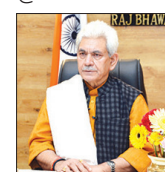


Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

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On the occasion of the birth anniversary of the unparalleled symbol of patriotism, sacrifice, and women's empowerment, the embodiment of justice, righteousness, and public welfare, the immortal warrior-saint and mother of the people, Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar Ji, I offer a hundredfold salutations to her. Her life, dedicated to the service of humanity and the welfare of the people, and her ideals will forever continue to inspire us.

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CM Omar Won't Resign Even As Executive Councillor: Sunil Sharma

'Would Accept Below Than UT-Status As Long As His Protocol Remains Intact'

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Ahead of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's meeting with NC legislators on Wednesday, Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma on Sunday said that the Chief Minister would not resign even from the position of executive councillor, as long



as his protocol remains intact. Speaking to reporters, Sharma said Omar Abdullah

would accept any status for Jammu and Kashmir - even below that of a Union Territory - provided his protocol remains intact.

"Remember my prediction: no one, even from the next generations of the Abdullah family, would resign. The Abdullah family is seated on the Chief Minister's" •P-06

'People Knowing Least Are Talking Most'

CM Omar Takes Swipe At LoP Sharma

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Sunday took a swipe at Leader of Opposition (LoP) Sunil Sharma over his remarks on the June 3 meeting convened by the ruling National Conference (NC) with its MLAs and independent legislators supporting the

J&K Hajj Pilgrims Decry Baggage Curbs Ahead Of Return Flights

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: As the return phase of Hajj-2026 approaches, the Jammu Kashmir pilgrims in Mina have voiced resentment over fresh baggage restrictions, demanding restoration of the traditional 40-kilogram luggage allowance. They questioned the decision to transport baggage separately by road from Ahmedabad to Srinagar. Kashmir politics coverage



A video shows pilgrims expressing concern that the reduced baggage allowance could damage or delay their belongings, including gifts and items purchased for

PoK Youth Crosses LoC After Social Media Romance, Apprehended

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A 22-year-old man from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir was apprehended after crossing the Line of Control in the Uri sector of north Kashmir, and investigators say a social media relationship may have prompted his risky journey.

The man, identified as Zeeshan Mir of Muzaffarabad, was intercepted by army personnel after entering Indian territory, officials said. Security agencies are investigating the circumstances and verifying his account.



Officials said Mir had faced personal and financial pressures at home, including family demands to earn a living and contribute to household expenses. Investigators described Mir as "innocent and deeply distressed" during questioning and said he had been struggling with depression amid domestic tensions. •P-06

Army Foils Exfiltration Bid In Uri, POJK Intruder Among Three Held

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Army on Sunday said that it foiled an exfiltration attempt in Uri sector of north Kashmir's Baramulla district and apprehended three individuals, including two residents of Sopore, during a joint operation with Jammu and Kashmir Police.

In a post on X, Chinara Corps of the Indian Army, said that a joint search operation was launched in the general area of Uri following specific intelligence inputs.

The Army said two individuals from Sopore were apprehended by troops while allegedly attempting to exfil-

trate through the Uri sector along with their accomplice guide.

"Based on specific intelligence input, a joint search operation was launched by Indian Army and Jammu and Kashmir Police in the general area of Uri, Baramulla.

Based on specific intelligence input, a joint search operation was launched by Indian Army and Jammu and Kashmir Police in the general area of Uri, Baramulla.

mir Police in the general area of Uri, Baramulla. Two individuals from Sopore were apprehended by vigilant Chinara Warriors while attempting exfiltration in Uri Sector with

General NS Raja Subramani Assumes Charge As CDS

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: General NS Raja Subramani formally assumed charge as India's new Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and was accorded a ceremonial Guard of Honour at the South Block lawns in New Delhi, marking the commencement of his tenure as the country's highest-ranking military officer.

Taking over from Anil Chauhan, who completed his tenure on May 30, General Raja Subramani said the Armed Forces remain committed to strengthening national security through greater jointness, innovation and self-reliance.

Expressing gratitude for the trust reposed in the Armed Forces, the new CDS said the Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, Ministry of Defence and other strategic institutions would work together under a "whole-of-nation approach" to advance the vision of "JAI" — Jointness, Atma Nirbharta and Innovation. He emphasized that organisational reforms, enhanced synergy among the services and accelerated induction of indigenous defence systems would remain key priorities during his tenure.

The Government had appointed General NS Raja Subramani as the



OUR CENSUS OUR DEVELOPMENT



Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh

Houselisting & Housing Census 1st to 30th June



What will you be asked?

Information of house:

- Building number
- Materials of the floor, walls & ceiling
- Ascertain use of the house- (Residential/Non-residential)
- Condition of the house

Others:

- Main cereal consumed
- Mobile number (Only for Census communication)

Basic information about the family:

- Number of family members
- Name, sex and caste of the head of the family (SC/ST or others)
- Ownership status of the house
- Number of rooms
- Number of married couples living in the house

Amenities:

- Source of drinking water
- Availability of drinking water source
- Main source of lighting
- Access to latrine
- Type of latrine
- Waste water outlet
- Bathroom facilities
- Kitchen and LPG/PNG connection
- Main fuel used for cooking

Assets:

- Radio/Transistor
- Television
- Access to internet Computer/Laptop
- Mobile phone /Telephone
- Two-wheeler/ Four-wheeler

» This stage lays the foundation for population enumeration

» All your information will remain completely confidential and secure

TOLL FREE - 1855

Let us fulfill our responsibility and participate in the Census

CensusIndia2027

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12 years of technological transformation laid foundation for Viksit Bharat: Dr Jitendra

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the last 12 years of technological transformation has laid the foundation for 2047 and under PM Narendra Modi, India has moved from being a technology follower to a technology leader. This transformation has fundamentally altered India's position in the global scientific landscape as well, he added.

During a podcast with Doordarshan News, Dr Jitendra Singh said that for decades, India largely adopted technologies developed elsewhere, often entering new technological domains years after leading nations. Today, he said, India is increasingly participating in the development of frontier technologies at the global level and, in several sectors, is helping shape the future direction of innovation itself.

"The last twelve years have witnessed India's transition from a technology follower to a technology leader. The scientific capabilities, innovation ecosystem and technological infrastructure created during this period have laid the foundation for Viksit Bharat @2047," Dr Jitendra Singh said.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said, PM Modi brought science and technology to the centre of national policy making, encouraging greater participation of the private sector, promoting innovation-led entrepreneurship and ensuring that scientific advancements translate into benefits for citizens. This approach, he said, has enabled India to build a technology ecosystem that supports economic growth, strategic capability and public service

delivery simultaneously. Referring to India's growing stature in frontier technologies, Dr Jitendra Singh said the country has registered major advances in space, nuclear energy, quantum technologies, biotechnology, artificial intelligence and clean energy. He said these sectors are collectively creating the scientific and technological foundation required for a developed India by 2047.

On the space sector, the Minister said India has built one of the world's most dynamic space ecosystems following the opening of the sector to private participation. He said the number of space startups has grown from single digits to more than 400, while India's space economy, currently estimated at around USD 9 billion, is projected to expand significantly in the coming years.

Dr Jitendra Singh said India's space achievements have transformed public engagement with science and inspired a new generation of innovators and entrepreneurs. He added that space technologies today support communications, infrastructure planning, governance, disaster management, agriculture and national security, making them increasingly relevant to everyday life.

The Minister described the advancement of the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor as a major milestone in India's long-term energy strategy. He said the achievement takes forward the three-stage nuclear programme envisioned by Dr Homi Jehangir Bhabha and strengthens India's pathway towards energy security and self-reliance.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said recent reforms enabling greater private sector par-



ticipation in the nuclear sector have opened new opportunities for startups, entrepreneurs and technology-driven enterprises. The reforms, he added, are expected to accelerate innovation and expand India's capabilities in advanced energy technologies.

Highlighting progress under the National Quantum Mission, Dr Jitendra Singh said India has already achieved nearly half of its targeted 2,000-kilometre quantum communication capability within the initial years of implementation. He said the pace of progress reflects India's growing competence in one of the world's most strategic technology domains. The Minister said quantum communication technologies will play a crucial role in strengthening secure communications, defence preparedness and next-generation digital infrastructure, positioning India among a select group of countries working at the cutting edge of quantum science.

On biotechnology, Dr Jitendra Singh said India is preparing for a biotechnology-driven industrial transformation through the BioE3 Policy. He said the future economy will increasingly be shaped by advances in biotechnology, genetics and bio-

manufacturing, and India is taking proactive steps to establish leadership in these domains. He referred to ongoing initiatives in genome sequencing, rare disease diagnosis and treatment, indigenous drug development and gene-therapy breakthroughs as examples of India's growing scientific capability. He said these developments are strengthening the country's ability to deliver solutions with both national and global relevance.

Speaking about Artificial Intelligence, the Minister said AI is emerging as a transformative force across governance, healthcare, agriculture, communications, scientific research and public service delivery. He said India is pursuing a balanced approach that combines human expertise with AI-enabled systems to improve efficiency, innovation and citizen-centric governance. Dr Jitendra Singh said the IndiaAI Mission is creating a strong foundation for future leadership in advanced digital technologies through investments in computing infrastructure, datasets, innovation and emerging applications.

The Minister said India's broader innovation ecosystem has expanded rapidly over the last decade, reflected in the country's

rise as one of the world's leading startup destinations, significant growth in patent filings, improved global innovation rankings and increasing scientific publications. He said India is no longer viewed merely as a consumer of technologies developed elsewhere but is increasingly recognised as a nation capable of generating original innovations and solutions for global challenges.

Referring to clean energy, Dr Jitendra Singh said India is pursuing a diversified strategy encompassing nuclear energy, green hydrogen, solar power and emerging ocean-based energy systems. These initiatives, he said, are aligned with the country's long-term commitment to sustainable development and net-zero emissions by 2070.

The Minister said the next phase of India's growth will increasingly be driven by underexplored sectors such as the blue economy, deep ocean resources, Himalayan bio-resources, advanced biotechnology and next-generation manufacturing technologies. He said India possesses unique natural and scientific advantages in many of these domains and is well-positioned to convert them into engines of national growth.

Concluding, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the journey of the last twelve years should be viewed as the beginning of a larger national transformation. He said the scientific confidence, technological capabilities and innovation ecosystem built during this period have positioned India to emerge as a leading knowledge economy and achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. (PIB)

Gulmarg Gondola set to resume today



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Gulmarg Gondola services are expected to resume for tourists on Tuesday following an expert trial run scheduled on Monday after days of suspension caused by a technical snag and maintenance work.

The reopening is being closely watched by the tourism sector as the temporary shutdown of one of Kashmir's major tourist attractions had disrupted travel plans and resulted in financial losses following cancellation of rides and suspension of services.

Sources said experts will conduct a test trial of the Gondola system on Monday to assess operational safety and technical performance before allowing public services to resume from Tuesday.

The Gondola had remained closed for tourists till June 1 following a technical malfunction that led authorities to suspend operations and undertake maintenance work.

During the closure period, all tickets for visit dates between May 25 and June 1 were ordered to be refunded in full.

Sources said that despite restoration efforts and

preparations for reopening, the Jammu and Kashmir Cable Car Corporation has yet to determine responsibility for the incident that led to the suspension of services.

The closure is understood to have caused substantial financial losses to the corporation and affected tourism-linked activity in Gulmarg during the peak visitor season.

The Corporation has maintained that safety remains the primary consideration and that services will resume only after technical experts clear the system for public operation. [KNT]

SMC bids farewell to four Senior Officers on their Superannuation

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Sunday organised a farewell ceremony in honour of four of its senior officers on their superannuation after years of dedicated service.

The officers who retired from service include Joint Commissioner (Works) Shafat Ahmad Khan, Chief Sanitation Officer Mudasir Ahmad Bandy, Executive Engineer Nisar Ahmad Wango, and Executive Engineer Mushtaq Ahmad Nowsheri.

The function was presided over by Commissioner

SMC, Faz Lul Haseeb, and attended by Joint Commissioners, Secretary, Health Officer, Superintending Engineer Drainage, and other senior officers and officials of the Corporation.

Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner congratulated the retiring officers on the successful completion of their distinguished careers and appreciated their valuable contributions towards strengthening municipal governance, improving civic services, and serving the people of Srinagar. He wished them good health, happiness, and success in

their future endeavours.

The retiring officers expressed their gratitude to the SMC administration and their colleagues for their support and cooperation throughout their service. They described their tenure in the Corporation as a rewarding and enriching experience and thanked the staff for their dedication and teamwork.

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of mementoes and best wishes to the retirees in recognition of their dedicated service and contributions to Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

DC Anantnag attends ongoing Holy Adhikmas Kumbh at Mattan, Interacts with devotees



GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Sunday visited Mattan and attended the ongoing Holy Adhikmas Kumbh 2026 alongside the representatives of Shri Martand Tirath Trust (SMTT) and a large congregation of devotees.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Tariq Ahmad Malik, Tehsildar Mattan, senior officers of line departments and other concerned officials.

Notably, the month long religious congregation which commenced on May 17, is witnessing participation of devotees from different parts of the country. The pilgrims are visiting the revered place including the Holy Temple as well as the nearby Sacred River with enthusiasm and religious fervor to pay their obsequance and perform traditional rituals and prayers.

During the visit, the DC attended the celebrations and ceremoniously participated in the rituals alongside the devotees. Interacting with them, the DC stated that the place has long stood as a great symbol of brotherhood and communal harmony, defining the region's shared heritage. He appreciated the spirit

of unity among the people and urged everyone to continue preserving the rich cultural and religious heritage of the area.

On the occasion, the DC reviewed the arrangements and impressed upon the concerned departments to ensure all necessary facilities are provided to the devotees in a smooth and uninterrupted manner. He instructed that all efforts be made to facilitate devotees enabling them to undertake a safe and comfortable pilgrimage.

The DC observed that the Holy Adhikmas Kumbh is not only a significant religious occasion but also presents apt opportunity to showcase the district's hospitality so the pilgrims leave with pleasant and lasting memories. He stressed upon the officers to ensure that all arrangements remain functional and effective on the ground.

Reiterating district administration's commitment for smooth conduct of the event, Dr. Bilal directed all departments to make sustained efforts, remain vigilant, address the grievances promptly and provide best possible facilities to the devotees during their stay. He urged officers to work in close coordination with the Shri Martand Tirath Trust and other stakeholders for the successful culmination of the Holy Adhikmas Kumbh.

"World No Tobacco Day"

DLSA G'bal conducts district-wide Anti-Tobacco Awareness Campaigns

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: In observance of World No Tobacco Day 2026, a series of door-to-door awareness campaigns were conducted across various areas of District Ganderbal under the directions of the Secretary, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal, through Adhikar Mitras as part of the ongoing efforts to promote public health awareness and legal literacy.

Ghulam Jeelani Raina and Amreena Naaz conducted an awareness campaign from Ganiwan to Dardwooder, educating the public about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and encouraging a tobacco-free lifestyle. The programme highlighted the serious health risks associated with smoking and other forms of tobacco use, including cancer, heart disease, and respiratory illnesses, while emphasizing the role of youth in spreading awareness and discouraging tobacco use.

Aasiya Mohi-ud-Din conducted a door-to-door awareness drive in the Kangan area, where residents were sensitized about the adverse effects of tobacco consumption, the importance of quitting tobacco, and the need to protect youth from tobacco addiction.

The participants were also informed about free legal aid services available through DLSA Ganderbal and were encouraged to report violations relating to the sale of tobacco products near educational



institutions. Yasir Nissar Bhat carried out an awareness campaign in the Prang area of Manigam, interacting with local residents and shopkeepers regarding the harmful effects of tobacco, smoking, and drug addiction. Shopkeepers were requested not to sell tobacco products to minors and to strictly adhere to the applicable laws and government guidelines regulating tobacco sales.

Nawaz Sharif Khatana conducted an awareness programme at Urpash Shajinagh and adjoining areas, focusing on the harmful effects of smoking, chewing tobacco, and emerging nicotine products such as vapes and nicotine pouches. The participants were also sensitized about the

2026 World No Tobacco Day theme, "Unmasking the Appeal: Countering Nicotine and Tobacco Addiction," and informed about legal provisions prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors and near educational institutions.

Bilal Ahmad Kumar and Gh. Nabi Tali conducted awareness programmes in Wakura, Dab, Batwina, and adjoining areas. The campaign focused on creating awareness regarding the provisions of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003, and sensitizing the public and shopkeepers about restrictions on the sale of tobacco products to minors and near schools. Participants were encouraged to con-

tribute towards building a healthy and tobacco-free society.

Heaba Mushtaq conducted a similar awareness campaign in Ganderbal, while Mukhtar Ahmad Raina carried out a programme in Gund, Hanan, and adjoining areas. Both programmes focused on the health risks associated with tobacco consumption, legal safeguards under anti-tobacco laws, and the importance of protecting young people from nicotine addiction.

Bisma Bashir also conducted a door-to-door awareness campaign in Kondbal and Potermulla areas, sensitizing residents and shopkeepers regarding the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and the provisions of COTPA, 2003.

During all the programmes, special emphasis was laid on preventing tobacco use among youth, creating awareness about tobacco-related diseases, ensuring compliance with anti-tobacco laws, and promoting healthy lifestyles. The public was encouraged to become active participants in the fight against tobacco addiction and to support efforts aimed at creating a healthier and tobacco-free society.

The awareness programmes received an encouraging response from the local communities, who appreciated the efforts of DLSA Ganderbal in spreading awareness regarding public health, legal rights, and social responsibility at the grassroots level.

Traffic restrictions announced for Padyatra in Kulgam



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Traffic Police Rural Kashmir issued a traffic advisory announcing restrictions and diversions in Kulgam town on June 1 in view of a Mega Rally (Padyatra) being organised under the ongoing Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan led by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

According to the advisory issued by Senior Superintendent of Police Traffic Rural Kashmir, Liaqat Ali, as per news agency JKNS, vehicular movement from Khudwani Crossing to Chawalgam Chowk via Laroo Bus Stand and Ghanta Ghar, as well as from Sangus Crossing to Laroo Bypass Crossing via Circle Road Kulgam, will remain completely suspended from 4:00 AM to 3:00 PM on June 1.

Traffic authorities have advised motorists to avoid unnecessary travel within Kulgam town during the event and follow designated alternate routes to ensure smooth movement of traffic. As per the diversion plan, traffic from DH Pora towards Anantnag and Srinagar will be diverted through Chawalgam Bypass, Pahloo, Kilam and Mirbazaar before joining NH-44.

Similarly, traffic heading towards Kulgam from Srinagar and Anantnag will be diverted at Wanpoh and Khudwani crossings via Alstop, Mirbazaar, Kilam, Pahloo and Chawalgam Bypass before reaching Kulgam town.

Vehicles coming from Khudwani and Qaimoh areas towards Kulgam have been advised to move through Kaddar Crossing, Bachroo and Laroo before entering the town.

Traffic Police said the advisory has been issued in public interest for awareness and compliance and urged commuters to cooperate with authorities to avoid inconvenience during the anti-drug awareness programme. (JKNS)

Satish Sharma launches Volvo fleet; bats for modern transport to boost J&K's growth

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, Transport, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, Sunday underscored the importance of modern transportation, tourism promotion, innovation and entrepreneurship in driving Jammu and Kashmir's economic transformation.

The Minister was speaking after inaugurating a fleet of Volvo buses introduced by Star World Ventures at Countryside Resort, Srinagar. The initiative is expected to strengthen the transportation facilities, improve tourist mobility and enhance connectivity across the Union Territory.

Addressing the gathering, Satish Sharma said that world-class transport infrastructure is essential for promoting tourism, facilitating trade and accelerating economic development. He said that the introduction of premium transport services would



significantly enhance the travel experience for both the tourists and the residents while contributing to the sustained growth of Jammu and Kashmir's tourism sector.

The event was attended by MLA Eidgah Mubarak Gul, senior government officers, representatives of the tourism and business sectors and members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industries Kashmir (CCIK).

The Minister appreciated the efforts of the organisers in introducing the modern transportation facilities and reiterated the government's commitment towards upgrading the transport infrastructure,

promoting sustainable tourism and encouraging private sector participation in key developmental sectors.

Later, Satish Sharma visited the Rang-e-Kashmir Exhibition at Sher-i-Kashmir Park, Srinagar, where he interacted with the entrepreneurs, artisans, startups and exhibitors showcasing the local products, handicrafts, innovations and the rich cultural heritage of Jammu & Kashmir.

Commending the participants for their contribution to economic activity and employment generation, the Minister said that entrepreneurship, innovation and technology-driven initiatives are emerging as

powerful engines of growth for Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized the need to create a supportive ecosystem that enables the young entrepreneurs and innovators to translate ideas into successful enterprises.

The Minister also emphasized the need to provide greater market access and institutional support to the local artisans, startups and small businesses to help them compete effectively in national and global markets.

Reaffirming the government's vision for a progressive and self-reliant Jammu and Kashmir, Satish Sharma said that sustained investments in infrastructure, innovation, youth empowerment and entrepreneurship would play a pivotal role in creating new opportunities and ensuring inclusive socio-economic growth across Jammu & Kashmir.

He called upon all the stakeholders, including industry bodies, entrepreneurs and civil society, to work collectively towards building a stronger, more prosperous and future-ready Jammu and Kashmir.

Dy CM inaugurates double-lane bridge at Greater Kailash

Says govt prioritising surface connectivity in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary Sunday inaugurated the newly constructed double-lane bridge over the Nallah at Greater Kailash in Jammu.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that the government is deeply focused on creating robust surface connectivity across Jammu and Kashmir. He added that the inauguration of the bridge marks a significant step towards strengthening the urban connectivity and improving the public infrastructure in the region.

The newly constructed bridge is expected to provide seamless connectivity, ease traffic movement and enhance convenience for the residents of Greater Kailash and adjoining areas. The project has been executed to improve accessibility and support the growing transportation needs of the locality.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister said that the government is working under a well knit system



to ensure robust, inclusive and people-centric development across Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized that strengthening the basic infrastructure remains a key priority for the government, as it plays a crucial role in improving the quality of life of the people and accelerating socio-economic growth.

"The government is creating durable and modern infrastructure that directly benefits the public. Projects like this bridge not

only improve the connectivity but also contribute to the overall development of the region," he asserted.

The Deputy Chief Minister also highlighted the government's continued efforts towards upgrading the road networks, bridges and other essential public infrastructure to meet the aspirations of the people and facilitate balanced development across the Union Territory.

Chief Engineer, Roads and Buildings (R&B), along

with other senior officers of the department, were present on the occasion. They briefed the Deputy Chief Minister about the technical aspects of the project and other ongoing infrastructure works in the area.

The local residents expressed satisfaction over the completion of the bridge and appreciated the government's efforts in enhancing the civic infrastructure and public convenience.

BOPEE conducts Pharmacy Common Entrance Test; 1684 candidates appear

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of Professional Entrance Examinations (J&K BOPEE) Sunday conducted the Common Entrance Test (CET) for B-Pharmacy and D-Pharmacy courses for the academic session 2026-27 at Jammu and Srinagar Centres.

The test was conducted at the University of Kashmir, Srinagar, in the Kashmir division and the Government College for Women, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, in the Jammu division, with 1684 candidates appearing from across Jammu and Kashmir.

To ensure smooth conduct of the Entrance Test, adequate arrangements were made in collaboration with the respective institution/college admin-

istration and law enforcement agencies, under the guidance of Professor Minu Mahajan, Chairperson, J&K BOPEE.

The examination concluded without any untoward incidents or unfair means, under the supervision of staff from the host institutions.

The Chairperson, along with the Members, the Secretary, the Controller of Examinations and officials of the J&K BOPEE actively monitored conduct of the Common Entrance Test at both the Centres in Jammu and Srinagar. They thanked the staff members of the respective institutions and the staff deployed under the overall supervision of Deputy Commissioners in the respective District Headquarters for smooth conduct of the entrance test.

Speaker inaugurates NTPHC at Challyan; emphasises easy access to essential amenities

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: In a major boost to the local healthcare infrastructure, Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, Sunday formally inaugurated a New Type Primary Health Centre (NTPHC) at Challyan, Chhatri-Sharief constituency.

The Speaker underscored that NTPHC is set to significantly augment the medical services in the area, bringing quality healthcare directly to the doorsteps of the local population.

Following the inauguration, the Speaker addressed a large public gathering, where he highlighted the government's ongoing developmental achievements and welfare initiatives aimed at transforming the socio-economic landscape of the region.

Addressing the gathering, the Speaker emphasized that the primary focus of the administration remains the equitable



development of all regions, with a special emphasis on ensuring easy access to essential amenities.

"The government is deeply committed to provide top-tier basic facilities to the public. Our core priority sectors like Health, Roads, Education, Power and Clean Drinking Water are receiving unprecedented focus. The inauguration of this NTPHC is a testament to our resolve to ensure that no citizen has to travel long distances for fundamental medical care," the Speaker said.

Recalling establishment of this health centre in 1979-80, he said it reflected his commitment to work for the remote, under developed and underprivi-

leged communities of the region.

"Today, I see infrastructure like roads, drinking water, healthcare, electricity, education has reached every nook and corner of this constituency and people are harping on the benefits of these facilities at their doorsteps", he said.

He further elaborated on various ongoing government schemes and urged the public to actively participate and avail benefit of these initiatives. He assured the community that the government will continue to accelerate infrastructure projects to ensure comprehensive growth and improve the overall quality of life for the common citizens.

Centre waives cooling-off period for V K Birdi

Clears way for fresh central deputation

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved waiver of the mandatory cooling-off period for Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vidhi Kumar Birdi, paving the way for his immediate deputation to the Central Government in relaxation of the existing IPS Tenure Policy.

According to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Government of India, the approval was granted on the recommendation of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), which had forwarded the proposal through its communication dated April 10, 2026.

The order stated that, "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Home Affairs for waiving of the 'cooling off' period for central deputation, in respect of Shri Vidhi Kumar Birdi, IPS (AGMUT:2003), in relaxation of IPS Tenure Policy."

The decision assumes significance as Birdi is presently serving as IGP Kashmir and has been supervising policing, law and order



management, counter-terror operations, and security-related matters across the Kashmir Valley.

Under existing central deputation guidelines, IPS officers returning from central assignments are generally required to complete a three-year cooling-off period in their parent cadre before becoming eligible for another deputation to the Government of India.

Birdi had returned to Jammu and Kashmir after serving on deputation with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), where he held the rank of Inspector General. He was prematurely repatriated from the CRPF in September 2023 and sent back to his parent cadre for posting in Jammu and Kashmir.

Following his return, he formally joined the AGMUT cadre on October 13, 2023 and was subsequently

posted as Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone.

As per the normal deputation rules, Birdi's cooling-off period was scheduled to conclude on October 13, 2026. However, the latest ACC decision has effectively waived the remaining period, making him immediately eligible for a central posting nearly four months ahead of schedule.

Birdi originally belonged to the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir cadre of the IPS. Following the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 and merger of the J&K cadre into the AGMUT cadre after the abrogation of Article 370, he became part of the AGMUT cadre.

The waiver has fuelled speculation within administrative and security circles that the Centre may be considering Birdi for an important assignment in a central security or intelligence-related organisation, although no official posting order has been issued so far.

The relaxation granted by the ACC reflects the Centre's prerogative to exempt officers from cooling-off requirements in exceptional cases where their services are considered necessary for specific assignments at the national level. (JKNS)

Father drowns while saving son in Lidder river at Pahalgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PAHALGAM: A 42-year-old man from Srinagar is feared dead after he drowned in the Lidder River while attempting to save his son near Langanbal area of Pahalgam on Sunday.

According to officials, Mohammad Ashraf Mir, son of Ghulam Mohiuddin Mir, a resident of Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar, who worked as an AC mechanic in the private sector, had visited Pahalgam along with his family on a leisure trip. The family was taking photographs on the bank of the Lidder River near Kolahoi Green Hotel, Langanbal, when his son, Fahad, accidentally slipped into the fast-flowing stream. In a desperate attempt to rescue him, Mohammad Ashraf Mir jumped into the river but also lost his footing and was swept away by the strong current.

Locals present at the scene managed to rescue the boy safely. However, Ashraf drowned in the river and is feared dead.

Soon after the incident, a rescue operation was launched by local authorities. Teams of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) have been pressed into service, while rafting teams have also joined the search efforts to trace the missing man. Further details are awaited as the rescue operation continues. (KNC)

Parts of JK witnessing normal weather conditions, Srinagar records 28.4 degrees Celsius

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Most places in Jammu and Kashmir are witnessing normal weather conditions, with Srinagar recording a maximum temperature of 28.4 degrees Celsius, the met office said on Sunday.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, witnessed day temperatures higher by around 2.4 degrees.

The IMD has forecasted isolated showers at some places over the next 72 hours in Jammu and Kashmir, with fairly widespread rains expected to lash the Union Territory on June 4.

Gulmarg tourist resort in North Kashmir recorded a maximum temperature of 20.2 degrees Celsius, which was 3.4 notches above the normal for this time of the year, the met said.

In the rest of the valley, there was a deviation of less than a degree in maximum temperatures as the mercury hovered between 22 and 27 degrees Celsius, the met said.

However, the residents of Jammu are experiencing major relief as the maximum temperature on Sunday was just 30.9 degrees Celsius against the normal of 39.1 degrees Celsius, the met said.

The other weather stations in Jammu region also witnessed lower maximum temperatures, with the highway town of Batote being the second coolest place in Jammu and Kashmir at 21.9 degrees Celsius. It was less than two degrees higher than Gulmarg.

High Court acquits two in 2013 Kulgam murder case, sets aside life sentence

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has acquitted two persons convicted in a 2013 murder case from Kulgam, setting aside the life imprisonment awarded by the trial court after finding serious infirmities, contradictions and lack of credible evidence in the prosecution case.

A Division Bench comprising Justice Sanjay Dhar and Justice Sanjay Parihar passed the judgment on May 29, 2026, while hearing appeals filed by Ali Mohammad Dar and Muzamil against their conviction in FIR No. 343/2013 registered at Police Station Kulgam under Sections 302, 34 and 120-B RPC.

The Principal Sessions Judge, Kulgam, had earlier convicted both appellants and sentenced them to life imprisonment. A fine of Rs 3 lakh had also been imposed on Ali Mohammad Dar.

In its judgment, the High Court observed that the prosecution had failed to establish a complete chain of evidence linking the accused to the homicidal death of the deceased. The court held that

the alleged motive, based on claims of an illicit relationship between the accused, was weak, uncertain and largely hearsay in nature.

The Bench noted that witnesses made only vague assertions regarding the alleged relationship and failed to provide any concrete evidence. It also referred to testimony indicating that Ali Mohammad Dar used to visit the deceased's house to administer injections to Muzamil during her illness, providing a plausible explanation for his presence there.

"Suspicion, however strong, cannot assume the character of legal proof required for sustaining a conviction in a criminal trial," the court observed.

The High Court further held that the prosecution case rested substantially on disclosure statements allegedly made by the accused while in police custody, without any independent corroborative evidence. It noted that several prosecution witnesses admitted during cross-examination that investigators had already informed them that the appellants were responsible for the killing.

According to the judgment, such admissions suggested that the investigation had proceeded with a predetermined mindset, thereby affecting the credibility and evidentiary value of the prosecution's case.

The Bench ruled that disclosure statements and custodial confessions have limited evidentiary value and cannot form the sole basis of conviction unless supported by independent evidence.

Finding that the trial court had relied heavily on such statements while overlooking material contradictions, inconsistencies and gaps in the prosecution case, the High Court termed the appreciation of evidence by the trial court as perverse and legally unsustainable.

Reiterating the principle that the prosecution must prove its case beyond reasonable doubt, the court held that the accused were entitled to the benefit of doubt.

Consequently, the High Court set aside the conviction and sentence awarded to both appellants and ordered their acquittal. It directed that they be released forthwith, if not required in connection with any other case. (KNC)

Shopian MLA protests exclusion of district from review meeting

Alleges irregularities in health sector

GMK NEWS NETWORK

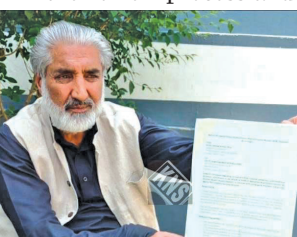
SRINAGAR: Shopian MLA Shabir Ahmad Kullay on Sunday criticised the holding of a review meeting in Pulwama instead of Shopian, alleging that the district was being repeatedly ignored despite being a district headquarters.

Addressing a press conference, Kullay said he had objected to the decision to hold the meeting in Pulwama and maintained that developmental review meetings concerning Shopian should be conducted within the district.

"Shopian is a district headquarters and deserves to host such meetings. There has been no review meeting here for a long

time," he said.

The MLA alleged that elected representatives from Shopian were not given adequate importance in the review process and



claimed that the meeting had assumed a political character.

Kullay said he would continue to raise the issue with the authorities and announced plans to stage a protest. He also said he intended to meet Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to discuss the matter.

"The government should function through institutional mechanisms and respect the mandate of elected representatives," he said.

The MLA also levelled allegations of irregularities in the health sector and claimed that he had approached the Anti-Corruption Bureau seeking an investigation into the matter.

He alleged the involvement of officials from different departments in the purported irregularities and claimed to possess documentary evidence supporting his allegations.

He reiterated his demand for greater attention to developmental issues in Shopian and said he would continue to pursue matters concerning healthcare and infrastructure in the district. (KNS)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

The True Measure Of Amarnath Yatra

When Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav recently touched down in Srinagar to review preparations for the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, his public vote of confidence carried more weight than standard political courtesy. It arrived at a delicate moment. As authorities race against the clock to secure the high-altitude pilgrimage, they are tasked with something far more complex than logistical planning: they are rebuilding public trust in the shadow of last year's tragic attack in Pahalgam. The Amarnath Yatra has never been just a religious pilgrimage. In the modern context, it serves as an annual, high-stakes litmus test for Jammu and Kashmir. It lays bare the reality of the region's security apparatus, the competence of its local administration, and its capacity to host hundreds of thousands of citizens under extraordinary conditions. Every year that passes peacefully does more than just secure a ritual; it chips away at fear, reinforcing Kashmir's foundational identity as a welcoming, stable sanctuary. The success of the Yatra isn't measured solely by the number of devotees who reach the holy cave, but by the resilience of the ecosystem that supports them. Dr. Yadav's public satisfaction with the groundwork is a nod to the massive, often invisible machinery operating behind the scenes. The heavy lifting being directed by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, spanning tight security grids, emergency healthcare, and treacherous mountain logistics, is monumental. Yet, administrative optimism must not mutate into complacency. Furthermore, it is vital to remember that the heartbeat of this Yatra is profoundly local. Beyond the spiritual fervor lies a crucial economic lifeline for the Valley. The pilgrimage feeds thousands of Kashmiri families, from the pony wallahs navigating steep ridges and local hoteliers to transport operators and small shopkeepers. When the Yatra thrives, the local economy breathes. It is a powerful reminder of the deep, historic interdependency that defines the region. Optimism is a welcome asset, but absolute vigilance remains the mandate. The security forces and local stakeholders cannot afford a single blind spot. Ultimately, the hope for enduring peace voiced during this high-profile visit mirrors the quiet, everyday aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. A seamless, secure Amarnath Yatra this year will be more than just a notch in the administration's belt. It will stand as a definitive statement of resilience, stability, and a quiet, renewed faith in the future of the Valley.

Further, it is vital to remember that the heartbeat of this Yatra is profoundly local. Beyond the spiritual fervor lies a crucial economic lifeline for the Valley. The pilgrimage feeds thousands of Kashmiri families, from the pony wallahs navigating steep ridges and local hoteliers to transport operators and small shopkeepers. When the Yatra thrives, the local economy breathes. It is a powerful reminder of the deep, historic interdependency that defines the region. Optimism is a welcome asset, but absolute vigilance remains the mandate. The security forces and local stakeholders cannot afford a single blind spot. Ultimately, the hope for enduring peace voiced during this high-profile visit mirrors the quiet, everyday aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. A seamless, secure Amarnath Yatra this year will be more than just a notch in the administration's belt. It will stand as a definitive statement of resilience, stability, and a quiet, renewed faith in the future of the Valley.

World No-Tobacco Day

Bridging The Gap Between Legislation And Implementation

RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR

The history of World No-Tobacco Day dates back to 1987 when the World Health Organization (WHO) passed a resolution calling for a day dedicated to highlighting the health risks associated with tobacco use. It is observed on May 31st every year to raise awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco use and to promote policies that reduce tobacco consumption. At union and state levels, multiple pieces of legislation have been created to check the unabated use of tobacco and other deleterious and noxious products.

But in public places like hospitals, hotels and restaurants, educational institutions, public transport and playing fields, the reckless and persistent use of tobacco and other unhealthy products is most concerning as well as worrying. In public transport, drivers and conductors are seen smoking, thoughtlessly and irresponsibly not considering its ill effects and adverse impacts. Going back to the history of tobacco, it is asserted that Christopher Columbus, along with his companions, while landing on Tobago island in 1492, found the local people using tobacco leaves for pleasure.

Since then the habit of smoking has spread all over the world, and it has assumed the shape of an industry but at the cost of human health. Researchers have come up with some astonishing facts; according to them, tobacco smoke contains over 4000 chemicals, out of these, 43 are carcinogenic, i.e., cancer-causing, which include some chemicals like polycyclic hydrocarbons. It also contains ammonia, formaldehyde and oxides of carbon, which are thought to be cellular irritants. Carbon monoxide, one of the dangerous culprits reducing the oxygen-carrying capacity of haemoglobin, is also found in tobacco. However, the major component, most harmful and affecting the nervous system of humans, is the Nicotine, which is highly addictive; it enhances heart rate and causes hypertension. Its story doesn't end here; the Tar in tobacco smoke is responsible for causing Lung cancer and smokers are ten times more likely to die from lung cancer



WORLD NO-TOBACCO DAY

than those not smoking.

During pregnancy, smoking can increase the risk of low birth weight and even premature babies. Passive smokers are also at high risk of developing many diseases, and it is here the need to check the smoking at public places arises. It is a silent killer which needs an immediate check. Besides making stringent laws to curb the menace of smoking, through strong campaigning all over the world, people are made aware about the dangerous effects of smoking in the long run. Alongside our elderly people, youngsters are becoming increasingly addictive to smoking, wasting the hard-earned money of their parents in buying costly cigarette packs, completely neglecting the warning lines. "Cigarette smoking is injurious to health" and "Smoking causes Cancer" written in bold letters on each pack.

Smokers, apart from injuring themselves, are an imminent threat to the whole public when smoking is freely allowed at public places. Reports of altercations between smokers and non-smokers have appeared in both electronic and social media in the past, but the non-seriousness of the law-enforcing agencies to ensure full enforcement of these laws has

given them a free hand to put human health at stake. Drivers and conductors are seen smoking in public transport while ferrying dozens of passengers; people dining in hotels and restaurants are enjoying cigarette puffs while dozens of non-smokers are around them, and also a big chunk on shop fronts are relishing hookah without thinking about its chilling effects and disastrous consequences.

To put a blanket ban on the sale and consumption of tobacco and other related products, it is crucial to get the laws implemented at grassroots levels, raising awareness to reduce ignorance among the people and prohibiting children from having easy access to such things both at home and school. Religious clerics, teachers and social activists can play a big role in forbidding local people as well as non-locals from consuming tobacco, Gutkha, Nevla and Paan, the smokeless tobacco products. It isn't out of place to mention here that seminars, debates and awareness camps are conducted each year on No Tobacco Day in educational institutions, health institutions and other places, but to make all our strides effective and result-orientated, collective efforts at the individual and community levels

need to be initiated at the earliest. Studies show that e-cigarette use can increase conventional cigarette uptake, particularly among nonsmoking youth, by nearly 3 times, undermining tobacco control efforts.

World No Tobacco Day 2026 provides an opportunity to highlight how the tobacco and nicotine industry continues to repackage and rebrand its products to attract a new generation – particularly children and adolescents – while attempting to evade stronger tobacco control measures worldwide.

Building on the momentum of the 2025 campaign, World No Tobacco Day 2026 reaffirms WHO's commitment to exposing the evolving strategies of the tobacco and nicotine industry and to advancing policies that protect young people and communities from addiction.

The 2026 campaign aims to:

Expose the industry's strategies – including the use of synthetic nicotine, nicotine salts and analogues designed to enhance addiction potential while being marketed as innovative or even less harmful;

Promote stronger policy action – through bans on flavours, advertising and promotion (including digital and social media), and through stricter regulation of packaging and product design that increase youth appeal; and

Empower youth and the public – by providing knowledge and tools to recognize and resist industry influence and by ensuring access to evidence-based cessation support.

In educational institutions, at morning assembly, awareness regarding ill-effects of smoking and tobacco products can help in disseminating a powerful message to curb this ill practice. So to safeguard human health, instead of hating smokers, we must teach them how smoking is injurious and bad for the health besides imploring and insisting they quit it. Lastly, we all must inculcate a civic sense to discourage smoking at all public places and restrict the sale of tobacco and cigarette products near places where big gatherings are witnessed on a daily basis.

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Is Wedding Season Becoming Kashmir's Quietest Crisis?



DR. RIZWAN RUMI

Across Kashmir today, the slogan of a "Nasha Mukht Kashmir" has emerged as a powerful social movement. Government agencies, religious institutions, educators, civil society groups, and families are collectively raising concern over the alarming rise of drug addiction among youth. Awareness campaigns are being organized in schools, mosques, colleges, and villages. The movement reflects a society trying to protect itself from a danger that silently destroys families, weakens moral foundations, and pushes young lives towards despair. Yet amid this collective struggle against one social evil, another deeply rooted burden continues to grow unchecked within our homes and communities – the increasing complexity, extravagance, and commercialization of marriages in Kashmiri society.

The issue may not appear as visible or alarming as substance abuse, yet its social and psychological consequences are profound. In many households today, marriage is no longer viewed merely as a sacred union between two individuals and families. Instead, it has become an exhausting social project shaped by competition, unnecessary customs, public display, and fear of societal judgment. Families spend years preparing financially for weddings, often sacrificing peace, savings, and emotional stability merely to satisfy expectations created by society itself.

Traditionally, Kashmiri marriages reflected simplicity, warmth, spirituality, and community participation. Ceremonies were rooted in affection and social bonding rather than luxury and status competition. Elders emphasized values, compatibility, and family dignity over external extravagance. Weddings were occasions of joy, not financial anxiety. However, with changing lifestyles, expanding consumer culture, social media influence, and growing materialism, the nature

of marriages has transformed dramatically over the past two decades.

Today, weddings in Kashmir often involve multiple functions spread across several days, extravagant decorations, expensive banquet arrangements, designer clothing, luxury photography, elaborate invitation systems, and customs that place immense pressure on ordinary families. In many cases, families compete with one another not out of genuine desire but out of fear of criticism and comparison. Simplicity, unfortunately, is increasingly misunderstood as weakness or inability.

The financial implications of this trend are severe. According to various national surveys and financial studies conducted across India, weddings constitute one of the largest lifetime expenditures for middle-class families. A report by the investment banking firm Jefferies estimated India's wedding industry to be worth nearly 130 billion dollars annually, making it one of the largest wedding markets in the world after the United States. The average Indian wedding today reportedly costs several times the annual income of a middle-class household. While metropolitan extravagance often dominates media attention, the pressure has deeply penetrated smaller towns and regions including Kashmir.

In Jammu and Kashmir, where unemployment remains a major challenge, the burden becomes even heavier. According to recent government and independent employment data, unemployment among educated youth in Jammu and Kashmir continues to remain significantly high compared to the national average. Thousands of young people struggle for stable income opportunities while families simultaneously face mounting social pressure regarding marriage expenses. For lower and middle-income households, conducting a wedding has increasingly become an economic challenge rather than a joyful milestone.

There are countless families who begin saving for their daughters' weddings from early childhood. Some mortgage land, sell jewelry, take loans, or borrow money from relatives simply to conduct ceremonies considered socially acceptable. The emotional cost attached to this financial burden is often invisible but deeply painful. Parents experience anxiety, stress, humiliation, and emotional exhaustion if they fail to meet social expectations. In some cases, the fear of "what people will say" becomes stronger than practical realities.



Families unable to afford lavish ceremonies often feel socially inferior or excluded. What should be a unifying social institution is gradually becoming a source of silent division and insecurity.

Ironically, many of the customs dominating weddings today are neither religious obligations nor essential cultural necessities. Most are products of social imitation and accumulated expectations over time. Islam strongly advocates simplicity, moderation, and ease in marriage. The teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) repeatedly emphasized that the most blessed marriages are those conducted with simplicity and least burden. Yet despite these teachings, modern society increasingly equates dignity with extravagance.

True cultural preservation does not mean blindly continuing practices that create hardship. Every society evolves by retaining values that promote harmony while abandoning customs that produce suffering. Kashmir itself has a long tradition of social wisdom, community solidarity, and moral consciousness. The same society that now collectively stands against drug abuse possesses the ability to challenge unhealthy marriage customs as well.

A "Sada Shaadi Kashmir" movement is not a call against happiness, celebration, or cultural identity. It is a call for balance, dignity, affordability, and social responsibility. It seeks to restore the original spirit of marriage as a bond of compassion and mutual respect rather than a financial competition. Such a movement would encourage families to prioritize education, stability, and future security over temporary social display.

The role of educated youth becomes especially important in this transformation. Real social change often begins when younger generations question harmful

norms courageously yet respectfully. Religious scholars, teachers, intellectuals, social activists, writers, and community leaders also carry immense responsibility in shaping public consciousness. Awareness campaigns against wasteful customs should become as common as campaigns against social evils like addiction.

Media platforms too must contribute positively. Instead of glorifying extravagant weddings alone, society should celebrate examples of simple and dignified marriages. Stories of modest weddings conducted with grace and mutual understanding should be projected as models of wisdom rather than signs of inadequacy.

At a broader level, simplifying marriages can generate meaningful social benefits. Reduced financial pressure can strengthen household stability, prevent unnecessary debt, encourage timely marriages, reduce class anxiety, and improve emotional well-being within families. It can also redirect financial resources towards education, healthcare, entrepreneurship, and long-term family welfare.

Most importantly, simplicity restores humanity to relationships. A successful marriage is not built upon expensive decorations, luxury halls, or elaborate ceremonies lasting a few days. It is built upon trust, patience, respect, compassion, and shared responsibility – values that no amount of wealth can purchase.

Kashmir today stands at an important social crossroads. The fight against drug abuse reflects society's desire to protect its future generations. Yet alongside this struggle, there is also a need to confront the silent burdens created by harmful social expectations. Just as addictions destroy individuals slowly, social extravagance too weakens families quietly from within.

Perhaps the time has come for society to recognize that real honor does not lie in excessive display but in wisdom, balance, and dignity. A truly progressive society is not one where weddings become larger every year, but one where families live with greater peace, less burden, and stronger human values.

And if Kashmir can dream of becoming "Nasha Mukht," it can also dream of becoming a society where marriages return to simplicity, humanity, and grace.

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■ Beyond The Pad

Dismantling Menstrual Discrimination To Achieve Gender Equality



SHOBHA SHUKLA

This year's Menstrual Hygiene Day, as well as the International Day of Action for Women's Health, is a grim reminder that women's health is far from being a fundamental human right in reality. The writing on the wall is clear: if we are to deliver on the goal of gender equality for all by 2030, we must dismantle deep-rooted stigma, secure bodily autonomy and eliminate period poverty. Menstruation – or a period – is a natural and healthy biological process. Every month, more than two billion people around the world menstruate. But out of these, 500 million people experience period poverty every month – that is, they are unable to afford and access menstrual products, sanitation and hygiene facilities and education and awareness to manage their menstrual health. This interrupts their lives, rights, and freedoms, forcing individuals to miss school or work, compromise their health, and endure stigma simply because they menstruate.

Period-friendly world

This should not be so. We want a "period-friendly world" where menstruation is accepted as a normal, healthy biological process rather than something to hide or be ashamed of. It is a fundamental human right that no one is held back because they menstruate. However, we are living through a poly-crisis - a period defined by the simultaneous and overlapping pressures of inflation, manmade as well as climate-induced disasters, and systemic poverty, alongside deep-rooted cultural stigmas.

This poly-crisis has shifted menstrual hygiene from a basic healthcare right to a financial trade-off, with families increasingly forced to prioritise food and fuel over menstrual products.

Thus, achieving a period-friendly world is becoming radically more complicated today in this anti-rights and anti-gender poly-crisis era.

Climate change, humanitarian crises and menstrual health

According to Rita Widiadana, a gender and health justice advocate, and former editor at the Jakarta Post, in Indonesia, period poverty is driven mostly by financial constraints and inadequate infrastructures. "The

climate crisis worsens the suffering of poor Indonesian women and girls during menstruation. They lose their safe spaces; they lose access to clean water and human dignity while facing increasing health risks. Indonesia faces floods and earthquakes, where women and girls suffer in evacuation centres", said Rita.

For most girls in low-income households sanitary pads are a luxury. With inflation, the price of menstrual pads also increases. Moreover, in Indonesia pads are also subject to 11% value added tax (VAT), making them unaffordable for many, she added.

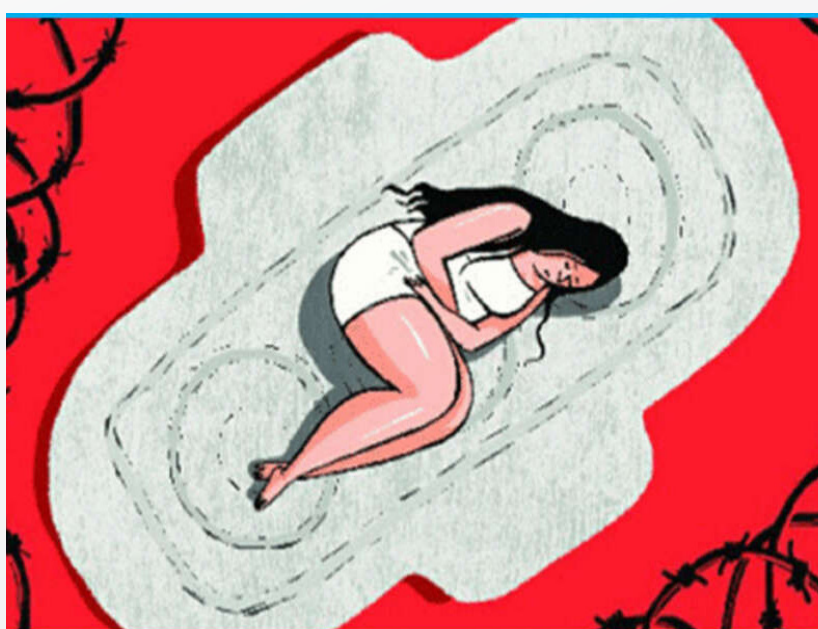
For Joie Cortina, menstrual health and dignity advocate in the Philippines who serves as a programme officer at Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR), "With menstruators from resource poor backgrounds already struggling to afford commodities like food or medicines, crises like climate disasters affect their bodies and wellbeing too, and their ability to make decisions about their bodies to advocate for themselves, to demand essential commodities, including period commodities."

Joie gives the example of summer fires that are rampant in the Philippines. One such fire that recently broke out in an informal settlement in Manila affected 200 families. And when these displaced families were asked what they needed most, one item they mentioned was underwear.

According to Angel Babirye, President, African Youth and Adolescent Network East and Southern Africa (AFRIYAN ESA), and Chief Executive Officer of Us for Girls Foundation, Uganda, the situation is no better in Africa.

"The ground reality for many households is that many menstruators are unable to afford essential menstrual products due to their rising prices. Many families are confronted with the dilemma whether to buy food for the household or menstrual pads. This forces families to end up stretching the menstrual products beyond safe use. For example, if a pad is to be used for 6-8 hours, many use it for longer hours or even for the whole day. Also, menstruating girls and women are often left with no choice but to resort to unsafe alternatives, such as socks, dried dung, among others. All of this increases their susceptibility to acquiring reproductive tract infections. Moreover, girls are forced to miss school when they fail to access menstrual products timely."

Angel added that in climate crisis situations, like drought, even re-useable menstrual products cannot be used due to water scarcity. This lack of access to clean water doubles



the challenge for girls and women as they cannot clean and re-use these menstrual products and cannot clean their bodies - this heightens their risk of reproductive tract infections.

Menstrual dignity and menstrual discrimination

Menstrual dignity is the fundamental human right to manage one's menstrual cycle safely, comfortably and free from shame and discrimination. For Radha Paudel, a nurse and activist for dignified menstruation in Nepal, and founder of Global South Coalition for Dignified Menstruation, dignified menstruation is rooted in the right to dignity, right to freedom, right to equality, right to non-discrimination and human right to health. It means no matter where the menstruating persons are - whether in an evacuation camp or refugee camp or camps of the war affected population, or climate or manmade disaster relief camps, we need to prioritise their needs.

Menstrual discrimination, on the other hand, is a range of perceptions and practices, which includes silence, taboos, shame, stigma, restrictions, abuse, violence, and deprivation from resources and services that are associated with menstruation throughout the life cycle of menstruators in all their diversities. It is a form of sexual and gender-based violence and a violation of human rights. We must go beyond ensuring basic hygiene by addressing the emotional, social, and economic barriers faced by women, girls, and gender-diverse people.

Radha Paudel vehemently challenges menstrual discrimination which is widespread in various forms

and asserts that it plays a vital role in reinforcing patriarchy and its unequal power relations, and exclusion.

Radha asserts that, "Beyond the issues of distribution or accessibility of menstrual pads we need to think about menstruators as human beings - be they persons with disabilities or gender diverse peoples. Because of menstrual discrimination, the menstruators may consider themselves as inferior, powerless and vulnerable whereas non-menstruators consider themselves as superior, powerful, and in control. We need to acknowledge the complex and multifaceted nature of menstrual discrimination. Menstruating girls and women face these discriminations at homes, in the education system, and all along."

"We need to seriously incorporate the dignified menstruation in all health, education, information, and behavioural change communication. We have to understand that menstruation is life-affirming rather than a source of shame or impurity."

Without having bodily autonomy or without being able to practice dignified menstruation at an individual and family level, how can menstruators say "no to child marriage", or say "no to unsafe sex", or "seek safe abortion services" when needed, wonders Radha.

"If we really want to ensure dignified menstruation, we need to realise that it is not only our right to dignity, but it is a composite outcome of the right to dignity, right to freedom, right to equality and right to non-discrimination", she added. Radha, Joie Rita and Angel were speaking at the SHE & Rights session.

We want a "period-friendly world" where menstruation is accepted as a normal, healthy biological process rather than something to hide or be ashamed of. It is a fundamental human right that no one is held back because they menstruate.

And as Angel says, we need to realise that periods do not stop during wars or humanitarian crisis situations. That is why it is essential to integrate menstrual health in disaster preparedness plans. Menstrual health must not come as an 'afterthought' when we are struck with disasters or crisis situations. It is not just about access to menstrual pads; it is also about access to clean water, privacy and other essential needs of girls and women to feel safe and dignified.

Shobha Shukla is a feminist, health and development justice advocate. She can be mailed at bobbyramakant@gmail.com

■ Parents Day

Relearning The Sacred Art Of Raising Humans



LALIT GARG

In every civilization, the story of humanity begins not in institutions, scriptures, or systems, but in the sacred space of a family. Before a child learns language, religion, philosophy, or success, the child first learns love through the mother's embrace and trust through the father's presence. Parents are not merely biological creators; they are the first spiritual architects of human consciousness. Modern life often measures success through wealth, status, and achievements. Yet the deepest foundations of a meaningful life are laid much earlier—within the quiet lessons, values, and invisible sacrifices of parents. They become the first school, the first temple, and the first living scripture that a child encounters.

Ancient Indian wisdom beautifully expresses this truth: Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava—"Let the mother be revered as divine, let the father be revered as divine." This is not merely a cultural statement; it is a profound spiritual insight. Divinity is first experienced in the compassion of a mother and the guidance of a father.



GLOBAL DAY OF PARENTS

A mother does not simply nurture a child's body; she shapes sensitivity, empathy, tenderness, and emotional intelligence. Her silent endurance becomes the child's first lesson in love without conditions. The father, in his own way, becomes the symbol of strength, responsibility, discipline, and vision. Together, they create not only a home but a sacred ecosystem where character blossoms. Parenthood, in its highest form, is a spiritual practice.

A true parent is not one who merely raises successful children, but one who awakens goodness within them. They sow seeds of kindness, gratitude, humility, forgiveness, and compassion. They teach that life is not about possession but purpose; not about competition but contribution. In today's fast-moving world, families are increasingly surrounded by noise—technology, ambition, speed, and endless distract-

tions. Yet children still seek what they have always sought: presence, listening, affection, and values. Material comforts may decorate life, but only emotional and spiritual nourishment gives it depth. Parents become creators of joy when they consciously bring spirituality into everyday living. Not through sermons, but through lived examples.

A family prayer before meals, a moment of silence together, reading inspiring literature, expressing gratitude at the end of the day, celebrating kindness, encouraging service, or simply spending time in heartfelt conversations—these small practices become transformative spiritual experiments. They create emotional harmony and inner richness. Children do not inherit values through instructions; they absorb them through observation. If parents live with bal-

"This is not merely a cultural statement; it is a profound spiritual insight. Divinity is first experienced in the compassion of a mother and the guidance of a father."

ance, children learn peace. If parents practice compassion, children learn humanity. If parents embody integrity, children learn character. Thus, parenting becomes an act of silent transmission.

The great spiritual traditions of the world repeatedly affirm that the family is the cradle of civilization. A harmonious society cannot emerge from fragmented homes. Peace in the world begins with peace in relationships; peace in relationships begins with respect; and respect begins at home. Parents are therefore not only

builders of families—they are builders of the future. Yet spirituality also invites another beautiful understanding: parents themselves must continue evolving. Age should not become a burden of memories but a celebration of wisdom. They must remain learners, seekers, and creators of joy. A joyful parent transmits hope; a peaceful parent radiates stability. The later years of life are not meant for withdrawal from meaning but for flowering into deeper awareness. Elderhood can become a season of inner fulfillment, reflection, creativity, and guidance.

Every parent carries within them an unwritten scripture of experience. Their journeys, struggles, sacrifices, and victories become invaluable wisdom for future generations. When families listen to their elders, they do not merely hear stories—they inherit consciousness. World Parents Day is therefore more than an occasion of gratitude. It is an invitation to rediscover the sacredness of parenthood. Parents are not shadows standing behind us; they are roots beneath us. They teach us how to walk, but more importantly, they teach us how to live. In an age searching for mental peace, emotional balance, and spiritual fulfillment, perhaps humanity needs to return once again to its oldest wisdom—that a loving family is not merely a social unit; it is a spiritual sanctuary. And parents are its silent lamps, illuminating life with love, values, and grace.

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ISI asks OGWs to infiltrate national parties to evade crackdown

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: In a move aimed at evading security crackdown and investigation into terror incidents, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) has asked its established network of Over Ground Workers (OGWs) in Jammu and Kashmir to infiltrate mainstream national political parties, officials said on Sunday.

The ISI is also trying to recalibrate its strategy by making desperate attempts to revive dormant, locally-founded terror outfits from the early 1990s to give an "indigenous colour" to terrorist violence and mask the direct involvement by Pakistan, which is facing constant monitoring by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) -- the global watchdog on money laundering and terror financing.

According to officials of the central security agencies, recent interrogation of OGWs arrested by Srinagar police showed that some of them were part of national political parties.

By embedding terror sympathisers, who provide critical logistical support, recruitment and funding to terror outfits, in legitimate political structures, the ISI hopes to shield its assets from the ongoing operations by security forces.

The officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said that the strategy stems from a sense of desperation and explained that the ISI is running out of options because their conventional terror groups are under intense pressure from security forces and the local support base for newer proxy outfits has shrunk significantly.

By trying to resurrect old names and blending their workers into mainstream politics, they are attempting to capitalise on a historical narrative to lure a new generation of youth while buying political immunity for their operatives.

According to officials, when an OGW is cornered during cordon and search operations, they often attempt to flash basic membership cards of national political parties in a futile bid to escape the dragnet.

Security officials have noted that this tactic has evolved over the decades as suspects routinely used voter identity cards to evade police in the late 1990s, and later tried to use Aadhar cards to dodge deep investigations.

The officials made it clear that no political leadership has ever stepped in to save such people.

In a related development, the OGW activities have been seen in reviving outfits that had become

largely defunct after 1993.

The security agencies are now closely tracking the resurfacing of names of terror groups that defined the initial, bloody phase of the Jammu and Kashmir terror in the 1990s and early 2000s, including Al-Umar Mujahideen, Al Badr and Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen.

By attempting to revive these older, home-grown banners, the ISI aims to project a false narrative that the terror violence in Jammu and Kashmir is an internal, home-grown movement rather than a proxy war orchestrated from across the border, the officials said.

While the high command of these revived terror groups remains safely sheltered in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, their ground-level networks are attempting to become active in propaganda, funding and radicalisation, they said.

The officials said that central intelligence agencies are maintaining a tight vigil on these developments and ensuring neutralisation of the logistical networks being spun by these resurfaced OGWs.

At the same time, they are aggressively combating the ideological subversion of youths by terror sympathisers as it will be critical in sustaining the hard-earned peace and stability in the region.

NIT Srinagar's SANGAM-3.0 concludes at Gulmarg

MLA Farooq Shah Calls for Stronger Alumni Engagement, Investment in Education

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The third edition of the global alumni reunion, SANGAM-3.0, concluded at Gulmarg on Sunday with a special networking and interaction session, bringing to a close three days of celebrations, discussions and renewed engagement between alumni and their alma mater.

The event was organised by the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar in collaboration with the Alumni Association, REC/NIT Srinagar.

The concluding session at the Golf Club Gulmarg witnessed enthusiastic participation from distinguished alumni, faculty members, administrators, and guests from across the country.

The event was hosted by alumnus and MLA Gulmarg, Er. Farooq Ahmad Shah, who welcomed the alumni fraternity and appreciated NIT Srinagar's efforts to reconnect generations of graduates through a vibrant alumni platform.

Among those present were Babu Lal Juneja, Chairman, SKD University Rajasthan; Ashwani Kumar, Rajasthan; Social activist

Tasneem Akhter; Nouman Ajaz Wawa, Director, TRM Institute; Er. Ambreena Anjum, Superintendent Engineer, Jal Shakti Department; Dr. Mehboob Makhdoomi (University of WathHarbor), CEO Gulmarg Development Authority (GDA) Tariq Hussain Naik (JKAS), and G.N. Var, President, Private Schools Association J&K.

Addressing the gathering, MLA Gulmarg, Farooq Ahmad Shah (IAS Retd.) described NIT Srinagar as one of Northern India's premier technical institutions that has produced generations of engineers, scientists, administrators, entrepreneurs and innovators who have made significant contributions to nation-building.

Calling SANGAM-3.0 more than an alumni reunion, MLA Shah said it was a celebration of shared experiences, lifelong friendships and collective commitment towards institutional growth.

"The values and relationships built during our days at REC Srinagar played a defining role in shaping our professional journeys," he said.

He urged alumni to deepen

their engagement with the institute through mentorship programmes, scholarships, research collaborations, industry partnerships and career opportunities for students.

MLA Gulmarg Shah also encouraged successful alumni and entrepreneurs to invest in higher education, skill development, and innovation initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir to generate employment and strengthen the region's human resource base.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia, said the successful conclusion of SANGAM-3.0 reflected the strength of the institute's global alumni network.

"Our alumni are our greatest ambassadors. The overwhelming response witnessed during the last three days demonstrates the enduring bond that graduates continue to share with the institute. Their mentorship, expertise and support remain invaluable for the growth of NIT Srinagar," he said.

Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman described SANGAM-3.0 as a landmark initiative aimed at building a sustainable

and active alumni ecosystem.

"The reunion provided an excellent platform for alumni from different generations to reconnect, exchange ideas and contribute to the institute's future growth. We witnessed meaningful interactions, academic discussions and several collaborative proposals during the programme," he said.

President of the Alumni Association REC/NIT Srinagar, Er. Malay Chatterjee said the event had further strengthened ties between alumni and the institute.

"The alumni community remains committed to supporting the institute through student mentoring, industry linkages, innovation support and creating opportunities for young graduates. SANGAM-3.0 has opened new avenues for meaningful engagement," he said.

Dean Alumni and International Affairs Prof. M.A. Shah said the reunion successfully reconnected alumni with their departments, faculty members and fellow graduates while inspiring students through interactions with accomplished professionals and administrators.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

CM Omar Won't Resign

chair. God forbid, if Jammu & Kashmir gets Hill Council on the pattern of Ladakh, and Omar becomes an executive councillor, he still wouldn't resign from that position," Sharma said.

He added that there is no question of resignation from a family he described as "power-hungry," alleging that they "got 50,000 Kashmiris killed for their chair." "They (NC) are saying they are ready to settle for J&K's position lower than UT status, provided there is no reduction in their cavalcade of 12 vehicles or protocol," Sharma said.

The Leader of Opposition further accused the NC and PDP of running a "so-called movement" to keep "incompetent princes and princesses of two families" in power.

"They bled Jammu & Kashmir for 36 hours to save their chairs," he said.

On the CM's upcoming meeting with MLAs, Sharma claimed that Omar Abdullah is attempting to ensure that infighting within the party does not spill into the public domain. (KNO)

CM Omar Takes

government to discuss matters of collective importance.

Reacting to Sharma's comments, Omar Abdullah said that those with actual knowledge of the meeting were not speaking publicly, while those making the most noise were sitting in the opposition.

Taking to the micro-blogging platform X (formerly Twitter), the Chief Minister wrote: "I love how the people who know the least about the meeting I've called with my MLAs are talking the most."

Remember one thing — those who know don't speak, and those who speak sit in the opposition."Drug awareness campaign

Earlier, senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma had described the June 3 meeting as "a last attempt to save a sinking ship."

"Our Chief Minister has convened an emergency meeting on June 3. I think this is the last attempt to save NC's sinking ship," Sharma had claimed.

J&K Hajj Pilgrims

their families during the pilgrimage. The pilgrims said Hajj travellers had historically been allowed to carry 40 kilograms of luggage and questioned why the policy had changed this year.

"We have been preparing for months and bought gifts and essentials for our families back home. Now, suddenly, we are being told that most of our luggage will come separately by road. We are worried our belongings may get damaged or delayed," said one of the pilgrims. Kashmir handicrafts online

Another pilgrim said that for years, Hajis were allowed to carry 40 kilograms of baggage. "Every year, the policy changes, and this creates confusion and stress for elderly pilgrims. We request authorities to restore the previous allowance or ensure the luggage reaches safely

and quickly," he said.

Responding to the concerns, JK Hajj Committee Chief Executive Officer Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi said that the restrictions were linked to the ongoing runway maintenance work at Srinagar International Airport.

"As per our Hajj guidelines and the training provided to pilgrims, the normal allowance is 40 kilograms of check-in baggage plus 7 kilograms of hand baggage. However, due to the runway maintenance at Srinagar Airport and the NOTAM issued from April till October, operational limitations were imposed this year," Qureshi said. Jammu and Kashmir government

He said that during the outbound Hajj flights, pilgrims from Srinagar embarkation were allowed to carry 25 kilograms of check-in baggage along with 7 kilograms of hand baggage.

"We allowed 25 kilograms plus 7 kilograms during departure, but when we reviewed the average luggage carried by pilgrims, it was only around 18 kilograms," he said.

Dr Qureshi said the return flights of Hajj pilgrims to Jammu Kashmir are scheduled to begin from June 2.

"Akasa Airlines is operating Hajj flights for four embarkation points, including Srinagar, Ahmedabad, Cochin and Bangalore. Across all these embarkations, the airline has now reduced baggage carriage to 35 kilograms plus 7 kilograms due to technical and operational issues," he said. Kashmir politics coverage

The CEO, however, said Srinagar embarkation faces additional limitations because aircraft cannot land with a heavy load while the runway maintenance work continues.

"Because of the ongoing repairs, aircraft operating to Srinagar will not be able to carry the full baggage load. Therefore, 30 kilograms of luggage belonging to each pilgrim will be transported separately by road from Ahmedabad to Srinagar," he added.

The Haj Committee CEO said pilgrims returning to Srinagar will only be permitted to carry 5 kilograms of check-in baggage and 7 kilograms of hand baggage on board the flight, while the remaining baggage will reach Kashmir separately within a few days.

"Zamzam water has already arrived in Srinagar, and it will be distributed to pilgrims at the airport after arrival," he said. Kashmir handicrafts online

Qureshi acknowledged the concerns of pilgrims who have purchased gifts and other items for their families and said efforts would be made to ensure the luggage reaches Srinagar within three to four days.

"Pilgrims requested that the baggage should remain with them, but they still have a 12-kilogram allowance on the flight. If they are carrying any perishable or important items, they should keep those with them while travelling to Srinagar," he said. (KNO)

PoK Youth Crosses

During that period, officials said, Mir connected on Snapchat with Irum Bano, a resi-

dent of Tulwari village in Uri. The online interaction developed into a close emotional bond, especially after the two learned that Mir's ancestors originally came from the same border village where Bano lives.

Mir shared his personal struggles with Bano, who encouraged him to seek a different future, officials said. Investigators said the two discussed a plan for Mir to cross the Line of Control and surrender to the army. Mir believed he would serve any sentence for illegal entry and then try to reclaim ancestral property before settling permanently in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mir crossed the LoC on Saturday night but was intercepted before he could proceed further, officials said. After his apprehension, Bano was also questioned to verify his account. She appealed to the army and local administration for leniency, asking that Mir be allowed to remain in India rather than be deported.

Security agencies continue to verify the narrative and rule out external influence or manipulation before deciding on legal action.

The army's Srinagar-based Chinar Corps confirmed the apprehension in a post on X, stating that troops exercised restraint. "A PoJK intruder has been apprehended, who was intercepted by alert Chinar Warriors while crossing the Line of Control in Uri Sector. The vigilant troops maintained restraint while challenging the intruder and surgically apprehended the individual. Intruder handed over to JKP for further legal proceedings," the post said. The individual was handed over to Jammu and Kashmir Police for further proceedings.

Many families in border districts have relatives in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and cross-LoC marriages have historically been common in several frontier areas. The investigation remains ongoing.

Army Foils Exfiltration

inimical intent along with their accomplice guide. Further probe is underway," the Army said.

In a separate statement, the Chinar Corps said that a PoJK intruder was also apprehended after being intercepted while crossing the Line of Control in the Uri sector.

According to the Army, alert troops challenged the intruder and apprehended him without causing harm.

"A PoJK intruder has been apprehended, who was intercepted by alert Chinar Warriors while crossing the Line of Control in Uri Sector. The vigilant troops maintained restraint while challenging the intruder and surgically apprehended the individual. The intruder has been handed over to Jammu and Kashmir Police for further legal proceedings," the Army said.

The incidents come amid heightened security measures along the Line of Control, with security agencies continuing investigations into both cases. (JKNS)

General NS Raja Subramani

next CDS on May 9. He will also serve

as Secretary, Department of Military Affairs, Government of India, from the date of assuming office.

Before taking over as CDS, General Raja Subramani served as Military Adviser at the National Security Council Secretariat. He earlier held key appointments, including Vice Chief of the Army Staff and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Central Command.

Commissioned into the 8th Battalion of the Garhwal Rifles in December 1985, the officer has served in a wide range of operational, command and instructional roles over a distinguished military career spanning more than four decades.

He has commanded formations in counter-insurgency operations in Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, and along strategic sectors of the country's borders, besides leading the Army's premier strike corps on the Western Front.

For his distinguished service, General NS Raja Subramani has been conferred with the Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Sena Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal, according to the Ministry of Defence. (JKNS)

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Prez, Guv can dismiss employee without inquiry on Cabinet advice: High Court

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court has held that the President or a Governor can dismiss a government employee without holding a departmental inquiry where, acting on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers, they are satisfied that such an inquiry is not expedient in the interest of the security of the State.

The ruling came as a Division Bench of Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Sanjay Parihar allowed an appeal filed by the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir and restored the dismissal of a police constable accused of having terrorist links, setting aside a 2011 Single Judge order that had quashed his removal from service.

The Bench said the satisfaction contemplated under Section 126(2)(c) of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, which corresponds to Article 311(2)(c) of the Constitution of India, is "not personal satisfaction but the satisfaction of the Head of the State or Government acting on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers".

"For the application of clause (c), the satisfaction of the President or the Governor, as stated above, is not personal satisfaction but the satisfaction of the Head of the State or Government acting on the aid and advice

of the Council of Ministers," the court said.

The court added that such satisfaction regarding the expediency of holding an inquiry is final and that the President or Governor is "not supposed to disclose the facts on which it is based either to the civil servant concerned or to any authority".

The case arose from the dismissal of Ghulam Mohammad Tantray, a police constable who was arrested in 2004 in connection with a case registered at Police Station Zadibal, Srinagar, under Section 120-B RPC and provisions of the Arms Act. Departmental proceedings were initially started against him, but the government subsequently invoked Section 126(2)(c) and dismissed him from service on the ground that his activities were prejudicial to the security of the State.

Tantray challenged the dismissal before the High Court. In 2011, a Single Judge set aside the order, holding that the government had not disclosed sufficient reasons for abandoning the departmental inquiry midway and resorting to the constitutional exception.

Allowing the government's appeal, the Division Bench held that the writ court had failed to examine the material available on record and described the earlier judgment as "sketchy and seriously flawed".

The Bench, said the constitutional position was well settled that while a government servant ordinarily cannot be dismissed, removed or reduced in rank without a departmental inquiry, Article 311(2)(c) creates an exception where an inquiry may be dispensed with in the interest of the security of the State.

Explaining the scope of the provision, the court observed that the expression "security of the State" cannot be given a narrow meaning. "The security of the State in clause (c) is not confined to the security of the whole State, nor is it confined to armed rebellion or revolt; it may be open or clandestine," the Bench said.

It further observed that "disaffection in armed, paramilitary, or police forces is an act that affects the security of the State".

"The involvement of the Government machinery, particularly of those serving in security forces like the J&K Police, in subversive activities aimed at disintegrating the country undoubtedly affects the security of the State," the court said.

The Bench relied on decisions of the Supreme Court, including *Shamsher Singh v State of Punjab*, *Union of India v Tulsiram Patel* and *A.K. Kaul v Union of India*, to hold that constitutional powers under Article 311(2)(c) are exercised by the Presi-

dent or Governor on ministerial advice and not in their personal capacity.

Referring to *Tulsiram Patel*, the High Court noted that the President or Governor may dispense with an inquiry if they are satisfied that holding one would not be "advantageous or fit or proper or suitable or politic in the interest of the security of the State".

The Bench also clarified that while orders passed under Article 311(2)(c) are subject to judicial review, the scope of such review is limited.

Quoting Supreme Court precedent, the court said judicial review would be available where the satisfaction of the President or Governor is vitiated by mala fides or based on wholly extraneous or irrelevant considerations.

At the same time, it stressed that courts cannot examine the adequacy of the material relied upon by the government or sit in judgment over questions of policy and expediency.

"Courts do not sit in appeal over the sufficiency of material upon which the competent authority draws its satisfaction," the Bench observed.

Examining the record, the court found that material had been placed before the Cabinet showing that the respondent had allegedly established contact

with a Pakistani militant, arranged a hideout for him and that searches conducted during the investigation had led to recovery of two hand grenades from his rented accommodation.

The judgment records that a committee headed by the then Chief Secretary had examined the matter and that the Home Department subsequently prepared a detailed memorandum for consideration by the Cabinet.

According to the memorandum, a regular inquiry was considered inexpedient because the employee allegedly had militancy-related connections, witnesses might not come forward to depose against him for fear of reprisals, and inquiry officers could face threats to their lives, families and property.

The Cabinet approved the proposal and recommended action under Section 126(2)(c), following which the matter was placed before the Governor.

Holding that the material before the government justified the invocation of the constitutional provision, the Bench said there was "no warrant or justification" for interference with the dismissal order.

Allowing the appeal, the court set aside the Single Judge's judgment and dismissed the writ petition filed by the former constable. (KDC)

HC upholds regularisation of 17 forest dept workers

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: In a significant relief to long-serving daily wage and ad hoc workers, the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has upheld the regularisation of 17 employees engaged by the Forest Department, dismissing two petitions filed by the Union Territory administration challenging orders passed by the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT).

According to the details available, a Division Bench comprising Justice Sindhu Sharma and Justice Shahzad Azeem observed that the government cannot continue to avail the services of workers for decades and later deny them regularisation by terming their engagement as temporary, seasonal or need-based.

The court held that such practices amount to exploitation of labour and are contrary to the principles expected from a welfare State. It emphasized that the State cannot evade its responsibilities by using technical classifications after benefiting from the services of workers over long periods.

The case pertained to 16 daily-rated workers of the Eco Task Force Division, Jammu, and one employee, Ghulam Mohi-Ud-Din Malik, who had served as

a Mali in the Forest Division, Doda. The CAT had earlier directed their regularisation after finding that they had rendered uninterrupted service for several years.

In the case of the 16 workers, the Tribunal relied on official records, including muster rolls, service certificates and duty registers, to establish that they had worked continuously for nearly 25 to 30 years. The High Court noted that these records were not disputed by the department.

The Forest Department had argued that the workers were engaged only on a need basis and not against sanctioned posts. It also contended that earlier regularisation schemes had ceased to exist following recent policy changes.

Rejecting the contention, the Bench observed that the very fact that the workers had been continuously engaged for decades demonstrated the permanent nature of the work being performed. The court said the government cannot shield itself behind labels such as tem-

porary or need-based to deny legitimate benefits to employees.

The court further remarked that a "hire and fire" approach undermines the dignity of labour, creates uncertainty and defeats the objectives of public employment.

In a separate but connected matter, the High Court also upheld the CAT's order directing the regularisation of Ghulam Mohi-Ud-Din Malik as Mali with effect from January 1, 2002, along with all consequential service benefits.

According to official records, Malik had been associated with the Forest Department since 1991-92 and continued to discharge duties for over three decades. The court noted that departmental documents themselves acknowledged his long service and the fact that he had crossed the age limit while awaiting regularisation.

Relying on recent Supreme Court rulings, the High Court held that public authorities cannot perpetuate prolonged ad hoc employment by merely assigning temporary designations to workers performing permanent duties. Finding no merit in the petitions, the court dismissed both cases and upheld the regularisation benefits granted to all 17 employees. (JKNS)



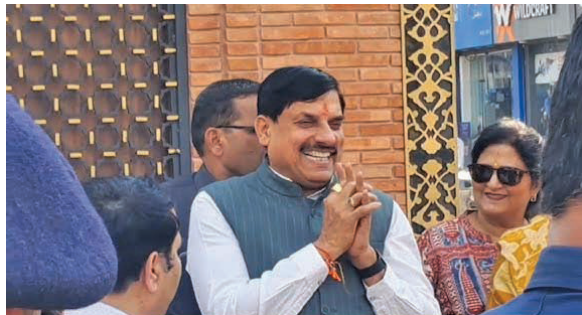
Madhya Pradesh CM visits Lal Chowk, Voices optimism over Kashmir situation

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav on Sunday expressed optimism over the prevailing situation in Kashmir and satisfaction with preparations for the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, saying extensive efforts were being made to ensure a safe and secure pilgrimage.

The remarks came amid preparations for the annual pilgrimage, with authorities focusing on security and logistical arrangements following last year's Pahalgam attack.

Talking to reporters during his visit to Lal Chowk in Srinagar, Yadav said he met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and discussed various issues related to the forthcoming



Amarnath Yatra.

Referring to the security situation, the Chief Minister said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had taken several steps to restore normalcy following last year's tragedy in Pahalgam.

He said Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha was also actively working to ensure that the pilgrimage remained safe and secure for devotees.

"The way arrangements are being made are quite

satisfying," Yadav told reporters.

The Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister also expressed hope regarding peace and normalcy in Kashmir while emphasizing the importance of smooth conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

Yadav visited Lal Chowk during his Srinagar tour and interacted with media persons on issues relating to Kashmir and the Amarnath Yatra. (KNT)

Admiral Krishna Swaminathan assumes charge as Navy chief

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Sunday assumed charge as Chief of the Naval Staff. He succeeds Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, who superannuated after 41 years of distinguished service.

Admiral Krishna Swaminathan was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 01 July 1987. A Communication and Electronic Warfare specialist, he has held a wide range of operational, staff and training appointments during a distinguished career spanning nearly four decades. Admiral Swaminathan's sea commands include the guided missile vessels INS Vidyut and INS Vinash, guided missile corvette INS Kulish, guided missile destroyer INS Mysore and aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya.

On promotion to the rank of Rear Admiral, he was served as the Chief Staff Officer (Training) at Headquarters, Southern Naval Command, Kochi. He was subsequently appointed as Flag Officer Sea Training and later commanded the Western Fleet, the Sword Arm of



the Indian Navy. Subsequently, he was appointed as Flag Officer Offshore Defence Advisory Group and Advisor, Offshore Security and Defence to the Government of India.

On promotion to the rank of Vice Admiral, he tenanted the appointments of Chief of Staff, Western Naval Command; and Controller Personnel Services, Chief of Personnel and Vice Chief of the Naval Staff at Naval Headquarters. Prior assuming charge as the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Swaminathan was the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the prestigious Western Naval Command.

He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla; Joint Servic-

es Command and Staff College, Shrivenham, United Kingdom; College of Naval Warfare, Karanja; and the United States Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. His academic qualifications include a BSc degree from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; MSc in Telecommunications from Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi; MA in Defence Studies from King's College, London; MPhil in Strategic Studies from Mumbai University; and a PhD in International Studies from Mumbai University.

Admiral Krishna Swaminathan is a recipient of the Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal for distinguished service.

Minor killed, father injured in hit-and-run incident at Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: A minor was killed while his father sustained injuries after they were allegedly hit by an unknown Tata Mobile vehicle in a hit-and-run incident at Arihal area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Sunday.

Officials said that the victims were shifted to District Hospital Pulwama following the accident.

The injured has been identified as Altaf Ahmed Shergoiji, son of Gulzar Ahmed Shergoiji, aged about 30 years and a resident of Arihal, who sus-

tained head injuries in the incident.

The deceased has been identified as Eeman Altaf, son of Altaf Ahmed Shergoiji and a resident of Arihal, who also suffered serious head trauma.

Doctors at District Hospital Pulwama declared Eeman Altaf brought dead on arrival, while Altaf Ahmed was admitted for treatment and remains under observation, officials said.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance of the incident and launched an investigation into the matter. (JKNS)

Delegation Led by BJP District President B'la Calls on LG Sinha



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A delegation of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders from Baramulla, led by District President Gh. Hussain Dar, called on Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, and submitted a detailed memorandum highlighting several important public issues and developmental demands concerning Baramulla district.

The delegation comprised District Minority Morcha President Amanjeet Singh, District Yuva Morcha President Shafqat Abdullah, Haji Muham-

mad Muzaffar, and social activist Mushtaq Hussain Wani.

During the meeting, the delegation urged LG Sinha to intervene and ensure the timely resolution of various issues affecting the people of Baramulla.

The BJP leaders also expressed their gratitude to the Lieutenant Governor for the successful conduct of the Mega Padyatra under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, which has played a vital role in spreading awareness against drug abuse and mobilizing public participation, particularly among

the youth, towards building a drug-free society in Baramulla.

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha patiently heard the concerns and demands raised by the delegation and assured them that all genuine public issues and developmental demands would be examined and addressed on priority.

The BJP leaders thanked the Lieutenant Governor for granting them an audience and appreciated his continued commitment towards the development, welfare, and progress of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

India, US discuss defence cooperation and advancing strategic interests in Indo-Pacific

IANS

SINGAPORE: Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh held a meeting with House Armed Services Committee Member Pat Harrigan, who led a bipartisan US Congressional Delegation (CODEL), in Singapore on Sunday, with discussions held on regional security, expanding defence cooperation, and advancing shared strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific.

In a post on social media platform X, the Ministry of Defence's Directorate of Public Relations, said, "Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh held productive discussions with Member, House Armed Services Committee Pat

Harrigan, who led a bipartisan US Congressional Delegation (CODEL)."

"The interaction reaffirmed the strength of the India-US defence partnership, with exchanges on regional security, expanding defence cooperation, and advancing shared strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific," it added.

Rajesh Kumar Singh is currently on an official visit to Singapore to attend the Shangri-La Dialogue.

During the Dialogue, the decision-makers from across the Asia-Pacific, North America, Europe, the Middle East and beyond to gather together to discuss the most pressing regional security issues and share policy responses

Earlier on Sunday, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh held a meeting with Defence Ministers of New Zealand and Singapore on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue, with discussions focused on strengthening bilateral ties, enhancing maritime cooperation, advancing information-sharing mechanisms.

Sharing details regarding the meeting, the Ministry of Defence said, "The engagements focused on strengthening bilateral defence ties, enhancing maritime cooperation, advancing information-sharing mechanisms, and reaffirming a shared commitment to a secure, stable and inclusive Indo-Pacific."

Dubai-based Indian banker Shradha Gupta conquers Mount Everest, the world's highest peak

IANS

NEW DELHI: Indian mountaineer Shradha Gupta has successfully summited Mount Everest (8,849 metres) — the highest point on Earth — completing one of the most demanding achievements in high-altitude climbing. The ascent was undertaken with Elite Expeditions, the company founded by record-breaking mountaineer Nirmal Purja.

The summit marks the most significant milestone yet in Gupta's rapidly rising mountaineering career, which has taken her from recreational hiking in Dubai to the summit of the world's highest mountain in just three years.

Gupta's Everest ascent follows her historic summit of Mount Manaslu (8,163 metres) — the world's eighth-highest mountain — on September 26, 2025. That climb marked her entry into the elite world of 8,000-metre mountaineering and established her as one of India's emerging names in endurance climbing.

Everest, standing at 8,849 metres above sea level in the Himalayas on the Nepal-Tibet border, is the ultimate objective for high-altitude mountaineers worldwide. The summit sits deep in what climbers call the



'death zone' — the altitude above 8,000 metres where oxygen levels fall to a third of those at sea level, and the human body begins to deteriorate faster than it can recover.

Before her Himalayan expeditions, Gupta had already completed three of the famed Seven Summits — the highest peaks on each continent. She summited Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 metres) in Africa, Mount Elbrus (5,642 metres) in Europe, and Aconcagua (6,961 metres) in South America, in addition to completing the trek to Everest Base Camp.

Her progression from the Seven Summits to the 8,000-metre peaks reflects a deliberate, disciplined approach to high-altitude mountaineering — building altitude experience, technical skill, and physiological acclimatisation step by step before taking on the world's most demanding terrain.

Gujarat farm labourer's daughter Kajal Vaja sprints to silver at Asian U-20 Athletics Championships

SIANS

GANDHINAGAR: Gujarat's rising sprint star Kajal Vaja has once again demonstrated that determination, discipline, and relentless hard work can propel athletes from humble beginnings to the international podium.

The 19-year-old sprinter from Chorwad village in Junagadh district played a pivotal role in India's silver medal-winning performance in the women's 4x100m relay at the 22nd Asian U-20 Athletics Championships in Hong Kong on Sunday.

Representing India alongside Bhavna (Tamil Nadu), Arti (Haryana), and Nipam (Uttar Pradesh), Kajal helped the quartet clock an impressive 45.05 seconds to claim the silver medal while rewriting the national U-20 record. The Indian team surpassed the previous national mark of 45.08 seconds, showcasing exceptional speed, teamwork, and baton exchanges on the continental stage.

Kajal's achievement is particularly inspiring considering her modest background. Her father, Hirabhai Vaja, works as a farm labourer in coastal Chorwad village in Junagadh district. Despite financial challenges, Kajal remained focused on her athletics career and made significant sacrifices to pursue her sporting ambitions.

Determined to give her best on the track, she took



a drop year in Class 12 to focus on her training and preparation for the competition, and her dedication ultimately paid off.

"Kajal showed a passion for sports from her school days and consistently excelled in competitions," recalls her uncle, Manthan Dabhi.

Her coach, Shivam Upadhyay, attributes the achievement to Kajal's unwavering commitment to training and her hunger for excellence.

"Kajal is one of the most promising young sprinters in the country. She has represented Gujarat with distinction and won numerous medals in the 100m, 200m, and relay events. Her discipline, confidence, and competitive mindset set her apart. She approaches

every training session with complete dedication and always strives to improve her performance," he said.

Kajal's silver medal in Hong Kong adds to an already impressive resume. Earlier, she won a silver medal in the 4x100m relay at the South Asian Senior Athletics Championships 2025 in Ranchi. She also holds the national U-20 record in the 60m event.

In March this year, Kajal struck gold at the First Indoor Open Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar, where she set a national record in the 60m sprint with a timing of 7.50 seconds, further cementing her reputation as one of India's brightest sprinting prospects.

Her sporting journey began through the

School Programme of the Sports Authority of Gujarat (SAG). She later joined the District Level Sports School (DLSS) in Kodinar in 2019, where her talent was nurtured systematically.

Recognizing her potential, she was selected for the High-Performance Centre (HPC) in Nadiad in 2023, where she continues to receive advanced training and support.

Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi congratulated Kajal and the Indian relay team on their outstanding performance.

"Under the leadership of Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel, we are committed to providing every facility required for our sportspersons to achieve their global dreams. Kajal's achievement is a proud moment for Gujarat and the nation," Sanghavi said.

Kajal's success comes close on the heels of another stellar performance by a Gujarat athlete at the same championship, where Rahul Jakhar won the decathlon gold medal while setting a new national record.

With her remarkable work ethic, record-breaking performances, and growing list of international achievements, Kajal Vaja continues to emerge as one of India's most exciting young sprint talents, carrying Gujarat's sporting aspirations onto the continental stage.

IPL 2026: Hazlewood, Bhuvneshwar, Kohli know what it takes to win a big game, says Karthik

SIANS

AHMEDABAD: Royal Challengers Bengaluru batting coach and mentor Dinesh Karthik said the presence of seasoned campaigners Josh Hazlewood, Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Virat Kohli has given the side a sense of calmness in the ongoing IPL 2026 final, where they are having the upper hand against Gujarat Titans.

Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar have already made an impact in the final happening in front of a packed crowd at the Narendra Modi Stadium by taking out Shubman Gill and B Sai Sudharsan in the power-play.

"A little bit, I must say (on a different feeling coming into the final. When you have people like Hoff (Hazlewood), who's been part of many a trophy, and he has this habit of winning big games, and he knows what it takes to win a big game, there's a sense of calmness, actually, when



we have those bowling meetings," said Karthik in a chat with the broadcasters at the half-way mark of the first innings.

Karthik was very effu-

sive in his praise of the two and talismanic batter Kohli. "That's so important, and I'm talking about Hoff here because he's a big influence on the bowl-

ing group. Bhuvi, who's won a few titles, and Virat Kohli, as we know. So these are three important names there who have won titles and know what it takes to win a big game."

RCB have an opportunity to join MI and CSK as the only teams to successfully defend their IPL title, especially with the winner of Qualifier 1 winning the trophy last eight times. On whether RCB are comfortable in being front-runners to defend their title, Karthik said they have been mindful in motivating the side to win their second IPL title.

"I think so because we set a mindset of trying to be attacking champions. We wanted to keep pushing towards a second title. One thing that we refrained from using was language around defending our title. Instead, we spoke about trying to win a second title. That's what we've constantly spoken about, and I think that's made a big difference."

1800 athletes gather in Gandhinagar for the 4th PAFI National Armwrestling & Para Armwrestling Championship

SIANS

GANDHINAGAR: The 4th National Armwrestling & Para Armwrestling Championship commenced at the Rashtriya Raksha University, Gandhinagar, bringing together over 1,800 athletes from across the country in one of the largest Armwrestling competitions in India.

Organised by the Armwrestling Sports Association Gujarat with the leadership of President Rajendrasinh Parmar and Treasurer Mayank Patel, under the aegis of the People's Armwrestling Federation India (PAFI), the four-day championship will run from May 30 to June 1 and features competitions across male and female sub junior, junior, senior, youth, para, master across various weight categories. Athletes from multiple states have assembled at the university campus, where all participants are being accommodated throughout the duration of the event.



The championship also serves as a platform for several leading stars of the Pro Panja League to lock horns again, who are representing their respective states and competing for national honours.

The Athletes who win the top two positions across categories here will qualify for the World Armwrestling & Para Armwrestling Championship taking place in New Delhi from October 29-November 7th 2026.

The most exciting cat-

egory has turned out to be the 90kgs senior men with several Pro Panja League athletes like Denic Lalruatuanaga, Tawheed Shaikh, Dara Singh Handa, Asker Ali, Pranjit Saikia, Satnam Singh and Pramod Mukhi all vying for the Championship medals and a chance to represent India at the World Championships.

Speaking on the occasion, Preeti Jhangiani, President of the People's Armwrestling Federation India (PAFI) and vice president of the Asian

Armwrestling Federation (AAF) said, "The growth of arm wrestling in India is evident from the scale of this championship. Having more than 1,800 athletes under one roof is a testament to the passion, dedication and rapid development of the sport across the country. We look forward to witnessing some outstanding performances over the next few days. The top athletes will get a chance to participate in the upcoming World Championships in New Delhi."

IPL 2026: Rasikh picks three-for as RCB seamers restrict GT to 155/8 despite Washington's fifty



SIANS

AHMEDABAD: Royal Challengers Bengaluru's seamers produced a disciplined performance to restrict Gujarat Titans to 155/8 in the IPL 2026 final at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Sunday, despite Washington Sundar hitting a fighting unbeaten half-century for the hosts.

Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar struck early to remove Shubman Gill and B Sai Sudharsan inside the Powerplay, while Rasikh Salam Dar delivered his best spell of the season to pick 3-27.

Amidst the collapse, Sundar stood tall for GT. He survived an early scare when a catch of him taken by Jordan Cox was ruled to be grounded, and Sundar went on to anchor the innings with a composed fifty laced with five boundaries to take GT past 150-mark.

While RCB's seamers executed their plans with precision to keep GT in check, Krunal Pandya was excellent as the lone spinner to finish with 1-23. GT finished with the same score they had restricted RCB to in the league game at this venue. But in the pressure of a grand finale, the total looks below par against a batting line-up led by Virat Kohli.

Pushed into batting first by RCB, GT endured a shaky start as Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar exploited bounce and movement on the mixed soil pitch by consistently bowling back of the length balls. The in-form Gill was dismissed for 10 by Josh Hazlewood, after slicing a short-arm pull to a running Rajat Patidar at mid-off.

Sudharsan, who hit suc-

cessive fours in a 13-run opening over off Jacob Duffy, followed soon after, top-edging a bouncer from Bhuvneshwar Kumar to wicketkeeper Jitesh Sharma for 12. Nishant Sindhu and Jos Buttler tried to steady the innings by adding cautious runs against disciplined pacers.

But with no boundary coming after power-play, thanks to RCB keeping things tight, Sindhu was forced to attack against Rasikh, but holed out to long-on for 20. GT almost lost Sundar on the final ball of tenth over, but Cox touched the grass while taking the catch, giving him a reprieve on four.

Buttler, visibly frustrated over being tied down by dot balls, advanced to attack Krunal, but was undone by a quick wide yorker, and Jitesh completed a sharp stumping. Arshad Khan briefly lifted GT spirits by hitting the first six of the innings in the 13th over and break a 40-ball boundary drought - the longest time a team has taken to hit their first six in an innings in IPL 2026.

He and Sundar hit three more boundaries collectively, before Hazlewood hurried him into a mistimed pull and was caught by short fine leg for 15. Rahul Tewatia's stay ended in the 16th over when he miscued a loft off a cross-seam ball from Rasikh and gave a straightforward catch to mid-on.

Though Holder top-edged to Hazlewood off Bhuvneshwar, Washington pierced the gaps well to collect boundaries and get his fifty off 37 balls. A mighty six from Rashid Khan off Rasikh took GT past 150-mark, before holing out on the next ball to deep square leg and set RCB 156 to win the title.

Thailand, Malaysia and China qualify for Asian Games women's cricket

SIANS

KUALA LUMPUR: Thailand, Malaysia and China have secured qualification for the women's cricket tournament at the 2026 Asian Games after emerging as the top three teams in the qualifying event staged in the city between May 26 and 31.

The trio will join the already-qualified teams at

defeating Nepal in a rain-shortened third-place play-off. The match was decided under the DLS method, with China securing a five-wicket victory.

The final saw Thailand underline their superiority once again. After restricting Malaysia to only 54 runs, Thailand comfortably chased down the target with nine wickets intact.



the continental showpiece, which is scheduled to be held across Aichi Prefecture and Nagoya in Japan during September and October next year.

Thailand enjoyed a flawless campaign in the preliminary stage, topping Group A with victories over both Malaysia and Hong Kong. Despite losing to Thailand earlier in the tournament, Malaysia bounced back strongly, overcoming Hong Kong to advance to the knockout rounds.

In the semi-finals, Thailand produced a dominant display against China, bundling them out for just 53 before cruising to an emphatic 83-run win. Malaysia also booked their place in the final after edging past Nepal by two wickets in a tense chase of 127, reaching the target with eight deliveries to spare.

China claimed the final qualification spot by

Women's cricket at the 2026 Asian Games will feature eight teams. Alongside hosts Japan, automatic qualification has been awarded to the four Asian Full Members — India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Thailand, Malaysia and China complete the field.

Thailand head into the Games as the highest-ranked of the three qualifiers, sitting 12th in the ICC Women's T20I rankings. Malaysia occupy 28th position, while China are ranked 42nd.

The qualification process for the men's competition is still underway. Apart from Japan, the five Full Members from the region - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka - qualified directly, while four teams will join them from the qualifiers, being contested by Nepal, China, Malaysia, Qatar, Bahrain, Hong Kong, Oman and Singapore.

Movies Schedule

Monday, 1st June

BHOOTH BANGLA (U/A16+)
Hindi - 11:45 AM, 03:00 PM

PATI PATNI AUR WOHO DO (UA16+)
Hindi - 04:30 PM

CHAND MERA DIL (U/A16+)
HINDI - 10:55 AM, 01:45 PM, 07:00 PM

OBSESSION (A)
ENGLISH - 11:30 AM, 02:15 PM

THE GREAT GRAND SUPERHERO ALIENS KA AAGMAN (U)
HINDI - 06:15 PM

DHURANDHAR: THE REVENGE (A)
HINDI - 05:00 PM

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Call: 95416 13868 For assistance with tickets