a senior military official.

The months following the conflict saw the government greenlighting several mega procurement projects in line with the national security strategy and priorities.

The procurement proposals cleared to further crank up the military's overall strike capabilities included a green signal to acquire a fresh batch of five S-400 missile systems from Russia and the purchase of 60 medium transport aircraft.

In March alone, the government greenlighted the acquisition of military hardware worth Rs 2.38 lakh crore.

In February, the government cleared another long-pending proposal to procure 114 Rafale fighter jets under a government-to-government framework with France, nearly two decades after the plan was originally rolled out to boost the Indian Air Force's combat prowess.

The defence ministry also approved buying six US-made Boeing P8-I surveillance aircraft for the Indian Navy to enhance the force's surveillance and anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

The Rafale jets are capable of carrying a range of potent weapons. European missile maker MBDA's Meteor beyond visual range air-to-air missile and Scalp cruise missile will be the mainstay of the weapons package of the Rafales.

The government is also in the process of sealing a Euro 5 billion deal for the supply of six stealth submarines to the Indian Navy. The submarines will be built by German defence major ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL).

In April, India commissioned its third indigenously-built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, INS Aridaman, significantly bolstering the naval component of the nation's nuclear triad.

India's nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) programme is a closely guarded project. INS Arihant was the first boat under the SSBN project, which was followed by another boat, INS Arighat.

In the course of the last one year, India also successfully test-fired a range of strategically important weapons, including several versions of the Agni missiles.

In August, India successfully test-fired the 'Agni-five' intermediate-range ballistic missile that has a range of up to 5,000 km.

The Agni-5 missile can bring almost the entire Asia, including the northernmost part of China, as well as some regions in Europe under its striking range.(PTI)

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## Mohammad Younis Malik assumes Charge as Director JKEDI

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Mohammad Younis Malik on Wednesday assumed charge as the Director of the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI).

The charge was handed over in a brief yet dignified ceremony held at the institute's Sempora campus, marking the transition of leadership at the premier entrepreneurship promotion organization of the Union Territory.

On the occasion, a warm and heartfelt farewell was accorded to the outgoing Director, Khalid Jahangir who had been holding the additional charge of Director JKEDI alongside his responsibilities as Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department.

Senior officers and officials of JKEDI, along with staff members, were present during the ceremony and acknowledged the contributions made by Khalid Jahangir during his tenure.

Speaking on the occasion, Mohammad Younis Malik expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to lead JKEDI and reiterated his commitment to further advancing the institute's mission. He emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship, capacity building, and effective implementation of government policies to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for the youth of the Union Territory.

"The employees of the institute are its permanent stakeholders, and

our collective strength lies in working together with unity and purpose. We must function as a cohesive team, moving in tandem to achieve our objectives and take JKEDI to newer heights," he said.

Highlighting the challenges ahead, he added, "Unemployment remains one of the biggest challenges before us today. It is imperative that the goals and initiatives of the JKEDI are closely aligned to address this concern and contribute meaningfully to the betterment of the youth of Jammu and Kashmir."

He further called for a results-oriented approach, stating, "We must all strive to work harder and to the fullest of our capabilities to meet the expectations of our youth and create impactful opportunities through entrepreneurship and innovation."

He also underscored the significance of the J&K Startup Policy 2024-27, noting that JKEDI will continue to play a pivotal role in nurturing startups, facilitating access to finance, and building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in alignment with the policy objectives.

In his farewell remarks, Khalid Jahangir extended his best wishes to the incoming Director and expressed confidence that JKEDI would continue to scale new heights under his leadership. He appreciated the dedication and professionalism of the institute's team and encouraged them to maintain their focus on impactful outcomes and service delivery.

## Comm SMC reviews arrangements for PSC Visit to J&K



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In preparation for the forthcoming visit of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs (2025-26) to Jammu and Kashmir from May 10 to 12, Faz Lul Haseeb, Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Wednesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the readiness of all departments and finalize logistical and administrative arrangements for the high-profile programme.

The meeting witnessed detailed deliberations on protocol management, transportation, accommodation, venue preparedness, security coordination, and inter-departmental synchronization to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the

parliamentary delegation's study visit.

Emphasizing the significance of the visit, the Commissioner directed all concerned officers to maintain close coordination and ensure that every arrangement is executed in a timely and professional manner. He stressed that the visit is of considerable importance in the context of ongoing urban development and housing initiatives in the Union Territory.

During the meeting, designated liaison officers were thoroughly briefed about their respective roles and responsibilities. The Commissioner instructed them to remain fully vigilant and responsive throughout the visit to facilitate hassle-free movement and effective engagement of the visiting committee members.

## Demolition drive conducted against drug peddler in Yaripora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: In a continued crackdown against drug peddlers, a demolition drive was carried out Wednesday at Tantaripora, Yaripora by joint teams of Revenue and Police.



The action was undertaken as part of ongoing efforts to curb the menace of drug abuse and dismantle illegal networks involved in narcotics.

Officials stated that strict measures will continue against individuals involved in drug peddling,

and reiterated the administration's commitment to ensuring a drug-free society.

Locals were urged to cooperate with authorities and report any suspicious activities related to drug trafficking.

# Satish Sharma attends school annual day; urges youth to lead with discipline

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, Wednesday called upon the youth to become torchbearers of discipline, integrity and national pride at the annual day celebration of BSF Senior Secondary School, Jammu.

Addressing a gathering of students, teachers, parents and BSF personnel, the Minister described the occasion as a moment of pride and inspiration. He highlighted the unique legacy of the institution, noting that it nurtures the young minds in an environment shaped by the courage, sacrifice and service of the Border Security Force.

Emphasizing the vital role of youth in nation-building, Satish Sharma said that the strength of the country lies in the character of its young generation. He encouraged the students to draw inspiration from the dedication of BSF personnel who safeguard



the nation under the most challenging conditions.

Appealing for a united front against the growing menace of drug abuse, the Minister termed it one of the gravest threats facing society today. He underscored the Government's firm commitment towards combating narcotics through strict enforcement, robust rehabilitation measures and widespread awareness. He called upon the students to act as the first line of defense against this menace by making informed and responsible choices.

"Real strength lies in

refusal," he said, urging the young people to stand firm against peer pressure and reject any path that compromises their future. He stressed that a mind affected by addiction cannot contribute meaningfully to the nation.

Highlighting the true essence of nationalism, Satish Sharma remarked that it goes beyond slogans and is reflected in everyday actions, through hard work, respect for others, environmental responsibility, and unwavering honesty. He encouraged the students to strive for excellence in their studies

and contribute positively to society.

Referring to the theme of global unity, he spoke about the importance of embracing both national pride and global citizenship. He said that being a proud Indian and a responsible global citizen are complementary ideals that strengthen one's outlook and contribution.

The Minister also reiterated the Government's focus on youth engagement, sports development and technological advancement. He emphasized that platforms in sports, innovation and digital empowerment are being expanded to help the young people realize their full potential and lead the region toward growth and progress.

Congratulating the school administration, faculty and students, Satish Sharma lauded the institution for fostering an environment of excellence and character-building. He also commended the award-winning students for their achievements and encouraged them to continue striving for greater heights.

## CM Omar chairs BoD of J&K Cable Car Corporation at Gulmarg

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GULMARG: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday chaired the meeting of the Board of Directors of Jammu & Kashmir Cable Car Corporation at the Convention Center, Gulmarg. During the meeting, the Managing Director, JK Cable Car Corporation, presented a detailed agenda and gave a comprehensive presentation on key projects and initiatives of the Corporation. The agenda items were discussed threadbare.

The Board deliberated on the upgradation of the Gulmarg Gondola Project aimed at enhancing its carrying capacity, operational efficiency and safety standards through modernization of critical infrastructure.

The Chief Minister emphasized timely execution of projects,

adoption of modern technology and adherence to high safety standards to meet the growing tourist inflow. He underscored the importance of strengthening tourism infrastructure to further boost the local economy.

The meeting was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani; Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo; Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister, Dheeraj Gupta; Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism, Ashish Chandra Verma; Managing Director, J&K Tourism Development Corporation, Shreya Singhal; Director Tourism Kashmir/Managing Director, J&K Cable Car Corporation, Syed Sajad Qamar; Director Tourism Jammu, Vikas Gupta; Director General, Budget; Chief Executive Officer, Gulmarg Development Authority, and other concerned officers.

## CM Omar hosts dinner in honour of PSC on Finance in Gulmarg

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GULMARG: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday hosted a dinner in honour of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance at Gulmarg.

The Committee headed by its chairperson, Member of Parliament, Bhartruhari Mahtab, is currently on a study visit to Srinagar and Gulmarg from May 4 to May 7 as part of its ongoing engagements to review and deliberate on key financial and economic matters. The dinner provided an opportunity for informal interaction between the Chief Minister and members of the Committee in the serene surroundings of Gulmarg. The Chief Minister extended a warm welcome to the visiting members and expressed hope that

their visit would offer valuable insights into the region's developmental landscape and tourism potential.

The visit of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance is part of its study programme for the year, aimed at gaining first-hand understanding of various sectors and initiatives.

On the occasion, Advisor to the CM Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Gulmarg Pirsada Farooq Ahmed Shah, MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce Vikramjit Singh, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla SF Hamid, DG Budget Mohammad Sultan Malik and other concerned were present.

## Dy CM inspects ongoing infrastructure works at GMC Srinagar



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Wednesday inspected the ongoing construction of a new building for upgradation of the Surgery, Medicine and Radiology departments at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar.

During the inspection, he emphasized the importance of timely completion of the project and strict adherence to quality standards. He stated that the upgradation of these key departments will significantly strengthen the healthcare infrastructure and enhance patient care services in Srinagar.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that the government is committed to ensure seamless delivery of healthcare services and is focused on creating equitable health related infrastructure in both Srinagar and Jammu.

"The administration

is prioritizing development of healthcare facilities, ensuring quality and timely completion to dedicate such facilities across all districts," he said.

Earlier, the Deputy Chief Minister met various public delegations at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar.

The delegations projected a range of issues and demands concerning public welfare and development.

The Deputy Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the concerns raised and resolved several issues on the spot. He assured the delegations that all other genuine matters would be actively taken up with the concerned departments for their prompt and smooth redressal.

Reiterating the government's commitment to responsive governance, he said that addressing public grievances and ensuring efficient service delivery remains a top priority.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change name on my driving license bearing No: JK 162010000128 from MOHD YOUSUF Mir TO MOHAMMAD YOUSUF MIR (as per aadhar card). If anybody having any objection in this regard he/ she may file the same before the concerned authority within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection shall be entertained.

NAME: Mohammad Yousuf Mir  
S/o: HABIB ULLAH MIR  
R/o FATEHPORA, GANDEBAL

### PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that the Class A Contractor Card issued by the PWD (Public Works Department) on 01-06-2025, valid up to 31-03-2028, was earlier in the name of Mr. Ishfaq Ahmad Malla. The said contractor card has now been changed/transferred to the name of the firm "Reliable Construction Company." If any person has any objection regarding this change, they may submit their objection along with valid proof to the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Ishfaq Ahmad Malla  
R/o Malpora, Gollabagh, Safapora, Ganderbal

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for a DEE Class Card under the name MOHAMMAD AAQIB BHAT S/O BASHIR AHMAD BHAT R/O KANGAN GANDEBAL. If anybody has any objection in this regard He/ She may file his/her objection in the office of superintendent Engineer R&B GANDEBAL/BANIDPORA within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

NAME: MOHAMMAD AAQIB BHAT  
S/o: BASHIR AHMAD BHAT  
R/o: KANGAN GANDEBAL

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change the name on my driving licence bearing No: JK 1620230001073 from MOHD ASIF WANI TO MOHAMMAD ASIF WANI (as per aadhar card). If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same before the concerned authority within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice; after that, no objection shall be entertained.

NAME: MOHAMMAD ASIF WANI  
S/o AB AHAD WANI  
R/o KACHAN, GANDEBAL

### PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that Mrs. Khadija, wife of Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, resident of Humhama Bagander, passed away at her residence on 09/01/2006. The applicant, Mr. Mohammad Maqbool Bhat, son of Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, resident of Humhama Bagander, is applying for the issuance of a Death Certificate in this regard. If anybody has any objection to the issuance of the said Death Certificate, they may file their objection at Tehsildar Budgam within 5 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, the Death Certificate shall be issued in favour of the applicant as per rules.

Mohammad Maqbool Bhat  
S/o Ghulam Mohammad Bhat,  
R/o Humhama Bagander

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR  
**OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER, SHANGUS**  
Email- dorswd.00010018@jk.gov.in

Subject: Provisional Selection List of Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers) of Poshan Project Shangus and inviting of objections thereof.

### (PUBLIC NOTICE)

In pursuance to the Government Order No. 222-JK (SWD) 2022 dated 30.11.2022 and Government Order No. 103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated 28-04-2023 and communication No. SWD-ICDS/43/2022 dated 14.08.2023 and approval from Mission Director Poshan J&K Vide No. MD/Poshan/38344-47 dated 03.12.2024 (for AWH) and MD/Poshan/47117-27 dated 24.12.2025 (AWWs) and advertisement Notice for Sahayikas. (Anganwadi Helpers) was issued vide Notification No:- 21 of CDPO 2026, Dated:-01-01-2026, Extension Notice No: CDPO/SHG/2025-26/400, Dated: 19-01-2026, Published in Daily Newspaper's Kashmir Monitor, Indian Times, Jabroot, Kashmir Digest on 03-01-2026 and Precious Kashmir, Daily Shaharbeen Times on 21-01-2026 respectively. In response to said advertisement notices, 04 application forms were received against 01 post of Sanginis (AWWs) within the stipulated time period for Panchayat/Municipal ward-Cherpora PC-02 (AWC-G.B Methmoo). Application forms were scrutinized by the selection Committees (District level selection committee) and thereby resulting in framing the Panel showing merit duly signed by all Committee members and accordingly Provisional selection list was framed. Merit list (Annexure-A) and Provisional Selection list (Annexure-B) is hereby published for information of public in general and applicants/Candidates in particular for filing appeal/Objections if any.

The appeal/objection (if any) against the Provisional Selection list, shall be filed in the office of the Child Development Project Officer, Poshan Project (ICDS) Shangus against proper receipt within ten days (in office Hours) from the date of publication of this notification. No appeal/objection shall be entertained after expiry of the last date of filing/Appeal/Objection.

Annexure-A of CDPO/SHG/2026-27/66-73 Dated: 06-05-2026.

S.No	Appl. S.No	Panchayat Halka/ Municipal Ward	Name of the AWC	Name of the Candidate	Parantage, W/o	Qualif.	Board	DOB	Married/ Unmarried	Marks 12th			Addl. 02 Points	Total % age	Remarks
										Max Marks	Marks Obt.	%age			
1	2	Cherpora PC-02	G.B Methmoo	Aqssa Altarf	D/o Mohd. Altarf Chohan	12th	JKBOSE	03-08-07	Unmarried	337	500	67.40%	Nil	67.40%	Selected

No: CDPO/SHG/2026-27/66-73  
Dated: 06-05-2026

Sd/-  
Child dev. Project Officer,  
Poshan Shangus.

DIPK-1082-26  
DT: 06/05/2026

# IPL 2026: All-round SRH soar to top of table with 33-run victory over PBKS

IAN S

**HYDERABAD:** Sunrisers Hyderabad delivered a strong all-around performance to overpower Punjab Kings by 33 runs in Match 49 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Uppal, in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

Their explosive batting, followed by disciplined bowling, played a key role, while PBKS' poor fielding proved costly in this high-scoring match. Dropped catches off both Ishan Kishan and Heinrich Klaasen came back to haunt Punjab. The pair capitalised on important half-centuries, helping SRH secure a commanding total and ultimately take control of the game.

Batting first, SRH again showed their aggressive approach right from the start. Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head set the pace with a quick beginning, continuing to dominate during the Power-play. They attacked early, push-

ing SRH forward and putting pressure on the PBKS bowlers. Even after losing an early wicket, the momentum hardly changed.

The real damage happened in the middle overs when PBKS let the game slip away. Ishan Kishan, benefitting from numerous lifelines - including dropped catches and a missed stumping - made the most of his opportunities. He scored a brisk 55, shifting gears effectively to keep the scoring rate high. Heinrich Klaasen also benefited from an early reprieve. He made Punjab pay with a fluent half-century, allowing SRH to easily pass the 200-run mark.

Their contributions, along with some late acceleration, lifted Sunrisers Hyderabad to a huge total, leaving Punjab Kings with a tough chase. The fielding mistakes, especially the dropped catches of two well-set batters, proved decisive moments that shifted the game solidly in SRH's favour. In response, Punjab Kings



struggled to find the sustained momentum needed for such a challenging chase. Although there were brief moments of brilliance, the innings lacked the consistency to challenge SRH's large total.

Sunrisers Hyderabad made a dream start with the ball,

ripping through Punjab Kings' top order inside the first six overs to seize complete control of the chase.

The damage was swift and brutal as both openers, Priyansh Arya (1 off 3) and Prabhsimran Singh (3 off 4), were sent back within the first seven

balls - marking their lowest combined return in 26 innings together. Pat Cummins set the tone with clever captaincy, deceiving Arya with a short ball after pushing mid-on back, while Nitish Kumar Reddy struck immediately to remove Prabhsimran.

Eshan Malinga then piled on the pressure by dismissing Shreyas Iyer, who mistimed a hard-length delivery straight to mid-off. At 57/3 in the powerplay, despite the scoring rate, PBKS were already on the back foot, needing 179 runs off 84 balls.

Amid the early collapse, Marcus Stoinis and Cooper Connolly attempted to steady the innings with a counter-attacking 33-run unbeaten stand, both contributing 22 runs each. Stoinis took the aggressive route, smashing Sakib Hussain for 19 in an over, while Connolly found boundaries off Malinga to keep the scoreboard ticking.

Their partnership helped PBKS recover to an extent, but with three key wickets already down, the chase remained an uphill task, leaving SRH firmly in command.

Cooper Connolly stood out with a steady knock, reaching a well-crafted half-century off 34 balls. He displayed maturity under pressure, trying to

anchor the innings and keep PBKS in the game despite the increasing required rate.

However, the target continued to rise out of reach. At one point, they needed 106 runs off 31 balls, making the task seem nearly impossible. SRH bowlers maintained control, mixing their lengths well and taking advantage of the slowing pitch. Regular wickets further diminished Punjab's hopes and inhibited any late push.

Connolly's resistance remained one of the few bright spots in a challenging chase as he brought up his first T20 hundred, ending on an unbeaten 107 as Sunrisers Hyderabad soared to the top of the table with a 33-run victory.

**Brief scores:**  
Sunrisers Hyderabad 235/4 in 20 overs (Heinrich Klaasen 69, Ishan Kishan 55, Yuzvendra Chahal 1-32) beat Punjab Kings 202/7 in 20 overs (Cooper Connolly 107 not out, Marcus Stoinis 28; Pat Cummins 2-34, Shivang Kumar 2-45) by 33 runs.

## U20 Men's Football Nationals: West Bengal, Manipur enter last eight

IAN S

**NARAINPUR (CHHATTISGARH):** West Bengal and Manipur secured themselves a spot each in the Swami Vivekananda U20 Men's National Football Championship after the former drew with Odisha, while the latter defeated hosts Chhattisgarh at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama in Narainpur, Chhattisgarh, on Wednesday.

Odisha drew with West Bengal 2-2, with Shankha Shekhar Hembram (28') and Barial Tudu (73') scoring for them, while Sahil Kar (60') and Tanbir Dey (65') struck for the latter. Ground 2 at the RKM Ashrama experienced a see-saw battle between the two eastern neighbours, which finally ended in a 2-2 draw that confirmed West Bengal's progression to the quarter-finals from Group E.

Odisha needed a win to go through and began with intent, taking the lead in the 28th minute through Shankha Shekhar Hembram. West Bengal roared back in the second half, Sahil Kar and Tanbir Dey scoring one each around the hour mark. While Barial Tudu pulled one back in the 73rd for Odisha, the draw was all



but secured Bengal's passage to the knock-out stage. West Bengal finished atop the three-team group with four points from two matches, followed by Karnataka with three, while Odisha could only muster a single point.

Over in Group B, Manipur secured their quarter-final progression with a 5-1 rout of hosts Chhattisgarh on Ground 1 at the RKM Ashrama on Wednesday. Salam Swamichandra Meitei netted a hat-trick, while Thounaojam Robertson Singh scored two for the north-eastern side, and Indrajit Roy converted a second-half penalty to score the only goal for Chhattisgarh.

Manipur finished Group B with a perfect record - three wins in as many matches. Chhattisgarh and Nagaland finish with four points apiece, while Dadra

& Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu lost all their games.

In the other match of the day, Nagaland defeated a 10-man Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu 8-1 on Ground 1 at the RKM Ashrama, though both teams' chances of progression to the knockouts were already over.

**Results:**  
Odisha 2 (Shankha Shekhar Hembram 28', Barial Tudu 73') drew with West Bengal 2 (Sahil Kar 60', Tanbir Dey 65')  
Chhattisgarh 1 (Indrajit Roy 51' p) lost to Manipur 5 (Thounaojam Robertson Singh 21', 45+3', Salam Swamichandra Meitei 23', 82', 86')

DNH & DD 1 (Pushpitra Thakur 90+2) lost to Nagaland 8 (Piyush Govinda Kokate 36' og, Vinato Achumi 37', Nokwang Konyak 41', 45+1', Lunmingou Singsit 51', Viselle Vasa 62', 64')

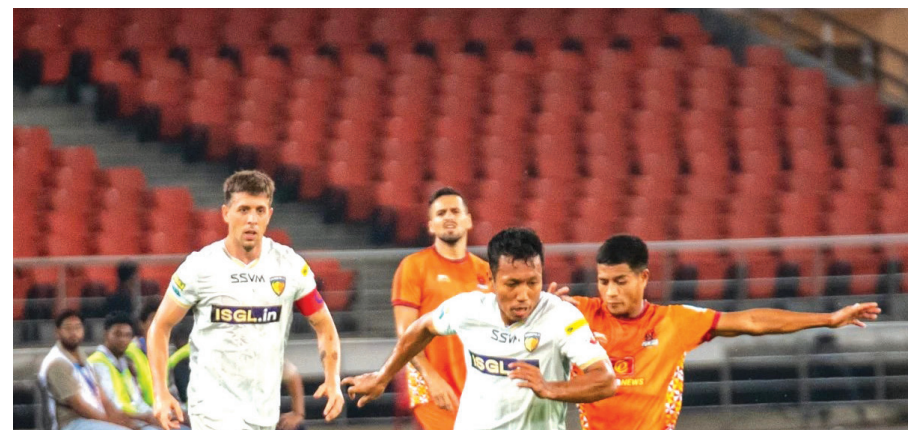
## ISL 2025-26: Late own-goal sees Chennaiyin FC fall to a 1-0 defeat against Punjab

IAN S

**CHENNAI:** Chennaiyin FC suffered a narrow 1-0 defeat away to Punjab FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2026 in Chennai on Wednesday, undone by a late own-goal despite showing sustained attacking intent throughout the contest.

Earlier, head coach Clifford Rayes Miranda recalled midfielder Mohammed Ali Bemamer to sit alongside skipper Alberto Noguera in the middle, while PC Laldinpuia joined Pritam Kotal in defence. Lalrinliana Hnamte accompanied Farukh Choudhary, Irfan Yadwad, and Daniel Chima Chukwu in the attack.

Eleven minutes in, Pritam produced an outstanding goal-line clearance early on to keep the scores level. Laldinliana



Renthle followed it up with a crucial block to deny a clear sight of the goal, as the Marina Machans stood firm against early pressure. At the other end, Chennaiyin carved out a promising 3v2 situation, but Hnamte's heavy touch let the opportunity slip. Chima was also presented with a half-chance soon after, only for the Punjab

defence to recover in time.

As the half wore on, the contest settled into a mid-field battle, with both sides struggling to assert control in a game that lacked a cutting edge. After the break, the pattern continued, with Chennaiyin remaining compact defensively while searching for a breakthrough in attack. Noguera came closest to

creating one, delivering a dangerous ball into the box that nearly led to an opening, with Chennaiyin also seeing appeals for a handball waved away.

The Marina Machans continued to probe in the final stages, working the ball into promising areas. Substitute Klusser Pereira floated a cross towards Irfan, whose header drift-

ed over, before Noguera slipped Chima through on goal moments later. However, the striker's effort from close range was off target, summing up a frustrating evening in front of goal for Chennaiyin.

Mohammad Nawaz was then called into action for the first time, producing a fine save to concede a corner. Punjab capitalised on the resulting set-piece in the 84th minute, with the ball deflecting in off Hnamte for an unfortunate own goal. The Marina Machans continued to push in search of a late equaliser, but were unable to find a way through, eventually seeing out the game in defeat.

Chennaiyin will face NorthEast United in their penultimate match of the season, before concluding the campaign at home against Bengaluru FC.

## ATP Tour: Djokovic fine-tunes game in Piazza del Popolo ahead of Rome return

IAN S

**ROME:** Former World No.1 and the most successful player in the Grand Slam tournaments, Novak Djokovic, will return to the ATP Tour this week at the Internazionali BNL d'Italia and will spend time on Tuesday practising on a temporary court at the famous Piazza del Popolo in Rome.

The 38-year-old Djokovic looked in a relaxed mood in the Italian capital, where he practised before signing autographs for the hundreds of fans watching from the square, according to a report by the ATP Tour's website.

Djokovic is set to compete for the first time since he lost to Jack Draper in the fourth round in Indian Wells on 12 March. The Serbian has not played a tour-level match on clay since his Roland Garros semi-final defeat to Jannik Sinner last June. The former No. 1 player

in the ATP Rankings holds a 68-12 record in Rome, according to the Infosys ATP Win/Loss Index, a tally that includes title runs at the ATP Masters 1000 event in 2008, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2020 and 2022.

Djokovic, who is competing in Rome for the first time since his third-round exit to Alejandro Tabilo in 2024, will face Hungarian Marton Fucsovics or Croatian qualifier Dino Prizmic at the Foro Italico in his opening match. The 101-time tour-level titlist is also seeded to face Italian and eighth seed Lorenzo Musetti in the quarter-finals.

Musetti eyes the Rome crown

Italian tennis has hit new heights in recent years. Jannik Sinner has climbed to No. 1 in the ATP Rankings and captured 28 tour-level titles. The Italian men have won three consecutive Davis Cup titles, while the women have won the past two Billie Jean King Cup editions.

World No. 10 Lorenzo Musetti played his part in Davis Cup successes and has become a major force at the top of the game. The 24-year-old, who has reached a career high of No. 5, has advanced to multiple major semi-finals and reached the final at the ATP Masters 1000 event in Monte-Carlo last year.

This week, Musetti will lead the Italian charge alongside Sinner at the Internazionali BNL d'Italia in Rome and is excited about the current status of tennis in Italy.

"I feel tennis right now is probably one of the most viral and most popular sports in the world, and especially in Europe and Italy right now," Musetti told ATP Media in his pre-tournament interview. "I think we are thanking Jannik, who is No. 1 in the world and has achieved so many titles. Jasmine Paolini on the women's side, and others and I.

## Movies Watchlist

Thursday, 7th May

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

Hindi - 04:10 PM, 07:10 PM.

**Ek Din (U/A13+)**

Hindi - 01:30 PM

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

English with English Subtitles

11:30 AM, 04:35 PM

**The Devil Wears Prada 2 (A)**

English with English Subtitles

11:00 AM, 02:10 PM, 07:30 PM.

**Dhurandhar: The Revenge (A)**

Hindi - 12:00 PM, 05:00 PM.

