

# Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication



**We must remain constantly alert and vigilant. The nature of law & order threats and terrorism has evolved, demanding a constant, unyielding vigilance and alert to threats that hide in plain sight.**

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■ Sidhra Demolition Drive

## J&K Govt Constitutes Committee To Probe Forest Rights Violations



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir Government has constituted a fact-finding committee to inquire into alleged violations of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, in connection with the demolition of houses belonging to tribal families in the Raika Bandi area of Sidhra, Jammu on Tuesday.

According to a government order issued by the Department of Tribal Affairs, sanction has been accorded for the constitution of a two-member committee

to investigate the matter and submit its report within seven days.

The committee comprises Director Tribal Affairs, J&K, Mohammad Mumtaz Ali, JKAS, and Assistant Director, Directorate of Tribal Affairs, Muzamil Hassan Choudhary, JKAS.

The order states that the committee will examine "any violations of Forest Rights Act, 2006, in respect of recent demolition of houses of Tribal families in Raika Bandi (Sidhra) Jammu."

The move comes amid widespread ●P-06

## Police Ensured Secure Environment For J&K's Progress: LG Sinha

Says Terror Needs Money, Networks, Support Systems To Survive

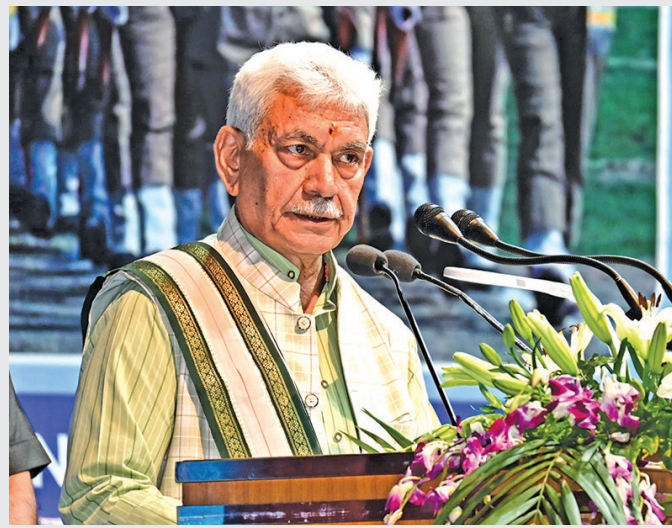
GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said peace is the fundamental prerequisite for development and credited the Jammu and Kashmir Police for maintaining a secure environment that enabled significant progress in the Union Territory over the past six years.

"Until peace is established, the dream of development cannot be fulfilled. In any part of the world where peace does not prevail, development is not possible," he said while addressing a gathering after distributing appointment letters to 100 newly recruited constables.

Lieutenant Governor presented appointment letters to newly appointed constables of Jammu & Kashmir Police. On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor urged the new recruits to dedicate themselves to defending the unity and integrity of the motherland and to strengthen the proud legacy of this force.

"We must remain constantly alert and vigilant. The nature



of law & order threats and terrorism has evolved, demanding a constant, unyielding vigilance and alert to threats that hide in plain sight," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that new recruits must work as a team because the threats Jammu Kashmir confronts demand cooperation between different agencies.

"When we share information, plan strategies, and confront the enemy together, we build capacities that no single institution can create alone. India has always embraced the values of peaceful coexistence, mutual goodwill, and sincere friendship. Yet we face a neighbour widely known as a source of terrorism in the world. Alongside maintaining

**LG URGES** new recruits to dedicate themselves to defending the unity and integrity of motherland

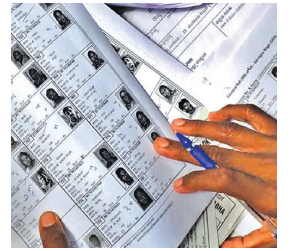
We must remain **CONSTANTLY ALERT** and vigilant

Nature of law & order **THREATS** and terrorism has evolved, demanding a constant, unyielding vigilance

law and order, newly recruited constables must stand on the front line of national security with determination to eliminate threats of terror," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that everyone should work with resolve and efficiency to rid Jammu Kashmir of fear and terrorism. He said terror does not sustain ●P-06

## J&K SEC Finalizes Panchayat Electoral Rolls 2026



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** The State Election Commission, Jammu & Kashmir, has concluded the annual revision of Panchayat Electoral Rolls with the publication of the Final Panchayat Electoral Rolls 2026, fixing April 1, 2026 as the qualifying date.

The comprehensive exercise, which began with the release of the Draft Electoral Roll on March 27, 2026, has now formally culminated following a structured schedule of claims, objections and verification.

The Commission had opened a 40-day window for filing claims and objections from March 27 to May 5, 2026. All submissions received during this period were examined and disposed of by Electoral Registration Officers by May 14, 2026. With the completion of this process, the Final Electoral Rolls were published today, May 21, 2026, setting the groundwork for the upcoming panchayat elections across the Union Territory.

The revision drive recorded significant ●P-06

## 'No Genuine Houses Touched' In Jammu 'Anti-Encroachment' Drives: BJP

REHAN QAYOOM

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) general secretary Ashok Koul on Wednesday said the ongoing anti-encroachment drives in Jammu are being carried out strictly against illegal occupations of government and forest land, asserting that no genuine residential structures have been touched during the pro-

cess. Speaking during a party function in Srinagar, BJP's Ashok Koul, said the exercise is part of a lawful process aimed at removing unauthorised encroachments from state and forest land.

"No house of genuine residents has been touched. Action is being taken against those who have encroached on government or forest land without ●P-06

## Former VC KU Prof Khurshid Andrabi Calls On LG Sinha



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Former Vice Chancellor of Kashmir University, Prof. Khurshid Andrabi along with Adv Jehanzeb Allaqaband called on the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Lok Bhavan, here.

The primary focus of the meeting was an extensive discussion regarding a major upcoming conclave being

organized by Adv Jehanzeb Allaqaband. Prof. Khurshid Andrabi had a detailed discussion on various education initiatives and the role of youth empowerment in strengthening the social and academic fabric of the region, said a press release.

Prof. Khurshid Andrabi also praised Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for his efforts and ●P-06

## Italian, Bulgarian Cherries Fetch Rs 200-300 Per Kg In Kashmir, Growers Optimistic

JAHANGEER GANAIE

**SRINAGAR:** The cultivation of imported cherry varieties from Italy and Bulgaria is emerging as a profitable venture for growers in Kashmir, with farmers reporting encouraging market prices and improved resistance to erratic weather conditions compared to traditional cultivars.

While the Valley's conventional cherry varieties are yet to arrive in markets, the early-ripening imported cultivars have already begun generating returns for orchardists in several districts, particularly in Pulwama and Shopian.

Growers said that the imported cherries are currently selling between Rs 200 and Rs 300 per kilogram in local markets, giving much-needed financial relief to orchardists after years of fluctuating prices and weather-related losses.

Asif Ahmad, a cherry grower



from Pulwama, said that despite a decline in overall production this year, the rates have remained favourable, raising hopes among farmers.

"This season, the crop is much less compared to normal years, but the prices are quite encouraging," Ahmad said. "Both imported and traditional Siyah varieties are fetching good rates

in the market. If prices continue to remain stable, growers may be able to recover some of the losses caused by the lower production."

He said the imported varieties have also helped farmers diversify their orchards and reduce risks linked to unpredictable weather patterns. "The biggest advantage is that these cherries are more resistant to ●P-06

## CS Reviews Sustainability Plan For Industrial Biotech Parks In J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Wednesday reviewed the readiness, operational framework and future sustainability plan for the Industrial Biotech Parks being established at Kathua and Handwara in Jammu and Kashmir, while stressing the need to transform these facilities into vibrant centres of innovation, entrepreneurship and technology-driven industrial development.

The review meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology Department; Commissioner Secretary, Planning; Director, CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine; CEO, Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency; CEO, Centre for Innovation and Transformation in Governance; faculty members from different universities and other concerned officers.



During the review, the Chief Secretary took stock of the infrastructure developed at the Industrial Biotech Park, Ghatti, Kathua, besides assessing the progress achieved on the Handwara Biotech Park project.

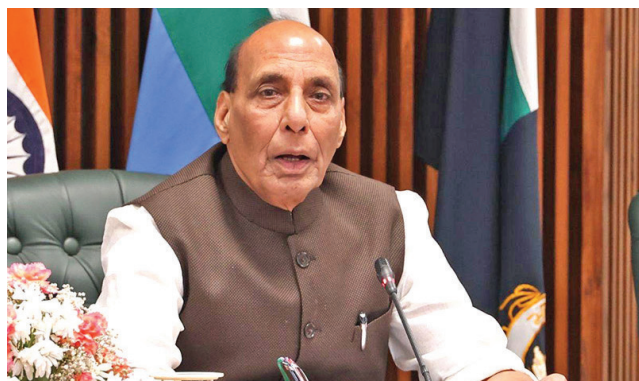
The Chief Secretary impressed upon the Science & Technology Department to address the governance gaps highlighted by the professionals, observing that an institutional structure in the form of a Society already exists for ●P-06

## India Won't Tolerate Any Form Of Nuclear Blackmail: Singh

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Wednesday termed Operation Sindoor as a testament to India's transformation into a strong, confident and capable nation. Interacting with the Indian diaspora in Republic of Korea, the Defence Minister said that the operation was proof that India will not tolerate terrorism in any form.

He added that while India remains committed to its No First Use policy, it will not tolerate any form of nuclear blackmail. Mr Singh reiterated the Government's commitment to achieve self-reliance in defence manufacturing. He added that defence exports are poised to reach 50 thousand crore rupees within the next one to two years while defence production is projected to rise to 1.75 lakh crore rupees in the next couple of months.



The Minister asserted that India is now emerging as a global power that offers solutions to the world, reflecting the transformation of the country in the last decade.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also chaired the India-RoK Defence Industry Business Round Table in Seoul. In his address, Mr Singh said that the success of India-Korea industrial cooperation

in the commercial sector demonstrates the enormous potential of long-term trusted partnerships between the two countries.

He said, the time has now come to extend this successful model into the defence sector, where technology, innovation, manufacturing capability, and strategic trust are becoming increasingly interconnected. The Minister

noted that the two countries can jointly develop and produce advanced technologies and defence systems for the future.

Speaking at an Indian diaspora event, Singh described Operation Sindoor as a testament to India's transformation into a strong, confident and capable nation.

"The operation was proof that India will not tolerate terrorism in any form. As a responsible nuclear power, we firmly adhere to a policy of No First Use," he said.

"However, there are times when people mistake our restraint and commitment to peace for weakness. While India remains committed to its No First Use policy, it will not tolerate any form of nuclear blackmail. This is new India," he said, in an indirect message to Pakistan.

The defence ministry said the agreements ●P-06

## J&K People Have 'Lost Faith' In Ruling NC: BJP

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** The opposition BJP on Wednesday said the people of Jammu and Kashmir have "lost faith" in the ruling National Conference (NC) due to its politics of "corruption and misgovernance".

A grand joining programme was organised here in which hundreds of people, including youth and prominent workers from the NC and other political parties, joined the BJP, the party said.

"The people of J-K, especially the youth, have lost faith in the ruling NC due to its politics of corruption, misgovernance and failure to work for the welfare and development of the common people," BJP J-K general secretary (Organisation) Ashok Koul said here.

Among those who joined the BJP were Danish Riyaz Dar (NC), Shabir Langoo, Mohd Yousuf Zargar, Bhartiya Krishak Samaj J&K vice president Tariq Sofi and Sanoor Choudhary, the party ●P-06

## Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan Police Intensify Campaign, Make Arrests, Demolish Property



SAJID RAINA

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Police on Tuesday intensified the ongoing "Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan" across Kashmir by destroying illegal poppy cultivation, arresting five alleged drug peddlers, attaching properties and vehicles linked to narcotics trade, and launching awareness programmes in several districts.

A Police official said that illegal poppy cultivation was destroyed in Anantnag, Baramulla and Handwara during coordinated operations carried out with the assistance of magistrates and officials from the Excise, Revenue and Agriculture departments.

"In Anantnag district, police destroyed illegally cultivated poppy crops at Bata-gund Verinag and registered FIR No. 76/2026 under relevant sections of law at Dooru police station," the official said, adding, "In Baramulla, police along with officials from the Excise and Agriculture departments conducted operations in Tangmarg and Kunzer areas, where illegal poppy cultivation spread over agricultural land was identified and destroyed on the spot. Cases under the NDPS Act were registered and investigations were initiated."

"In Uri, Police ●P-06



# Govt committed to develop rural areas at par with urban areas: Dy CM

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**URI:** Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Wednesday said that the government has accelerated facility creation and is committed to develop rural areas at par with urban areas and cities of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Deputy Chief Minister said this while addressing a public outreach programme at Bagna during daylong tour to border Constituency Uri of Baramulla district.

During an extensive tour, he assessed the progress of developmental works, road connectivity projects, educational and health infrastructure and mining operations across Uri areas.

The Deputy Chief Minister was accompanied by Chief Engineer PMGSY, Chief Engineer R&B North Kashmir, ADC Baramulla, SDM Uri and other senior officers of the district administration.

Addressing a public gathering, the Deputy Chief Minister said that, "the Government is committed to create facilities in rural areas at par with urban areas across Jammu and Kashmir so that



the youth living in far-flung and border areas receive equal opportunities for growth and progress."

During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected various R&B works at Zehampora Uri, including construction of additional classrooms and library facilities at Government High School. He directed the concerned officers to ensure speedy completion of the projects and emphasized the need for strengthening educational infrastructure for the benefit of students.

Reviewing the ongoing developmental activities in the mining sector, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected the Gypsum mining block at Bagna Dara Gudliyan Uri. He stressed transparency, proper regulation and

strict adherence to safety and environmental norms in mining operations. He further directed the officials to submit complete details of all mining blocks so that effective measures can be taken to ensure welfare and socio-economic benefits for local communities associated with mining activities.

"Any mining operations should benefit the local population and enhance means of their livelihood first," he said.

As part of the infrastructure development initiatives, the Deputy Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the Kushamarg PMGSY Road project at Bagna Uri.

He said that several important road projects have already been undertaken in Uri while many

others are in the pipeline for the current year to ensure smooth and seamless connectivity across the border region.

He also laid the foundation stone for construction of the PMGSY Nambla-Rustom-Bilalabad road project in Uri and remarked that the project would significantly improve mobility and connectivity for residents living in border areas.

During the tour, the Deputy Chief Minister also inspected the PWD Rest House at Lagama Uri and called for its complete renovation. He directed the concerned departments to prepare plans for construction of a conference hall, development of parking facilities and landscaping of the lawn area so that the facility can serve as a better accommodation and meeting venue for official visitors and government engagements.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister also addressed a public outreach programme at Officer's Club and listened to their issues and demands.

He assured robust development and prompt grievance redress as priority for the present government.

# Min Itoo presides renaming ceremony of GHS Hapatnar as Shaheed Adil Hussain Memorial GHS

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG:** Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Wednesday presided the renaming ceremony of Government High School (GHS) Hapatnar as Shaheed Adil Hussain Memorial High School Hapatnar.

MLA Pahalgam Altaf Ahmad Wani (Kaloo); Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Director School Education Kashmir, Director Health Services Kashmir, CMO, CEO, other senior officers of district administration, family members of Shaheed Adil Hussain and large number of locals were also present on the occasion.

Addressing a large gathering, the Minister paid rich tributes to Shaheed Adil and said that the renaming of the institution is a humble tribute to the courage, sacrifice and patriotism displayed by the martyr. She added that the sacrifice of brave son of the soil will not be forgotten and Shaheed Adil will be remembered in our hearts, as this school is dedicated in his name to recognise his sacrifice.



Calling Shaheed Adil Hussain as national hero, Sakeena Itoo said that Government is committed to support the family in every possible manner.

"Everyone remembers martyr Adil Sahib. Along with Jammu and Kashmir, he has left his mark across the country. No one can ever forget the sacrifice he made," Sakeena Itoo said.

The Minister recalled that Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah and former Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah had promised the family that the school would be renamed after the martyr, adding that the government fulfilled the promise within a year.

The Minister emphasized that educational institutions play a vital role in shaping the future of society and renaming the school after Shaheed Adil would serve as a constant source of inspiration

for students and youth of the area. She urged the students to work hard with commitment, discipline and contribute positively towards nation-building and social progress.

Highlighting the government's commitment towards strengthening the education sector across Jammu and Kashmir, the Minister said that several initiatives are being undertaken to improve educational infrastructure, enhance learning facilities and provide quality education to students, particularly in rural and far-flung areas.

She further said that the Omar Abdullah-led Government is focused on ensuring inclusive and equitable development across all sectors with special attention towards education, healthcare and social welfare.

MLA Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Wani (Kaloo) also

spoke on the occasion.

The Minister also interacted with students and teaching staff and appreciated the efforts of the school administration in promoting quality education in the region.

During the visit, the Minister also interacted with local residents and family members of Shaheed Adil Hussain, and paid rich tributes to the martyr.

The locals also raised various public issues before the Minister and sought their immediate redressal. She assured them that their genuine demands will be addressed.

On the occasion, a short movie was also played in the memory of Shaheed Adil Hussain Shah highlighting his braveness, besides lectures were delivered, praising the boldness and his humane nature of Shaheed Adil Hussain.

# AET Holds Mega Anti-Drug Awareness Program in Rajouri

Appeals to LG, CM for Grassroots Expansion



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**RAJOURI:** Continuing its mission to foster a healthy and drug-free society, Awami-E-Tehreek (AET) organized a large-scale anti-drug awareness program at Government Higher Secondary School, Manjakote, under the leadership of its President, Waqar H. Bhatti.

The program witnessed the presence of several key administrative and police officials as Guests of Honor, including Tehsildar Manjakote Imsha Khalid, Naib Tehsildar Manjakote Jawad Parihar, BMO Manjakote Dr. Saleem Ahmed Bhatti, and a Sub-Inspector from Police Station Manjakote.

Keynote addresses were delivered by Tehsildar Imsha Khalid, BMO Dr. Saleem Ahmed Bhatti, and Awami-E-Tehreek President Waqar H. Bhatti, who educated students and staff on the devastating impact of drug abuse and the urgent need for a drug-free environment.

Speaking on the occasion, Bhatti welcomed the government's ongoing 100-day drug-free Jammu & Kashmir campaign and made a crucial appeal to Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to extend the drive to the grassroots level.

"Our organization, Awami-E-Tehreek, is continuously visiting villages and schools to create awareness among the young generation so that our children stay away from drugs, alcohol, and all other evils. I urge LG Sahib and Chief Minister Abdullah Sahib to take this campaign to every school and every village so that the coming generations can benefit," Bhatti said.

He further stressed that in today's modern era, children and youth must be drawn more toward education and sports. He called upon the administration to develop rural sports infrastructure and stadiums, enabling positive channelization of youth energy.

# Advisor to CM reviews New Assembly Complex construction, inspects dev works in Jammu

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, Wednesday conducted a comprehensive on-site review of the New Legislative Complex at Jammu besides inspecting the development works in the region.

The visit was aimed to inspect the ongoing construction work and ensure that all state-of-the-art infrastructural amenities aligned with global standards for Legislative efficiency are being adhered to by the executing agency. The Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Project Division-II presented the overview of the project, floor-wise facilities being constructed, details of enhanced seating capacity of Assembly Hall, construction of central hall, external finishing etc.

During the visit, the Advisor toured the central assembly hall, review the administrative chambers and the surrounding public utility spaces.

Emphasizing the government's commitment towards reinforcing democratic infrastructure in the Union Territory, the Advisor directed the executing agency to expedite the remaining finishing works and complete the project well within the specified time limit. He underscored that timely completion of



the modern complex is vital for the smooth functioning of future democratic proceedings and convenience of public representatives.

"Robust infrastructure is the backbone of effective governance. This new complex is not merely a building; it is a symbol of democratic ethos and must be completed promptly with uncompromising quality," said the Advisor during the inspection.

Nasir Aslam interacted with the senior engineers of PWD(R&B) Jammu and Mechanical Engineering Department, taking detailed stock of the structural and technical specifications of the project. He instructed the authorities to ensure seamless integration of advanced IT infrastructure, modern acoustics and enhanced security systems within the premises including e-Vidhan.

The upcoming New Legislative Complex is

designed to provide a highly accessible, eco-friendly and technologically advanced environment for the lawmakers with facilities like e-Vidhan. With the expedited timeline, the administration aims to facilitate an enhanced working environment for the region's representatives.

The Advisor was accompanied by senior officials from the civil administration.

Later, Nasir Aslam inspected various ongoing developmental works in Jammu along with Chief Engineer PWD (R&B), Jammu, Rajesh Augustam, Superintending Engineer, Chief Medical Officer Jammu and other senior officers.

During the visit, the Advisor reviewed the permanent restoration work of the approach road to the 4th Tawi Bridge, Jammu. The senior officers informed that the project has been allotted at an estimated cost of ₹14.59 crore with a stipulated completion period of 12 months. The restoration work is aimed at improving the connectivity and ensuring smooth traffic movement in the area.

Nasir Aslam also inspected repair and renovation works being carried out at Yatri Niwas Bhagwati Nagar in view of the upcoming Shri Amarnath Yatra. The project included construction of temporary sheds and hangars for Yatris and langars besides laying of bitumen in parking areas and internal roads. The works are being executed at an estimated cost of ₹1.59 crore with a completion period of one and a half months.

The Advisor also inspected another major project envisaging construction of a 105-meter span prestressed RCC bridge over Balole Nalla at Gadi Garh. The Advisor was informed that the bridge work has been completed at an estimated cost of ₹7.2 crore within 24 months.

During the inspection, the Chief Engineer PWD (R&B), Jammu briefed the Advisor about the ongoing preparations and infrastructure works related to the Shri Amarnath Yatra, particularly the arrangements being undertaken by the PWD (R&B) Division Satwari.

# Speaker JKLA inaugurates bridge at Chowdrigund, Chadoora

Emphasizes robust connectivity network for sustainable growth



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM:** Marking a significant milestone for the regional infrastructure, Speaker Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, Wednesday officially inaugurated a newly constructed double lane 25-meter bridge with total width of 11.70 meter at Chowdrigund on Nallah Apzari, Chadoora.

The bridge, constructed with an estimated cost of 474.65 lakh, is set to drastically improve the local connectivity, ease commutes and stimulate economic activity in the region.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, the Speaker emphasized that establishing a robust connectivity network is the cornerstone of sustainable growth. He reiterated the government's steadfast commitment to transform the regional landscape through strategic infrastructure projects.

"Connectivity is absolutely crucial for holistic development of our region," Speaker Rather stated. "A

bridge does more than connect two pieces of land; it links people to markets, healthcare, education and better opportunities. Our government is dedicated to ensure equitable development of all areas, ensuring that no region or community is left behind," he added.

The newly inaugurated double lane bridge addresses a long-standing demand of the local residents, promising to reduce travel time and provide all-weather access to essential services.

During the event, Rather assured the public that the government would continue to prioritize underdeveloped pockets, focusing on balanced progress, fair resource allocation and the timely completion of vital public welfare projects.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by SE R&B Erim Lone along with senior officials from R&B and PMGSY besides local dignitaries, and members of the community, who welcomed the development as a major step forward for the area.

# Dy CM reviews progress of developmental works, availability of essential services in Uri

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**URI:** Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Wednesday chaired a meeting of senior officers at Officer's Club Uri to review the availability of essential services, basic facilities and progress of developmental works across the Uri Sub Division.

The meeting was attended by MLA Uri Dr. Sajjad Shaif, Chief Engineer R&B North Kashmir, Chief Engineer PMGSY, Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Sub Divisional Magistrate Uri, Joint Director Mining and other senior officers of the district administration and line departments.

During the meeting,

the Deputy Chief Minister stressed the need for prompt service delivery, robust development and seamless public outreach to ensure amicable redressal of genuine public grievances. He directed the officers to remain accessible to the people and ensure time-bound disposal of developmental and welfare issues.

Reviewing the progress on ongoing infrastructure projects, the Deputy Chief Minister emphasized quality execution and timely completion of works. He instructed the officers to conduct regular and random inspection of projects to ensure strict adherence to the prescribed guidelines and SOPs.

The Deputy Chief Minister also reviewed the status of road connectivity projects in Uri. He said that around 20 road projects have been undertaken in the area during the last one and a half years while additional projects are in the pipeline and will be taken up for execution soon.

He stressed that developmental initiatives should ensure better connectivity and improved living standards for the people living in remote villages. He said that the government is committed to ensure that villages are provided facilities at par with cities so that local youth can realize their aspirations and dreams.

# ACS reviews PDD's preparations for Amarnath yatra 2026

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Power Development Department Ashwani Kumar, Wednesday chaired a review meeting to assess the preparedness and arrangements being put in place by the JPDCL and KPDCCL for smooth conduct of the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2026.

During the meeting, the ACS reviewed the status of electrical infrastructure development, routine facilities and general preparedness along both axis (Baltal and Pahalgam routes).

Managing Director(s) of JPDCL/ KPDCCL presented the overview of the preparations by their DISCOMs, status of the tendering and implementation status of works was discussed Camp-wise/ Padav-wise. The critical and major project especially the UG cabling along the routes were discussed.

The ACS was apprised that all the works related to providing of reliable power supply to Yatra related installations shall be completed well before commencement of the Yatra-2026.

The ACS emphasized the need for close coordination among all the departments and agencies to ensure seamless facilities for the pilgrims. Directions were issued to both the DISCOMs to stick to timelines for completion of preparatory works and ensure reliable and quality power supply is provided with ample operational infrastructure.

The meeting was attended by Gural Singh MD-JPDCL, Mahmood Ahmad Shah MD-KPDCCL, Er. Habib Choudhary MD- JKPTCL, Er. Nisar Ahmad Lone Chief Engineer Distribution KPDCCL and concerned officers of DISCOMs.

# J&K Govt accords approval to naming of schools after eminent personalities, martyrs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has sanctioned the naming of several schools after eminent personalities and martyrs in recognition of their outstanding contributions, legacy and supreme sacrifices.

The decision has been taken in pursuance of the 7th Council of Ministers meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

Government Higher Secondary School, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, has been

renamed after Late Principal Kuldeep Kumar Badyal, while Government High School, Hapatnar in Anantnag district, has been named after Late Adil Hussain Shah.

Adil Hussain Shah earned widespread admiration for his courage and selflessness during the Baisaran attack, where he helped tourists to safety and laid down his life for humanity. The government stated that the initiative is aimed at honouring the memory and legacy of distinguished personalities and martyrs who have rendered notable service and sacrifice for society.

Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

## Hypertension Emerging As A Silent Crisis In Kashmir

**T**he rising cases of hypertension in Kashmir are becoming a serious public health concern. Doctors have repeatedly warned that high blood pressure, often called a "silent killer," is affecting people across all age groups and silently leading to life-threatening complications such as heart disease, stroke and kidney failure.

The recent CME programme organized by the Department of General Medicine at SKIMS Medical College on the occasion of World Hypertension Day highlighted the urgent need for awareness, early diagnosis and proper treatment of the disease.

Medical experts during the programme stressed that hypertension often develops without noticeable symptoms, which is why many patients remain unaware of their condition until severe complications arise. Doctors also pointed out that lifestyle changes, mental stress, unhealthy eating habits, lack of physical activity and smoking are major reasons behind the growing number of cases in Kashmir.

What is particularly worrying is that hypertension is no longer limited to elderly people. Increasing numbers of young adults are now being diagnosed with high blood pressure due to changing lifestyles, stress and poor dietary habits.

The healthcare community believes that awareness at the grassroots level is the need of the hour. Regular blood pressure monitoring, healthier lifestyles, reduced salt intake, exercise and timely medical consultation can significantly reduce the risk of complications. The initiative by SKIMS Medical College to conduct academic discussions and on-site blood pressure screening was widely appreciated. However, experts believe that sustained awareness campaigns and community-based screening programmes are essential to tackle the growing burden of hypertension in the Valley.

As hypertension continues to silently affect thousands of people, doctors are urging the public not to ignore regular health check-ups and to take preventive care seriously before the disease turns fatal.

# The Growing Isolation Of Elderly Parents



MOHAMMAD HANIEF

**A**t a time when the world is witnessing rapid technological advancement, economic competition, social unrest, and changing lifestyles, one silent crisis is steadily emerging within families and societies across the globe — the neglect of elderly parents. Despite modern comforts and material progress, millions of senior citizens today are living in loneliness, emotional pain, insecurity, and neglect. This painful reality is no longer limited to distant societies or developed nations alone; it is increasingly becoming visible within our own communities, including Jammu and Kashmir, where respect for elders and strong family bonds have historically formed the foundation of social life.

The care of elderly parents is not merely a personal obligation or cultural tradition. It is a moral duty, a spiritual responsibility, and one of the truest measures of humanity. The way a society treats its elderly reflects the strength of its values, compassion, and moral conscience. Parents dedicate their entire lives to raising their children, sacrificing their comfort, ambitions, and happiness so the next generation can live with dignity and opportunity. Tragically, many parents today find themselves emotionally abandoned at the stage of life when they need support and companionship the most.

Traditionally, Kashmiri society was deeply rooted in collective living, mutual respect, and intergenerational harmony. Joint family systems ensured that elderly parents remained emotionally secure, socially respected, and actively involved in family affairs. Elders were regarded as the emotional and spiritual backbone of the household — a source of wisdom, guidance, experience, and blessings. Their advice was valued in important family decisions, and their presence brought stability, warmth, and unity to the home.

Children grew up under the affectionate care and supervision of grandparents and elderly family members, learning lessons of patience, discipline, compassion, and humanity. Caring for aging parents was never considered a burden; rather, it was viewed as an honor and a natural responsibility.

However, the social fabric of modern society has changed significantly over the years. The rise of nuclear families, migration for education and employment, increasing financial pressures, and the growing influence of materialistic lifestyles have weakened traditional family structures. Young people increasingly move to distant cities or



foreign countries in search of opportunities, leaving their aging parents behind in villages, towns, and urban homes where silence and loneliness often replace companionship.

In Jammu and Kashmir, this issue carries even deeper emotional significance because the elderly generation has already spent decades enduring difficult social, political, and economic circumstances. Many aging parents in the region lived through years of uncertainty, emotional stress, conflict, and financial hardship. Despite these challenges, they struggled tirelessly to educate their children, support their families, and secure a better future for the next generation.

Today, many of these same parents are spending their old age in emotional isolation.

Some wait endlessly for a phone call or visit from their children. Others silently suppress their pain because they do not wish to become a burden on their families. Their suffering often remains hidden behind patience, prayers, and quiet endurance. Many elderly people continue to live with dignity despite carrying deep emotional wounds caused by neglect and loneliness.

One of the greatest tragedies of the modern age is that material success has increasingly replaced emotional responsibility. Children may provide financial support, medicines, or comfortable living arrangements, yet fail to provide what elderly parents truly need most — emotional presence, compassion, respect, and genuine human connection.

Old age is not merely a period of physical weakness; it is also a deeply sensitive emotional phase of life. As parents grow older, they become more vulnerable to loneliness, anxiety, fear, and emotional insecurity. They seek affection, companionship, reassurance, and the comforting feeling that they still matter within the family they once sacrificed everything for.

A few moments of sincere conversation, sitting beside them during meals, listening patiently to their stories,

asking about their health, or involving them in family discussions can provide immense emotional comfort. Such gestures may appear small, yet for elderly parents they hold enormous emotional value. Emotional care cannot be replaced by money or expensive gifts; it requires time, patience, affection, and genuine concern.

The changing global situation further highlights the importance of family bonds and elder care. Across the world, societies are facing increasing mental health crises, loneliness, social fragmentation, and the collapse of traditional family systems. In many countries, elderly people spend their final years in care homes, separated from children and grandchildren. Economic progress has often failed to provide emotional peace and stable family relationships.

These realities should serve as a warning for societies like ours. When family values weaken, society itself begins to weaken from within.

In Jammu and Kashmir, where religion and culture strongly emphasize respect and compassion towards parents, neglecting elderly parents represents not only a social problem but also a moral and spiritual crisis. Islamic teachings repeatedly stress kindness, humility, and patience towards parents, especially during their old age. Serving one's parents is regarded among the greatest acts of virtue and a source of blessings in both this world and the hereafter. The prayers of parents hold immense value, and their satisfaction is considered a path toward divine mercy.

Unfortunately, modern lifestyles, social competition, and digital distractions have created emotional distance even among family members living under the same roof. Today, many people spend hours on mobile phones and social media while ignoring the emotional needs of elderly parents sitting quietly beside them. This silent neglect leaves deep psychological scars. Many elderly individuals suffer from depression, loneliness, anxiety, and feelings of worthlessness, yet rarely express their pain openly.

Healthcare challenges further intensify the hardships of old age. Aging naturally brings physical complications such as arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, hearing problems, vision loss, and reduced mobility. In Jammu and Kashmir, harsh winters, difficult terrain, limited healthcare facilities in remote areas, and rising medical expenses make life even more difficult for senior citizens.

Therefore, caring for elderly parents requires far more than occasional financial support. It demands continuous emotional involvement, compassion, patience, and responsibility. Children must ensure proper healthcare, nutritious food, emotional companionship, safe living conditions, and above all, dignity and respect for their parents.

Elderly parents do not seek luxury or sympathy. Most simply desire love, attention, inclusion, and reassurance that they are not forgotten. They are the same people who stayed awake during their children's illnesses, worked tirelessly during difficult times, sacrificed personal dreams, and silently endured hardships for the happiness and success of their families.

Society as a whole must also play its role. Educational institutions, religious centres, social organizations, and community leaders should actively promote awareness regarding elder care and family responsibilities. Schools must teach children the importance of respecting parents and valuing elderly family members from an early age. Governments and institutions should strengthen welfare systems for senior citizens through improved healthcare access, pension support, and community centers where elderly individuals can remain socially active and emotionally connected.

Technology, when used wisely, can help reduce emotional distance. Video calls, digital communication, and online healthcare consultations can help children living far away remain connected with their parents. However, technology should strengthen human relationships — not replace them.

A society that honours its elders preserves its humanity, culture, and moral identity. A society that neglects them gradually loses its soul.

In Jammu and Kashmir, where traditions of spirituality, compassion, and family honour still survive despite changing times, there remains hope that communities can revive and strengthen the culture of caring for elderly parents with sincerity, dignity, and responsibility.

Ultimately, every individual must remember one unavoidable reality: old age is the destiny of all human beings. The compassion, respect, and care we offer our parents today will shape the kind of society we ourselves will inherit tomorrow.

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## Kashi: Gateway To Moksha And Divine Light



OMKAR DATTATRAY

**K**ashi, also known as Varanasi and Banaras, is one of the most spiritual cities of India. Spiritually, historically, and culturally, it is a significant city not only for India but for the entire world. It is an extremely ancient city. Kashi existed when Rome did not exist. Kashi was there when Egypt was nowhere, and it continued to exist even when Athens no longer remained in its glory. Kashi is a city that connects a person with the inner self and with Godhood. It is the abode of Lord Shiva. As per legend, Kashi is erected on the tip of Lord Shiva's Trishul (trident).

Kashi is a spiritual, religious, historical, and cultural city that has existed since ancient times. It is believed that the darshan of Lord Vishwanath grants Moksha, that is, liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Kashi is thus regarded as the pilgrimage of liberation, Godhood, and self-realisation. Kashi is situated on the banks of the holy River Ganga. Devotees take a holy bath in the Ganga, which is believed to purify sins, and hence the river is called Mokshadayani. Hindus also perform Shradha, that is, offering Pind Daan for their departed

ancestors. Performing Pind Daan gives a sense of spiritual satisfaction to people, as they believe they have offered oblations to their deceased blood relatives. It is also believed that by performing Pind Daan, the departed souls attain peace and heavenly blessings.

Kashi is a symbol of India's culture and civilisation and stands as a living example of communal amity, harmony, and Sarva Dharma Sambhav, for which India stands tall and respected across the globe. Kashi is Hinduism's holiest city and the eternal abode of Lord Shiva. Known as the "City of Light," it is a primary pilgrimage site where devotees gather to bathe in the sacred Ganges, wash away sins, and seek Moksha — liberation from the cycle of rebirth. Sadhguru describes Kashi Varanasi as more than just an ancient city; according to him, it is a massive spiritual and cosmic device. He explains that Kashi was designed as a sacred geometric tool or Yantra to map the cosmos. The city originally featured 72,000 shrines corresponding to the 72,000 Nadis, or energy channels, in the human body, thereby acting as a bridge between the microcosm and the macrocosm. The word "Kashi" literally means "to be luminous" or, more particularly, "a tower of light." Mark Twain once remarked that Kashi is older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend, and looks twice as old as all of them put together. Indeed, nobody can truly decipher the exact antiquity of this sacred place.

The core pillars of Kashi's sacredness are deeply rooted



in faith and mythology. First, Kashi is regarded as the abode of Lord Shiva. According to Hindu mythology, Kashi is Shiva's personal domain and the site where the first Jyotirlinga emerged through the earth. The primary shrine, the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, houses this divine manifestation. Second, Kashi is associated with the power of Moksha. Hindus believe that dying or being cremated in Kashi grants spiritual liberation and permanently breaks the cycle of reincarnation. Cremation ghats like Manikarnika Ghat and Harishchandra Ghat are considered direct pathways to salvation.

Third, the Sacred Ganges forms the spiritual lifeline of Kashi. The city lies on the western crescent of the Ganga, representing a sacred threshold where the river flows northward toward the Himalayas. Bathing in the Ganga at Kashi is believed to cleanse the soul and purify devotees spiritually. Among the essential sites and rituals of Kashi, the Ghats hold immense significance. The city

features around eighty riverfront steps used for ritual bathing and ceremonies. The most prominent among them are Dashashwamedh Ghat, Manikarnika Ghat, and Assi Ghat.

The Evening Ganga Aarti is another deeply spiritual ritual performed daily by priests at Dashashwamedh Ghat. This grand fire ceremony is conducted to express gratitude to the River Goddess for her life-sustaining and purifying waters. The Panchakroshi Yatra is a traditional 88-kilometre circumambulation of the city undertaken by devout Hindus to absorb the spiritual energy of Kashi. The Temple Circuit of Kashi extends far beyond the Kashi Vishwanath Temple. The city is home to several sacred pilgrimage sites, including the Annapurna Devi Temple, dedicated to the Goddess of nourishment, and the Kal Bhairav Temple, devoted to the fierce guardian deity believed to control the entry and exit of the city. Kashi is also a centre of philosophy and world faiths.

Though predominantly a

Hindu spiritual hub, its significance extends to other Dharmic religions as well. Located just outside the city is Sarnath, the sacred site where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon after attaining enlightenment. The city is also deeply revered by Jains, as it is believed to be the birthplace of several Tirthankaras.

Kashi is considered the cosmic centre of the universe. According to ancient scriptures, the city was built upon the tip of Lord Shiva's Trident and is destined to survive even cosmic destruction, or Pralaya, untouched. Its true mystique lies in its status as a gateway to ultimate liberation, making it one of the most enigmatic places on earth. Unravelling the sacred city reveals a blend of ancient lore, architectural geometry, and mystical legends. It is fitting to mention that Lord Shiva and Kashi are regarded as inseparable.

There is a legend describing how Lord Shiva and Parvati, after their marriage, decided to leave Kailasha and settle in a Siddha Kshetra. After observing the entire world, they chose Kashi as their divine abode. It is also believed that staying in Kashi for nine days allows pilgrims to complete a traditional spiritual cycle known as the Navratra or the nine-day Kashi Yatra. This extended stay is said to purify the body, mind, and soul, enabling devotees to deeply absorb the divine and spiritual essence of Kashi.

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# Modi, Meloni, And The Art Of Diplomatic Harmony



DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

As the twenty-first century advances with rapid technological changes and geopolitical uncertainties, partnerships rooted in mutual respect and cultural understanding become increasingly valuable. India and Italy, through their evolving cooperation, demonstrate how ancient civilizations can reinvent their friendship for modern times. The melody of MELODI therefore is not simply a social media trend; it is the music of two democracies discovering renewed harmony in a changing world. The diplomatic and cultural relationship between India and Italy has entered a fascinating and dynamic phase in recent years, popularly described by the term "MELODI."

India and Italy, despite geographical distance, share a rich historical consciousness rooted in ancient civilizations, artistic excellence, maritime traditions, and intellectual curiosity. Both nations value family traditions, heritage, architecture, cuisine, and spirituality. These shared cultural sensibilities have often created a natural emotional bridge between the peoples of the two countries. The modern diplomatic relationship between India and Italy began formally after India's independence in 1947, and over the decades both countries have gradually expanded cooperation in trade, science, defense, education, and cultural exchange. However, the recent revival of Indo-Italian relations has acquired a special momentum under the leadership of Narendra Modi and Giorgia Meloni. Their personal chemistry has captured international attention and has given diplomacy a human face. In a world increasingly marked by geopolitical tensions, ideological conflicts, and economic uncertainties, the visible warmth between the leaders of India and Italy has projected optimism and mutual trust.

The word "MELODI" itself is a creative fusion born out of the names of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. Though initially coined playfully on social media after a few warm public interactions between the two leaders, the expression gradually evolved into a symbolic representation of the strengthening ties between the two ancient civilizations. Behind the smiling photographs, viral videos, and public camaraderie lies a deeper strategic, economic, technological, and cultural partnership that reflects the changing realities of global diplomacy in the twenty-first century.

The warm interactions between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni have attracted global attention and symbolized a new era of friendship. Popularly described as "MELODI," this bonding has gone beyond social media popularity and developed into meaningful diplomatic engagement. India views Italy as an important European partner, while Italy recognizes India's rising global influence and economic potential. Both countries are expanding collaboration in manufacturing, clean energy, tourism, maritime security, and innovation. Cultural connections are also deepening as Indian



logue, and democratic cooperation.

The "MELODI" moment became globally recognizable during international summits such as the G20 meetings, COP summits, and bilateral engagements where Giorgia Meloni and Narendra Modi shared cordial interactions. Social media users enthusiastically embraced the term, transforming it into a symbol of friendship between the two democracies. Yet diplomacy is not merely about optics. Behind the symbolic gestures lies an expanding strategic alignment. Italy today recognizes India as one of the most important emerging powers in the Indo-Pacific region. India, on the other hand, views Italy as a crucial European partner with influence in the European Union, the Mediterranean region, and global manufacturing networks. This mutual recognition has strengthened bilateral cooperation in multiple sectors.

Economically, India and Italy are steadily deepening their engagement. Italy is among India's significant trading partners within Europe. Bilateral trade has expanded considerably in recent years with increasing exchanges in machinery, engineering products, automobiles, textiles, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy technologies, and luxury goods. Italian companies are attracted by India's rapidly growing market, demographic advantage, and technological transformation. Indian businesses, meanwhile, seek collaboration with Italy's globally admired expertise in design, fashion, manufacturing precision, and industrial innovation. Italian industries are particularly renowned for small and medium enterprise excellence. India's manufacturing ambitions under initiatives such as "Make in India" have created opportunities for technological partnerships and industrial cooperation. Italian firms are increasingly investing in Indian infrastructure, transport systems, food processing, and green technologies. Simultaneously, Indian IT companies and pharmaceutical enterprises are strengthening their footprint in Italy and across Europe.

One of the most promising areas of collaboration lies in clean energy and sustainability. Both India and Italy recognize the urgency of climate change and the need for sustainable growth models. Renewable energy cooperation, green hydrogen initiatives, sustainable urban development, and circular economy strategies have emerged as important dimensions of the bilateral partnership. Italy's technological expertise and India's large-

scale renewable energy ambitions together create a complementary framework for future collaboration. Defense cooperation between the two nations has also witnessed significant progress. In recent years, both countries have intensified dialogue on maritime security, cyber defense, counterterrorism, and defense man-

ufacturing. The Mediterranean and Indo-Pacific regions are increasingly interconnected in strategic calculations, and Italy understands that India is a key player in ensuring stability in the Indian Ocean region. Naval cooperation and joint military exercises indicate growing trust between the

*The modern diplomatic relationship between India and Italy began formally after India's independence in 1947, and over the decades both countries have gradually expanded cooperation in trade, science, defense, education, and cultural exchange. However, the recent revival of Indo-Italian relations has acquired a special momentum under the leadership of Narendra Modi and Giorgia Meloni.*

two democracies.

Another remarkable aspect of Indo-Italian relations is cultural diplomacy. Italy, the land of Renaissance art, Roman civilization, and architectural marvels, naturally attracts Indian admiration. Similarly, India's spiritual traditions, yoga, classical arts, cinema, and literature continue to fascinate Italian audiences. Cultural festivals, academic collaborations, tourism exchanges, and educational partnerships have strengthened people-to-people connections. Italian appreciation for Indian spirituality

has a long history. Yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, and Indian philosophy enjoy considerable popularity in Italy. Likewise, Indian travelers and students are increasingly drawn toward Italy's universities, museums, fashion institutes, and artistic heritage. Cities like Rome, Venice, Florence, Milan, and Naples hold a timeless attraction

for Indian tourists, while Indian cuisine and Bollywood culture continue to gain popularity among Italians. Food itself has become a beautiful cultural bridge between the two nations. Italians are deeply passionate about culinary traditions, and Indians share a similar emotional relationship with food. Though cuisines differ greatly in flavor profiles, both cultures value family meals, authenticity, local ingredients, and hospitality. The popularity of Italian pizza, pasta, espresso, and gelato in India reflects a cultural embrace, while Indian curries, spices, tea, and vegetarian cuisine are gradually finding enthusiastic audiences in Italy.

Fashion and design constitute another area of shared admiration. Italy's fashion houses are globally celebrated for elegance and craftsmanship, while India possesses a vibrant textile tradition rooted in centuries of artisanal excellence. Collaborations between Indian designers and Italian fashion experts are creating exciting possibilities that blend tradition with modernity. Luxury brands, leather goods, jewelry, and textile innovation have all become part of this evolving partnership. Academic and scientific cooperation between India and Italy is equally important. Universities and research institutions from both countries are engaging in collaborative projects related to physics, engineering, medicine, environmental science, and space technology. Student exchange programs and research partnerships are building intellectual bridges between younger generations. Such educational ties contribute to long-term mutual understanding beyond political leadership.

The Indo-Italian relationship has also gained significance in the context of changing global geopolitics. The world is witnessing the emergence of new multipolar realities where partnerships are increasingly issue-based and strategic rather than ideologically rigid. India's growing global influence makes it an attractive partner for European nations seeking economic resilience and geopolitical balance. Italy, as a member of the European Union and the G7, plays a valuable role in supporting deeper India-Europe engagement. During India's G20 presidency, Italy expressed strong support for initiatives related to sustainable development, digital transformation, and global cooperation. Both nations share concerns regarding energy security, migration challenges, technological transitions, and economic recovery after the pandemic years. Their cooperation in multilateral forums demonstrates a convergence of interests on several global issues.

The emotional appeal of "MELODI" lies partly in the contrast it offers to conventional cold diplomacy. In an era dominated by strategic competition and political polarization, the visible warmth between Narendra Modi and Giorgia Meloni appeared refreshingly human. Their interactions projected friendliness, humor, and mutual respect. Such symbolic gestures may seem superficial to some observers, but public diplomacy often plays a significant role in shaping perceptions and generating goodwill between nations. Social media amplified the phenomenon enormously. Videos, photographs, memes, and captions featuring the two leaders spread rapidly across digital platforms. Young audiences particularly embraced the term "MELODI," transforming a diplomatic interaction into a cultural trend. This demonstrated how modern diplomacy increasingly operates not only through official communiqués but also through digital storytelling and public engagement.

Yet the real strength of the Indo-Italian partnership cannot depend merely on personalities. Political leadership changes with time. Sustainable bilateral relationships require institutional depth, economic interdependence, cultural trust, and strategic alignment. Fortunately, India and Italy appear to be building exactly such long-term foundations. Tourism is another sector with immense untapped potential. Italy's historical monuments, cathedrals, coastal towns, and artistic treasures attract millions of visitors worldwide. India's diverse landscapes, spiritual centers, Himalayan beauty, and heritage architecture similarly hold enormous appeal for Italian travelers. Greater connectivity, simplified visa procedures, and tourism promotion can significantly strengthen mutual engagement.

Cinema and media collaborations may also emerge as future bridges. Italian cinema has historically influenced world filmmaking through masters like Federico Fellini and Vittorio De Sica, while Indian cinema commands one of the largest audiences globally. Film festivals, co-productions, and creative exchanges could enrich artistic dialogue between the two nations. Sports diplomacy too offers opportunities. Football is deeply loved in Italy, while cricket dominates Indian sporting culture. Yet both countries increasingly engage with global sports ecosystems involving athletics, motorsports, tennis, and Olympic events. Shared sporting initiatives and youth exchanges could contribute to stronger social ties.

The Indian diaspora in Italy also serves as an important bridge. Thousands of Indians living and working in Italy contribute to sectors such as agriculture, hospitality, business, academia, and healthcare. Their integration into Italian society while preserving cultural identity enriches the multicultural character of contemporary Italy. Diaspora communities often become natural ambassadors of goodwill between nations. The symbolism of MELODI extends beyond bilateral diplomacy. It represents the possibility of democratic nations building partnerships based not solely on transactions but also on cultural respect and emotional intelligence. In a fragmented world struggling with mistrust and conflict, such examples carry symbolic significance.

Critics may argue that social media narratives sometimes exaggerate personal chemistry between leaders. That observation is partly valid. Diplomacy ultimately depends on national interests rather than personal affection. However, positive interpersonal relationships between leaders can create favorable environments for negotiations, trust-building, and long-term cooperation. Human warmth often facilitates political confidence. India and Italy today stand at important crossroads in global history. India is emerging as a major economic and geopolitical force with technological ambitions and demographic strength. Italy continues to be a culturally influential European nation with industrial sophistication and strategic importance within Europe. Their partnership therefore possesses both symbolic charm and practical relevance.

The growing friendship between India and Italy reflects the meeting of two vibrant democracies shaped by ancient civilizations and modern aspirations. Though geographically distant, both nations share deep respect for democratic values, cultural heritage, family traditions, and human freedom. In recent years, diplomatic ties between the two countries have strengthened significantly through cooperation in trade, technology, defense, education, renewable energy, and cultural exchange. The future of Indo-Italian relations may include deeper cooperation in artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure, space technology, climate adaptation, smart manufacturing, cultural preservation, and higher education. Maritime cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and Mediterranean regions may also gain increasing strategic importance. Above all, MELODI has succeeded in reminding the world that diplomacy need not always appear mechanical or distant. Sometimes a smile, a gesture of warmth, or a moment of shared humanity can strengthen the emotional foundations of international partnerships. The friendship between India and Italy, symbolized through MELODI, reflects not merely political convenience but the meeting of two civilizations proud of their heritage and optimistic about the future.

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spirituality, cuisine, and cinema gain popularity in Italy, while Italian art, fashion, and architecture continue to inspire Indians. The meeting of these two democracies demonstrates how nations with different histories and geographies can unite through mutual respect, shared aspirations, and a common belief in peace, dia-

scale renewable energy ambitions together create a complementary framework for future collaboration. Defense cooperation between the two nations has also witnessed significant progress. In recent years, both countries have intensified dialogue on maritime security, cyber defense, counterterrorism, and defense man-

has a long history. Yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, and Indian philosophy enjoy considerable popularity in Italy. Likewise, Indian travelers and students are increasingly drawn toward Italy's universities, museums, fashion institutes, and artistic heritage. Cities like Rome, Venice, Florence, Milan, and Naples hold a timeless attraction

## J&K Govt Constitutes

criticism and protests following the anti-encroachment drive carried out by officials of the Forest Department, Revenue Department and Police, during which several structures were demolished.

The demolition drive had triggered outrage among members of the Gujjar-Bakarwal community and political leaders, with allegations that the action was conducted without prior notice and in violation of tribal rights.

The order has been issued by the Department of Tribal Affairs under the directions of the Jammu and Kashmir Government.

## Police Ensured Secure

itself; it needs money, networks, and support systems. Using the full force of the law, we must trace and neutralize sources of funding. We must identify every network and dismantle every support system completely, the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also cautioned that along with modern tools, police force should also adopt tradecraft of basic policing.

"In matters of law and order, beat policing proves highly effective. When a beat constable resolves that no crime will occur within their jurisdiction and that public land will not be occupied illegally, such unwavering commitment inevitably delivers results," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said all new recruits are heirs to this noble legacy and they will enrich it further. He said every uniform of the Jammu & Kashmir Police tells a story of courage, commitment, and purpose woven into the fabric of the nation's history.

"Each time you put on the uniform, remember that you are adding a proud chapter to its legacy. Take pride in the ideals of defence and service that the Jammu & Kashmir Police embodies, for they define both your duty and your honour," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also commended the Jammu Kashmir Police for its swift and effective action against the drug smugglers and drug peddlers during the ongoing Nasha Mukht Jammu Kashmir Campaign.

"J&K Police has laid out a comprehensive plan to completely choke drug entry routes. I am confident that the actions in the coming days will be stringent, and will yield major successes," he said.

Over 3200 newly recruited constables were inducted into the Jammu Kashmir Police Force.

Shri Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Shri Nalin Prabhath, DGP J&K; Shri Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary Home Department; Shri S.J.M. Gillani, Special DG Coordination PHQ; Shri Abdul Ghani Mir, Commandant General Home Guards; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; senior officials of police and civil administration, and family members of new recruits attended the appointment letters presentation ceremony.

## J&K SEC Finalizes

voter activity. A total of 3,39,384 new voters were added to the rolls while 1,13,344 names were deleted due to death, shifting, duplication, and other admissible reasons. In addition, corrections were carried out in the particulars of 17,664 voters, and 31,590 voters were transposed. The final roll now stands at 72,24,131 electors, which includes 36,62,502 male, 35,61,488 female, and 141 Third gender voters. This marks a net increase of 2,26,040 voters compared to the previous revision concluded in January 2025, when the rolls listed 69,98,091 voters with January 1, 2025 as the qualifying date.

The Commission said the exercise witnessed substantial participation from the eligible citizens, with 5,10,285 forms received during the revision period. These forms were processed by Panchayat Election Booth Officials, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers, and Electoral Registration Officers in accordance with the procedure and timelines prescribed by the Commission.

To maximize outreach, the SEC undertook extensive SVEEP campaigns through print and electronic media, including radio jingles, voter appeals by the State Election Commissioner and regular newspaper advertisements. The district authorities further strengthened the awareness using hoardings, mobile awareness vans, and other SVEEP modes to ensure no eligible voter was left out.

State Election Commissioner Shantmanu commended the coordinated efforts of District Panchayat Election Officers, EROs, AEROs, PEBOs, the staff of the State Election Commission and the Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Department, as well as representatives of political parties. He also thanked the public for their active participation and cooperation in the successful completion of the revision exercise.

The SEC particularly lauded the enthusiastic response from youth, who turned out in large numbers to enroll in the Panchayat Electoral Roll 2026 and contributed significantly to the 3.39 lakh new additions.

## 'No Genuine Houses

permission," he said. Koul said the drive is not arbitrary but is being conducted in accordance with legal and judicial directions issued in 2020, which are now being implemented on the ground as part of a structured exercise to retrieve public land.

"The court directions issued in 2020 are being

implemented now," he said, adding that such steps are necessary to ensure protection of public resources and prevent further illegal occupation of land meant for public use.

The BJP leader said the ongoing action is focused only on unlawful constructions and encroachments, and reiterated that the interests of genuine residents have been fully safeguarded.

He further said the recent political engagement and joining of new members reflect a visible shift in public sentiment. "We welcome everyone who is joining the Bharatiya Janata Party. This shows that the party is growing in Jammu and Kashmir, especially in Kashmir," he said.

Koul added that the BJP would continue to organise such outreach programmes across the Valley in the coming days.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent public appeals on reducing unnecessary expenditure and promoting conservation, Koul said these suggestions were aimed at long-term national benefit.

"Whatever Modi Ji has said should be implemented by the people. During COVID, the Prime Minister provided free rations, which are continuing. He always thinks ahead for the country," he said.

The BJP leader referred to calls for reducing fuel consumption and limiting the use of certain commodities, describing them as measures linked to both economic prudence and public health awareness—(KNO)

## Former VC KU Prof

initiatives. Prof Khurshid Andrabi further congratulated the Lieutenant Governor on his proactive role in the Nasha Mukht Abhiyaan.

Adv Jehanzeb Allaqaband also congratulated the Lieutenant Governor on the Nasha Mukht Abhiyaan and appreciated his proactive measures in curbing the drug menace to secure a healthier future for the younger generation. In addition to the conclave, the anti-drug campaign, and education initiatives, various other public and developmental issues were also discussed during the meeting.

## Italian, Bulgarian Cherries

light rainfall. Traditional cherries can crack very quickly after rain, which affects their quality and market value," he added.

Irfan Ahmad, a grower from Shopian, said the staggered harvesting pattern of the imported cultivars is proving beneficial for growers as it prevents market oversupply.

"Traditional varieties usually ripen together within a short period, forcing growers to sell quickly before the fruit perishes," Irfan Ahmad said. "But the imported varieties mature in phases, which ensures a continuous supply to the market and helps maintain better prices."

He added that the longer harvesting season has also created additional employment opportunities for labourers associated with cherry orchards. "Earlier, the harvesting season would last only a few weeks, but now the work extends for nearly two months because of these imported varieties. It benefits both orchard owners and workers," he said.

President of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Union, Bashir Ahmad Basheer, said the market response this year has been positive despite a noticeable decline in production.

"This year's cherry output is nearly 50 per cent less than the normal production due to weather-related factors, but the market rates are very good," Basheer said. "If the prices continue at this level during the peak season, it will help growers compensate for the losses caused by the reduced yield."

He said growers are optimistic as traditional varieties, including Makhmali, Siyah, Awal Number, Jadi, Holland, Double, Mishry, Splendor and Steela are expected to arrive in markets in the coming weeks.

Basheer further stated that although imported varieties currently occupy a smaller share in Kashmir's cherry industry, their popularity is steadily increasing because of their weather tolerance and better market timing.

According to official figures, Jammu and Kashmir produces more than 1.5 lakh metric tonnes of cherries annually, making it the leading cherry-producing region in India. More than 2,300 hectares of land in the Union Territory are presently under cherry cultivation, with Shopian, Srinagar and Ganderbal among the major producing districts—(KNO)

## CS Reviews Sustainability

running these parks. He called for putting in place a professional management system for taking day-to-day operational decisions and ensuring optimum utilisation of these assets in line with the objectives envisioned for their establishment.

He further emphasised the need for clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the Science & Technology Department and CSIR-IIIM Jammu in creating a conducive ecosystem for startups, entrepreneurship and capacity building. He urged the IIIM to position the required professional manpower at these facilities in accordance with on-ground requirements, noting that the institution possesses the expertise and capability to provide the necessary technical and scientific support.

The Chief Secretary also called for formulation of measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with defined timelines to achieve tangible outcomes and develop these parks into some of the best-performing innovation assets across the nation. He directed CiTaG to extend all possible

assistance to the department in this endeavour.

Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology Department, Babila Rakwal, apprised the meeting about the present status of infrastructure created at these parks. She informed that optimal utilisation and efficient functioning of these facilities would require professional management under the guidance of institutions like IIIM Jammu, supported through adequate funding from the department and convergence with relevant Government of India schemes.

During the meeting, Director, CSIR-IIIM, Dr Zabeer Ahmed, and CEO, CiTaG, Dr Sandeep Ananthanarayanan, gave detailed presentations regarding the present status, functionality and long-term operational strategy for the biotechnology parks at Kathua and Handwara.

The meeting was informed that the Kathua facility, spread over nearly 10 acres, has been equipped with advanced infrastructure including fermentation and enzyme production units, medicinal and aromatic plant cultivation facilities, micro-propagation laboratories, farmer and youth skill development centres and central instrumentation facilities. It was further informed that the park has already hosted several programmes and activities aimed at promoting innovation, entrepreneurship and capacity building in the biotechnology sector.

The meeting was informed that the Kathua Biotech Park presently houses a BIRAC-BioNEST Incubator established to support agri-based startups and innovation-driven enterprises in sectors such as agriculture, nutraceuticals, phytopharmaceuticals, aroma and food processing, fermentation and healthcare biotechnology. The facility has been envisioned as a major innovation hub for startups, researchers and entrepreneurs from across Jammu and Kashmir.

Director, CSIR-IIIM further informed the meeting that several initiatives including farmer-centric workshops, skill development programmes, awareness campaigns under Mission YUVA and scientific conferences on AI-driven innovations in drug discovery and agriculture have already been organised at the Kathua campus.

He further highlighted the park's significant potential in promoting medicinal and aromatic plant cultivation, essential oil processing, mushroom cultivation, herbal product development and bio-based industrial processes in the region.

Regarding the Handwara Biotech Park, the meeting was apprised that the project is progressing steadily and is being developed as another major biotechnology and innovation centre for Kashmir region.

The meeting was apprised that operationalisation of both the parks would help create a robust ecosystem for biotechnology-led industrial growth, startup incubation, employment generation and skill enhancement among youth, women and farmers.

The CEO, CiTaG, Dr Sandeep Ananthanarayanan, presented a comprehensive roadmap for ensuring optimum utilisation and future self-sufficiency of the biotech parks through a collaborative operational model involving government departments, scientific institutions, startups, entrepreneurs and private sector participation.

A three-bucket operationalisation strategy and collaborative framework were also discussed for ensuring sustainable functioning, professional management and long-term economic viability of these facilities.

The meeting also discussed manpower requirements, infrastructure readiness, industry linkages, startup support mechanisms and alignment of these biotech parks with the national BioE3 policy and emerging bio-economy initiatives of the Government of India.

The Chief Secretary stressed that these biotech parks should serve as engines of innovation, scientific research and market-oriented biotechnology enterprises in Jammu and Kashmir. He underlined the need for strengthening institutional collaborations and ensuring effective utilisation of the infrastructure created for generating tangible socio-economic outcomes and employment opportunities across the region.

## India Won't Tolerate

signed between India and South Korea signalled a promising future for India-Korea defence innovation and technology partnership.

"The success of India-Korea industrial cooperation in the commercial sector demonstrates the enormous potential of long-term trusted partnerships between the two countries," Singh told a group of South Korean business leaders.

"The time has now come to extend this successful model into the defence sector, where technology, innovation, manufacturing capability, and strategic trust are becoming increasingly interconnected," he said.

The defence minister said South Korea's technological excellence, combined with India's scale, talent and manufacturing ecosystem can create a powerful foundation for cooperation.

During the event, two agreements were also signed, signalling a promising future for India-Korea defence innovation and technology partnership. The agreements are expected to facilitate enhanced collaboration between the defence industries of both countries and promote technology cooperation and capacity building.

## J&K People Have

added. Welcoming the new entrants into the BJP fold, Koul said there is a growing support for the party in the Kashmir valley which reflects the people's trust in the policies and vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The BJP has emerged as the only party committed to transparency, development, good govern-

nance and equal opportunities for all sections of society. The growing support for the BJP across Kashmir reflects the people's trust in the policies and vision of PM Modi," he said.

He said people of Kashmir are associating with the BJP and the party would continue to organise such joining events in the valley.

"Today, thousands of people attended the programme and hundreds have joined the party. It shows that the BJP is acceptable now.

"Sometime ago, people used to be afraid of getting associated with the BJP. Now, they are joining the BJP in front of the media; it is a huge thing," Koul said.

Welcoming the new joiners to the party, the party functionary thanked them and said, "It shows that the BJP is growing in J-K, especially in the Kashmir valley."

## Police Intensify Campaign,

arrested Faisal Ahmed Khan after recovering charas-like sticks wrapped in corn husk from his possession during checking at Zero Morh Daragutian," the official said.

In a first-of-its-kind move, Anantnag Police installed a GPS-enabled tracking ankle on an accused released on bail in an NDPS case to monitor his movements and ensure compliance with court directions, the official added.

In Handwara, police destroyed illicit poppy cultivation in Mangwalpora Kralgund and registered FIR No. 31/2026 under Section 8/18 of the NDPS Act against an accused identified as Reyaz Ahmad Wani, the official said, adding that Police secured cancellation of 14 driving licences and two vehicle registration certificates of persons involved in NDPS cases as part of the crackdown on narcotics networks in Handwara.

Police also conducted anti-drug awareness programmes, public rallies, naka checking and community outreach campaigns in Handwara and Awantipora, urging people to cooperate in efforts to eradicate drug abuse and trafficking from society, the official said, adding that Police also arrested five alleged drug peddlers in Anantnag, Baramulla and Ganderbal and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

In Anantnag, police arrested a wanted heroin supplier identified as Imtiyaz Ahmad Dar alias Christian during naka checking at Chechripora bypass crossing in Dialgam. Officials said heroin-like substance was recovered from his possession, he said.

Meanwhile in Ganderbal, three persons travelling in a Scorpio vehicle were arrested after police recovered heroin-like substance during naka checking at Dumkadal Chowk. The accused were identified as Jahingir Ahmad Jan alias Jana, Junaid Zahoore Bhat and Jahangir Ahmad Bhat. The vehicle used in the alleged crime was also seized, an official said.

He said cases under relevant sections of law were registered at respective police stations and investigations were underway.

In another major action, Srinagar Police demolished an alleged illegal two-storey structure built on state land at Haka Bazar in Lal Bazar area, which officials said was linked to a wanted drug peddler involved in multiple NDPS cases. The property, spread over around nine marlas and estimated to be worth Rs 1.5 crore, was allegedly linked to Arshid Ahmed Sheikh. The demolition was carried out in the presence of an executive magistrate and Srinagar Municipal Corporation officials, he added.

Police in Pulwama also attached a vehicle allegedly used in narcotics trafficking in connection with an NDPS case registered at Pulwama police station, the official said—(KNO)

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# 47th District-Level NCORD Meeting held in Budgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM:** 47th District-Level Narco Coordination (NCORD) Committee Meeting was Wednesday convened at the DC Office Budgam under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, along with SSP Budgam Hariprasad KK, to review ongoing anti-drug measures and strengthen strategies for a drug-free Budgam.



The meeting was attended by ADC Budgam, Mehrajuddin Shah; all SDMs, ACP, CMO, DIO, DSWO, Medical Superintendent DH Budgam, Principals of Government Degree Colleges, Executive Officers of Municipal Committees, officers from Excise, Police, Health, Education, Rural Development Departments and other concerned officers.

At the outset, the DC reviewed action taken on decisions made during previous meetings and assessed progress achieved under the ongoing 100-Day Intensive Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan being implemented across the district.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that drug

abuse is not merely a law enforcement issue but a serious social challenge affecting families, youth, and the overall social fabric.

He said that the administration shall continue to adopt a zero-tolerance approach against drug peddlers, traffickers, and cultivators, while simultaneously ensuring proper treatment, counselling, and rehabilitation facilities for victims of substance abuse.

The DC emphasised that a multi-dimensional strategy involving strict enforcement, preventive awareness, community participation, counselling, and rehabilitation is

essential for eliminating the menace of drugs from society.

He highlighted the extensive awareness activities being carried out under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, including massive IEC campaigns, awareness programmes in schools and colleges, counselling sessions, Gram Sabhas, and community outreach initiatives across villages and urban areas of the district.

The meeting was informed that intensified drives against narcotics cultivation are being conducted in coordination with Police, Excise, Revenue, and Agriculture Departments. The DC

stressed that roadsides, embankments, and Panchayat areas must remain free from illicit cannabis and poppy cultivation and directed concerned departments to continue destruction drives and ensure registration of FIRs wherever required.

Regarding regulation of pharmacies and drug sale monitoring, the DC directed that all chemist shops shall ensure proper CCTV coverage and Computerized Billing Systems (CBS) for maintaining transparency and accountability. He instructed the Drug Inspector to continue regular inspections and ensure strict action against violations, including cancellation of licences wherever necessary.

The DC further stated that the Drug De-Addiction Centre Budgam should provide effective treatment, counselling, and rehabilitation support to affected individuals.

He directed the Health Department to ensure uninterrupted round-the-clock services at DDAC and also strengthened OPD facilities at Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at District Hospital.

# CME on World Hypertension Day held at SKIMS Medical College Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Department of General Medicine, SKIMS Medical College Srinagar Wednesday organized a Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme in the College Auditorium to mark World Hypertension Day, observed globally on May 17.

The CME programme was attended by Principal, SKIMS Medical College, Prof. Dr. Fazal Qadir Parry, Heads of various departments, senior and junior faculty members,

Medical Superintendent, residents, nursing staff and students.

Addressing the gathering, the Principal appreciated the Department of General Medicine for organizing the programme on a significant public health issue. He described hypertension as a "silent killer" and stressed the importance of timely diagnosis and proper management to prevent complications.

Head, Department of General Medicine, Prof. Dr. Tariq Bhat, in his welcome address, highlighted the importance of conducting

such academic activities and emphasized the clinical relevance of the topics discussed during the CME.

During the scientific sessions, Senior Resident Dr. Khalid Bin Mushtaq delivered a presentation on "Preoperative Management of Hypertension," while senior faculty member Dr. Naik Muzafar, who is also a co-author of the Indian Hypertension Society Guidelines for Home Blood Pressure Monitoring, spoke on "Home Blood Pressure Monitoring (HBPM)."

were chaired by senior faculty members including Prof. Basharat, Prof. Shams Bari, Prof. Javed Malik, Prof. Tariq and Dr. Manzoor.

A key highlight of the programme was the on-site hypertension screening of faculty members using automated blood pressure monitoring apparatus.

The CME concluded with an interactive discussion focusing on early detection of hypertension, lifestyle modification and adherence to evidence-based guidelines for effective blood pressure control.

## Training Programme for PLVs of DLSA Srinagar, Budgam concludes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** In compliance with the directions of the J&K Legal Services Authority, the District Legal Services Authority Budgam, in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority Srinagar, organized a one-day Orientation cum Training Programme for Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) of DLSA Srinagar and Budgam at the ADR Centre, DLSA Srinagar.

The programme was conducted under the guidance of Haq Nawaz Zargar, Principal District & Sessions Judge, (Chairman DLSA) Srinagar; O.P. Baghat, Principal District & Sessions Judge, (Chairman DLSA) Budgam and under the supervision of Tabassum Qadir Parry, Secretary DLSA Srinagar/Budgam.

The initiative aimed at strengthening the role and functioning of Para Legal Volunteers at the grassroots level and enhancing their capacity in delivering legal aid and awareness services effectively.

Chairman DLSA Srinagar, while addressing the participants, emphasized the vital role played by PLVs in ensuring access to justice for all sections of society, particularly the marginalized and vulnerable.

Chairman DLSA Budgam,

joined the inaugural session virtually. In his keynote address, he directed the newly empanelled PLVs to work with dedication and stand for the constitutional values. The welcome address was delivered by the Secretary DLSA Srinagar/Budgam.

During the technical sessions, distinguished speakers deliberated extensively on various important legal and social issues. Lateef Ahmad Khan, Chief LADC Budgam spoke on the role of Para Legal Volunteers in spreading legal awareness and facilitating access to justice for marginalized and vulnerable communities.

Similarly, Faheem, System Officer elaborated on recent developments in the Legal Services Delivery System and the use of technology for efficient functioning of DLSAs. He demonstrated practically step by step operations of e-court services.

Advocate Suhaila Ali, Panel Lawyer highlighted the importance of professional and sensitive interaction with litigants, beneficiaries, and government departments.

Likewise, Nisar Ahmad Mir, PLV DLSA Budgam discussed the implementation of various NALSA schemes and outreach programmes at village and community levels.

## DLSA Ganderbal holds review meeting on Legal Services Activities

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL:** District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Ganderbal Wednesday held a review meeting, in pursuance to the Plan of Activities for the month of May, 2026 issued by the J&K Legal Services Authority, with an aim to assess and strengthen the functioning and effectiveness of legal services activities in the district.

The meeting was chaired by the Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal and attended by officials, Legal Aid Defence Counsel System (LADCS), Para Legal Volunteers PLVs of DLSA Ganderbal/TLSC Ganderbal and TLSC Kangan.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held regarding the functioning and effectiveness of legal services programmes

and activities being carried out in the district.

Emphasis was laid on improving coordination among PLVs, TLSCs and other functionaries for streamlining legal aid services and ensuring better outreach to the eligible beneficiaries.

The performance and progress of the Legal Aid Defence Counsel System (LADCS) was also reviewed. Various challenges faced during implementation of legal aid activities were discussed and suitable measures for improvement were deliberated upon.

The Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal stressed upon all stakeholders to work with dedication and coordination to ensure effective delivery of legal aid services and to strengthen access to justice for all across sections of society.

## JKEDI concludes 3-Day PMFME Training Programme at Sempora Campus

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on Wednesday concluded a three-day training programme organised under the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme at its Main Campus, Sempora.

The programme saw enthusiastic participation from aspiring entrepreneurs as well as officers from the Department of Horticulture.

Organised by JKEDI District Centre Pulwama, the training programme was aimed at enhancing the entrepreneurial competencies of aspiring and existing entrepreneurs engaged in the micro food-processing sector. Over the course of three



days, participants were provided detailed insights into business planning, financial management, market linkages, government support schemes, and access to institutional credit facilities.

The programme was designed to strengthen the capacities of participants by equipping them with the essential skills and knowledge required for establishing and sustaining successful micro food-processing enterprises. The initiative also seeks to promote entrepreneurship, generate self-employment opportu-

nities, and contribute to the growth of the local economy by strengthening grassroots enterprise ecosystems.

The training sessions were conducted by JKEDI faculty members under the overall supervision of Director JKEDI, Muhammad Younis Malik.

Addressing the participants, the Director encouraged aspiring and existing food-processing entrepreneurs to take full advantage of the PMFME Scheme and work towards the formalisation and expansion of their enterprises.

## Vice Chairman LCMA inspects Dal Lake Inflow Channels

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Vice Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Lake Conservation and Management Authority (JKLCMA), Khurshid Ahmad Shah, Wednesday visited Tailbal, Batapora, Habak Shanpora and Baghi Chandpora areas to inspect various inflow channels of Dal Lake and review the status of land acquired by the Authority on the ground.

The Vice Chairman was accompanied by the Collector, Naib Tehsil Officer, Patwaris and other senior officers of the Authority.

During the visit, the Vice Chairman stressed the importance of proper maintenance of inflow channels, protection of Authority land from encroachments and ensuring planned development in environmentally sensitive areas.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Aarif Hussain Jungle Gojar S/o Mohammad Qasim Jungle Gojar R/o Maliknas Malangam Bandipora, Kashmir intend to correct my credentials in my aadhar card bearing no. 7234 5014 4476 in which it is wrongly mentioned as Arif Janjle instead of Aarif Hussain Jungle Gojar S/o Mohammad Qasim Jungle Gojar R/o Maliknas Malangam Bandipora, Kashmir as per my school records. If anybody having any objection, may contact the concerned department within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection/s shall be entertained after the expiry of the said time period.

F.No.-NCSC/JMU/J/11017/05/2026

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**ADVERTISEMENT OF FREE OF COST AND STIPENDIARY COACHING/TRAINING FOR SC/ST JOBSEEKERS THROUGH NCSC FOR SC/ST'S, JAMMU.**

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Sl no.	Name of the course	Duration of the course	Age limit	Minimum Qualification	Family Income	Books & Stationery	Likely to be commenced
01	Special Coaching Scheme	One Year	18-27 years (as on 01.07.2026)	10+02	Up to Rs 03.00 Lakh per annum	Free	01.07.2026
02	O' Level one year IT computer training through NIELIT	One Year	18-30 years (as on 01.07.2026)	10+02	Up to Rs 03.00 Lakh per annum	Free	01.07.2026
03	O' Level Computer Hardware Maintenance training through NIELIT	One Year	18-30 years (as on 01.07.2026)	10+02	Up to Rs 03.00 Lakh per annum	Free	01.07.2026
04	Foundation of Artificial Intelligence Technology	Two Months	18-30 years (as on 01.07.2026)	10+02	Up to Rs 03.00 Lakh per annum	Free	01.07.2026

➤ Eligible candidates may contact with National Career Service Centre for SC/STs, as on above address in working days with all educational certificates, District Employment and Counselling Centre Registration card/ NCS Registration No., State Subject/ Domicile, Cast Certificate, three photographs, Valid Income certificate up to 3 lac per annum, Bank Account Number, Aadhar Number linked with bank Account etc. for credit of stipend.

➤ Stipend of Rs. 1000/- per month after completion of minimum 80% attendance during the month as per rule under Special Coaching Scheme, O' Level one year IT computer training & O' Level Computer Hardware

➤ There will be no stipend for short term course i.e. Foundation of Artificial Intelligence Technology

➤ Free Book & stationery will be provided as per rule.

**Important Dates**

The last date for submission of application forms is 15-06-2026 till 4 P.M.

For more enquiry pl. visit office during working hour.

Note- Candidates would be considered for only one course

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**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**

E-NIT No.15/R&B/RAJ of 2026-27 issued under Endorsement No: 1582-92 Dated: 20.05.2026.

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

S.No.	Name of Work	Base Cost Excl. GST (₹ in Lacs)	TOTAL / Adv. Cost (Base Cost + GST) (₹ in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc.	Earnest Money Deposit	Time of completion	Major Head	Class of Contractor/ Agency
1.	Development of Fallow Land into Park/ Beautification at Horticulture Complex Lal-Mandi Srinagar.	29.78	35.14	₹1100/-	₹70,280/-	90 Days	Capex Budget 2026-27 (Horticulture)	AAY/BEE

Position of AAA: Accorded vide No. 233 of 2026. Dated:30.04.2026.

Position of TS: Accorded EE/PWD/RJB/TS/21 of 2026-2027 Dated:05/2026.

Position of Funds: Budgeted / Committed.

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	20.05.2026.
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	21.05.2026 from 10:00 AM
3	Bid submission Start Date	21.05.2026 from 10:00 AM
4	Bid Submission End Date	01.06.2026 Up to 04:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	02.06.2026 at 11:00 AM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Rajbagh Srinagar.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan under M.H-0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Rajbagh Srinagar (Tender inviting authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan & EMD should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Rajbagh Srinagar (Tender Receiving Authority).
- At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Rajbagh Srinagar. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of 3% as Performance/ Additional Performance Security and Drawal of Agreement.

**\*Abnormally Low Bid Price:**

As per the Circular instructions of Finance Deptt. Vide NO.FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 Dated:08.08.2025, which is reproduced as :-

- Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the Project Cost put to bid, the additional Performance Guarantee/ Security Percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of the project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.
- Where the bid price is 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

- The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security & shall be released after the DLP is over successfully.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Rajbagh Srinagar (Tender Receiving Authority).
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.
- The bid is liable to be rejected if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in the NIT.
- All other terms conditions shall remain as per the J&K Engineering Manual 2020 and other standing Guidelines of the Govt. of India / Govt. of J&K UT and as per PWD FORM (25) Double Cover.

No. 1582-92  
Dated : 20.05.2026.

DIPK-1495-26  
DT: 20/05/2026

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
R&B Rajbagh Division Srinagar.

# IPL 2026: Pandey, Powell, and bowlers keep KKR's playoffs hope alive

IAN S

**KOLKATA:** Manish Pandey and Rovman Powell played key roles under pressure as Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) beat Mumbai Indians (MI) by four wickets in Match 65 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Wednesday, keeping alive their hopes of reaching the playoffs stage.

Chasing a target of 148 on a tricky two-paced surface, KKR faced a few tense moments but crossed the finish line thanks mainly to Pandey's steady 45 off 33 balls and Powell's bold batting in the middle overs.

KKR started their innings aggressively despite an early loss. Impact substitute Finn Allen, who replaced injured Varun Chakravarthy, hit two clean square-driven boundaries off Deepak Chahar before dragging the last ball of the opening over into his stumps. KKR was 10/1 after one over.

Jasprit Bumrah then delivered an excellent second over in which Ajinkya Rahane and Pandey faced only two balls combined, illustrating the tough batting conditions.

However, Rahane quickly found his groove as KKR picked up the pace. Bumrah had an unusually expensive fourth over, with Rahane and Pandey both hitting boundaries to move KKR to 31/1 after four overs.

Mumbai Indians made a brief comeback when Corbin Bosch dismissed Rahane for 21 off 17 balls in the final over of the Power-play. After giving away nine runs on the first three balls, Bosch adjusted his length brilliantly to induce an outside edge, catching Rahane off guard. KKR finished the Power-play at 48/2.

The hosts faced another



setback in the eighth over when Cameron Green mishit a poor delivery down the leg side from Allah Ghazanfar straight to a fielder, scoring only four runs off eight balls. At 54/3, Mumbai sensed an opportunity.

Pandey, however, expertly stabilised the innings while Powell shifted the momentum with a series of powerful shots. Powell almost got out in the 10th over when Deepak Chahar let a top-edged hook shot slip through for Robin Minz at fine leg, but the chance was missed amid confusion.

Meanwhile, Pandey kept the innings flowing by rotating the strike and punishing loose balls. He reached 45 before Bumrah finally got him out for the first time in T20 cricket after 49 balls in their matchups. Bumrah bowled a fantastic offcut with the 15-over-old ball that sharply moved back through bat and pad.

Earlier, KKR's bowlers set the stage for victory by limiting the Mumbai Indians to a modest 147/8 in 20

overs. Cameron Green and Saurabh Dube dismantled Mumbai's top-order batter on a challenging pitch. Green removed Naman Dhir for a three-ball duck and then took an incredible over-the-shoulder catch to dismiss Rohit Sharma for 15.

Dube also struck twice during the Power-play, including the wicket of Suryakumar Yadav for 15, as Mumbai fell to 46/4 after six overs.

After a rain delay at 57/4 in eight overs, KKR's spin pair of Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarthy tightened their grip on the game. Narine bowled exceptionally well, finishing with 4-1-13-1 by taking out Hardik Pandya for 26, while Varun delivered a 4-0-28-0 despite having a hair-line fracture in his foot.

Tilak Varma struggled with his rhythm, scoring 20 off 32 balls before Kartik Tyagi dismissed him with a bouncer. Will Jacks was run out for 13 after a mix-up with Bosch.

Late hitting from Bosch and Chahar helped

Mumbai recover a bit, with Bosch hitting back-to-back sixes in the final overs, allowing MI to gather 52 runs in the last four overs for a total of 147/8. However, that total ultimately proved too low.

Even after Pandey's wicket, Powell (40) continued to attack, hitting Ghazanfar for a huge six over long-on. But Bosch shone again in the field, diving to his right at backward point to take a stunning catch, dismissing Powell just as the game seemed secure for KKR.

Despite losing wickets late in the game, KKR crossed the finish line with four wickets in hand as Rinku Singh hit the final runs with a boundary over long-on, keeping their playoff aspirations alive.

**Brief scores:**  
Mumbai Indians 147/8 in 20 overs (Corbin Bosch 32 not out, Hardik Pandya 26; Cameron Green 2-23, Saurabh Dube 2-34) lost to Kolkata Knight Riders 148/6 in 18.5 overs (Manish Pandey 45, Rovman Powell 40; Corbin Bosch 3-40) by four wickets.

# ISL 2025-26: Mohun Bagan SG look to keep their end of the bargain against SC Delhi

IAN S

**KOLKATA:** Mohun Bagan Super Giant prepare for one final push for the title when they take on Sporting Club Delhi in the Indian Super League title race on a scorching summer night at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata on Thursday night.

With five clubs – East Bengal, Mohun Bagan, Mumbai City FC, Punjab FC, and Jamshedpur FC – still mathematically in contention heading into the last round of fixtures, the ISL 2026 season is set for a dramatic finish. Mohun Bagan know the equation is no longer entirely in their control, but the defending champions remain alive in the race for a historic third consecutive league crown. The Mariners cur-



rently sit second in the table with 23 points from 12 matches, level with arch-rivals East Bengal but behind on goal difference. The Red-and-Gold Brigade's goal difference is 18 compared to Bagan's 13. Sergio Lobera's side must first defeat Sporting Club Delhi and then hope East Bengal either drop points against Inter Kashi or fail to maintain their

superior goal difference. There is another route too. If both Kolkata clubs win, Mohun Bagan would require a 6-0 margin of victory combined with a 1-0 East Bengal win to overturn the goal difference deficit. A draw could also be enough if East Bengal lose and the Mumbai City FC versus Punjab FC clash ends level. Despite the complicat-

ed permutations, Lobera insisted his players are focused only on the task in front of them. "We need to believe. To be honest, we are not in the scenario we wanted to be in, but there are still options. When there are options, we need to fight for them. We need to prepare well for the game, and we need to win," the Spaniard said.

The Mohun Bagan coach confirmed that midfielder Lalengmawia Ralte, popularly known as Apuia, is unlikely to feature, while Jason Cummings remains doubtful. "About Apuia, most probably he is not going to play because he is not fit for tomorrow's game. About Jason, we will try in the last training session. It will be difficult, but not impossible. Maybe he can play," Lobera revealed.

# ISL 2025-26: Maiden ISL title in sight, East Bengal look to end league draught

IAN S

**KOLKATA:** Kolkata Giants East Bengal, who have won everything in Indian football except the Indian Super League (ISL), need just a few points to claim their maiden title and will hope to achieve that when they take on Inter Kashi at the Kishore Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata on Thursday.

After 22 years of waiting for a national top-flight league crown, the Red-and-Gold Brigade enter the final day of the ISL season carrying the hopes, nerves, and expectations of an entire fanbase when they face Inter Kashi.

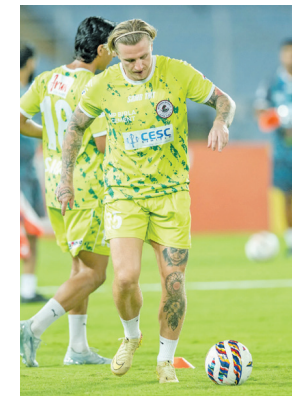
The fate still hangs in the balance, but for the first time in years, East Bengal find themselves in control of their own destiny. Heading into the final round of the ISL season, the Red-and-Gold Brigade sit at the top of the table with 23 points from 12 matches, ahead of arch-rivals Mohun Bagan Super Giant on goal difference. East Bengal have a goal dif-

ference of 18 compared to Bagan's 13.

With five teams – East Bengal, Mohun Bagan, Mumbai City FC, Punjab FC, and Jamshedpur FC – still mathematically alive in the title race, every moment on Thursday night could alter the course of the championship.

Oscar Bruzon's men know a victory over Inter Kashi should almost certainly deliver the title unless Mohun Bagan defeat Sporting Club Delhi by a margin of six goals greater than East Bengal's winning margin. A draw could still prove enough if Mohun Bagan fail to win and the Mumbai City FC versus Punjab FC fixture also ends level.

The emotions around the club have only intensified after Sunday's Kolkata Derby. East Bengal came within touching distance of placing one hand on the trophy before conceding a late equaliser against Mohun Bagan in a dramatic 1-1 draw. That missed opportunity still hangs in the air,



but Bruzon insisted his side is mentally ready for the occasion.

"Tomorrow, there are still five teams that can become champions. It is going to be a very important day, but we have the advantage because we are only focused on our own performance," the Spaniard said. "We cannot hide from the fact that now it is one game for one title. If we want to take one game at a time, now is the moment to take one title at a time."

East Bengal's transformation under Bruzon has

been remarkable. A side that spent years struggling in the ISL has suddenly become one of the most difficult teams to beat. They have lost only once in 12 matches and built their campaign on defensive organisation, resilience, and moments of attacking quality.

The East Bengal coach also said that emotions cannot take over on a night of such significance. "Right now, there is no room for emotion. There is only focus," Bruzon said. "We need to stay calm because tomorrow we have to transfer everything – mentally, technically, tactically, and psychologically – into our performance."

East Bengal will receive a boost with midfielder Souvik Chakrabarti returning to the squad after suspension. However, Bipin Singh remains doubtful after suffering from dehydration during the derby against Mohun Bagan. Saul Crespo and Naorem Mahesh Singh continue to remain sidelined through injury.

# Golf: IGPL star Manav Shah qualifies for US Open

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**NEW DELHI:** Indian-American Manav Shah has become the first Indian Golf Premier League (IGPL) player to qualify for a Major since the IGPL was inaugurated last year in September, and will be making his appearance at the US Open in a few months.

The 33-year-old Indian-American, who has come close to winning on the IGPL, has been in great form this season with three Top-7 finishes and one at T-11 in four IGPL starts. He has also spent a few months playing on the Asian Development Tour and Asian Tour.

It is turning out to be a great time for Indian-origin players as Aaron Rai won the PGA Championship for his maiden Major, and now Shah will make his debut in a Major. "To play a Major is just amazing, and I have had a great run at the AM Green IGPL, and now I get to the US Open," said Shah.

Shah shot rounds of 66-71 to total 7-under to finish fourth in the 36-hole final qualifying tournament held at the Dallas Athletic Club. That earned him a spot in the 2026 U.S.

Shah finished the sectional qualifier in fourth place at 5-under after shooting 5-under 66 and even par 71 to earn one of

the highly coveted spots in the major championship field.

It will be his maiden major championship



appearance. The 2026 U.S. Open takes place at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club.

The 33-year-old Manav Shah's parents are of Indian origin, and he grew up in Bakersfield, California, playing on local public courses before playing collegiate golf for the UCLA Bruins. He graduated in 2015 with a degree in Political Science.

Shah has won eight professional titles globally. His most prominent victory came at the 2022 Quito Open on the PGA Tour Latinoamérica, making him only the second Indian-American player to win a PGA Tour-sanctioned event. The first

was Arjun Awal, who won the Wyndham Championship in 2010.

Shah, who now plays on the IGPL tour in India, earned full playing status on the Asian Tour through Q-School and recently played in the International Series.

The Dallas qualifier was won by Peter Uihlein (67-66) and Tom Kim (66-68), with second, Cooper Dossey (65-70) was third.

Former US Open champion Graeme McDowell will play in the Major for the first time since 2020 after making it through 36 holes of final qualifying at Dallas Athletic Club. McDowell won the US Open in 2010, and he was one of nine to qualify for the Shinnecock Hills tournament from Dallas after shooting 69-69. McDowell also finished T2 at the 2012 US Open.

PGA Tour winner Tom Kim needed final qualifying to ensure his fifth US Open appearance. The South Korean was placed T8 in 2023.

While there was joy for the nine who qualified, for other notable names, there was disappointment at missing out. They included Sergio Garcia, who till 2025, had played in 25 consecutive US Opens. He narrowly missed out in the final qualifying a year ago, and he fell short again.

## Show Timings

Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> May

INOX LIVE THE MOVIE

**BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+)**  
Hindi – 10:45 AM, 02:30 PM

**Michael (U/A 13+)**  
English with English Subtitles  
11:45 AM, 06:25 PM

**Dhurandhar: The Revenge (A)**  
Hindi – 02:00 PM

**WAR OF SHERA (U/A 16+)**  
PUNJABI WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES  
06:00 PM

**PATI PATNI AUR WOH DO (UA16+)**  
Hindi Atmos –  
11:15 AM, 01:45 PM, 04:15 PM, 06:45 PM

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