

Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication



Deeply saddened by the loss of lives in a tragic fire incident in Malviya Nagar, Delhi. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of grief. Prayers for early recovery of injured.

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Amit Shah To Review Amarnath Yatra Security Preparedness On June 8



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Union Home Minister Amit Shah will chair a high-level security review meeting in the national capital on June 8 to assess preparations for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting is expected to be attended by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat, senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs, intelligence agencies, the Army, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), and key officers of the Jammu and Kashmir administration.

According to official sources, the Home Minister will evaluate the readiness of security and civil departments involved in the annual pilgrimage and review measures aimed at ensuring the smooth, secure, and successful conduct of the Yatra. Discussions are likely

to focus on deployment of security personnel along the traditional Pahalgam and Baltal routes, counter-terrorism strategies, protection of pilgrim convoys, emergency response mechanisms, healthcare facilities, communication systems, and overall logistical arrangements.

Officials are also expected to be briefed by the Home Minister on the prevailing security situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the steps being taken to safeguard pilgrims throughout the pilgrimage period.

Special attention is likely to be given to intelligence coordination among various agencies, surveillance measures along the Yatra routes, and contingency plans to tackle any unforeseen challenges or security threats.

The review meeting forms part of the Centre's broader strategy to ensure robust security coverage and efficient facilities for thousands of devotees expected to participate in this year's Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra. (KNC)

CM Omar Holds Offsite 'Review' Retreat With NC Legislators In Dachigam

OB Vans, Camera Crews Replace Wildlife Calm At Famed National Park

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: The quiet wilderness of Dachigam National Park on Wednesday turned into an unusual political and media hub as Chief Minister Omar Abdullah led a high-level review meeting along with ministers, MLAs and senior National Conference leaders.

For several hours, the entrance of the park resembled a live broadcast zone rather than a wildlife destination, with rows of OB vans, camera crews and a heavy presence of security personnel and political leaders.

According to details available, the National Conference leadership assembled at Gupkar in the morning before moving to Dachigam for a closed-door governance review and stock-taking exercise.

Inside, discussions focused on the government's performance over the past 19 months, covering political, developmental and organisational issues. Outside the gates, television reporters delivered continuous live updates, with camera teams stationed amid heightened activity.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, in a post on X, described the exercise as a review of "the good, the not so good and everything in between." The choice of venue drew attention from both political circles and the media. Journalists on the ground described the setting as unusual, noting



the rare convergence of politics and media in a location typically known for its serene environment.

"Usually we cover such meetings at party offices or government buildings. Today, the entire setup shifted to Dachigam. It was unusual but visually striking," Taha Wani, a Srinagar-based journalist said.

The Surprise Venue Of CM's 7-Hour Marathon With MLAs

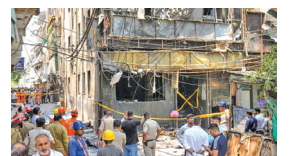
AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Taking everyone by surprise, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah along with MLAs from the National Conference and independent legislators supporting the government rushed to Dachigam on Wednesday morning to hold a meeting that lasted more than seven hours to review the performance of the 19-month-old government headed by him.

In the invitation letter sent to MLAs on May 30, Gupkar was scheduled to be the venue of the meeting. However, as per details in possession, the MLAs of NC as well as independents supporting the government first converged at the CM's Public Services & Outreach Office, Raabita, on Gupkar Road adjacent to his house, before being taken to Dachigam.

The MLAs were asked to enter the CM's residence where three vehicles had

LG, CM Mourn Loss Of Lives In Delhi Hotel Fire



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday expressed grief over the loss of lives in a devastating hotel fire in Delhi's Malviya Nagar area that claimed at least 21 lives.

According to officials, the fire erupted in a hotel located in a congested locality of south Delhi. Among those killed were several foreign nationals whose family members were reportedly undergoing treatment at nearby hospitals.

A number of people also sustained injuries in the incident and are receiving medical care. Expressing condolences to the bereaved families, Manoj Sinha described the tragedy as deeply distressing. In a message shared on social media platform X, he conveyed sympathies to those who lost their loved ones and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also voiced profound sorrow over the incident. In a statement shared through his office on X, he extended condolences to the families of the victims, wished a swift

Congress Can Join Govt Anytime, Ministry Post Kept Vacant: CM

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has revealed that a cabinet berth in the Jammu and Kashmir government continues to remain reserved for the Congress party, asserting that his government is prepared to accommodate its ally whenever the party decides to join the administration.

The remarks provide the clearest indication yet that the National Conference-led government has deliberately kept a ministerial position vacant for Congress while both parties await restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

In an interview with a Jammu-based media outlet, Omar Abdullah said Congress had not sought representation in the cabinet despite being entitled to a berth under the alliance arrangement.

According to the Chief



Minister, when the government was formed in October 2024, the Pradesh Congress Committee leadership had made it clear that the party would stay out of the government until statehood was restored.

"When the government was formed, the PCC president clearly stated that until statehood is restored they would not become part of the government," Omar said.

He added that the position remains available even today and that Congress would be accommodated if

Trekkers Urge Reopening Of Great Lakes Routes, Say Livelihoods At Risk

Over 200 Operators Appeal To LG, CM, Say They Face Financial Distress

RAJA SYED

SONAMARG: Trekkers and adventure tourism operators from Ganderbal district have urged the Jammu and Kashmir administration to reopen the Great Lakes trekking routes, saying the continued restrictions have severely impacted their livelihoods.

The routes include Gadsar, Krishansar, Vishansar, Satsar and Gangbal, Kolahoi Glacier Trek, Tarsar-Marsar Trek in Pahalgam; Tosamaidan-Yusmar; Dara-Pahalgam; and Dara-Sonamarg.

The trekking community said the closure of the routes during the peak tourism season has left hundreds of guides, pony owners and support staff without work, creating financial hardships for



families dependent on adventure tourism.

"We have bank loans and monthly EMIs to pay. Trekking is our primary source of income, and the continued closure of these routes is pushing many families into financial distress," Mushtaq Ahmad, a local trekking guide, said.

While many tourist spots have since been reopened in phases after security reviews, most trekking routes continue

CS Reviews Preparedness For Rollout Of VB-G RAM G Across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Wednesday, chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the preparedness of the Rural Development Department and district administrations for the smooth rollout of the Viksit Bharat Gramin Rozgar Abhiyan Mission (VB-G RAM G) across Jammu and Kashmir from July 1, 2026.

The Chief Secretary reviewed the progress achieved by the department in transitioning from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) framework to the newly enacted VB-G RAM G, which was notified by the Government of India on May 11, 2026.

Stressing the importance of meticulous planning and coordinated execution, the Chief Secretary directed the officers to adhere strictly to the timelines prescribed for operationalization of the scheme and



ensure that all preparatory activities are completed well before its commencement on July 1, 2026.

He called for expediting all prerequisites, including notification of the scheme in consultation with the Law Department, completion of e-KYC of all eligible workers, and advance planning and approval of works to facilitate a smooth and seamless transition to the new framework.

The Chief Secretary also directed the Directors of Rural Development, Jammu and Kashmir, to take personal responsibility for capacity building and

Drung Emerges As Cool Retreat As Tourists Flee Heat

WARIS FAYAZ

TANGMARG: Amid soaring temperatures across several parts of the country, Kashmir's famed tourist destination Drung in Tangmarg has emerged as a refreshing retreat for visitors seeking cooler temperatures and natural beauty.

Tourists from various states visiting the Valley said the pleasant weather, scenic landscapes and peaceful atmosphere have made their Kashmir trip memorable, with many describing the region as unmatched among tourist destinations.

Sania, a tourist from Lucknow, said that she was impressed by the beauty of Kashmir after visiting Drung, Gulmarg, Pahalgam and Srinagar.

"There is no match to



Kashmir. I am enjoying the temperature and the peaceful atmosphere here. Every place we visited was beautiful and refreshing," she said.

The tourist said the Valley offered a welcome escape from the scorching temperatures prevailing in many parts of the country and urged others to experience Kashmir's

unique charm.

Another visitor, Sonal from Ahmedabad, who was travelling with a group of 12 people, described Kashmir as "Paradise on Earth" and said the experience had exceeded their expectations.

"The weather is wonderful, and the people are very welcoming. Those who have

not visited Kashmir should definitely come here and see its beauty for themselves," she said.

Members of her group echoed similar views, saying the Valley offered an experience unlike any other destination.

"If you missed Kashmir, you missed a paradise-like experience. Everything here is beautiful. Whatever people may hear from outside, the reality is different. This is a place everyone should visit," she said.

Drung, known for its crystal-clear stream and lush green surroundings, is situated around 3 kilometres from Tangmarg and about 16 kilometres from the world-famous Gulmarg resort.

The destination, while it attracts visitors during summer for its

Fertility Rate, Child Marriage Rise In J&K: NFHS-6

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: The latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6) for 2023-24 indicates notable progress in several health and maternal care indicators across Jammu and Kashmir, although certain demographic concerns, including fertility levels and child marriage rates, have shown a marginal rise.

Data from the survey, reveals that the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in the Union Territory stands at 1.8 children per woman, up from 1.4 reported in NFHS-5 (2019-21). The proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married before attaining 18 years of age also rose slightly to 5.1 per cent from 4.5 per cent.

Healthcare indicators, however, registered positive gains. Institutional deliveries increased to 93.6 per cent, compared to 92.4 per cent in the previous survey. The share of births assisted by trained health professionals remained

Zojila Tunnel Breakthrough On June 9, Only Few Metres Left

13.15-Km Tunnel To Link J&K, Ladakh; Union Minister Gadkari To Trigger Blast



RAJA SYED

GANDERBAL: The strategically significant 13.15-kilometre Zojila Tunnel, linking Jammu and Kashmir with Ladakh, is set to reach a major milestone on June 9 as Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari is scheduled to trigger the breakthrough blast.

Once completed, the tunnel will become the world's longest single-tube bi-directional road tunnel at an altitude of nearly 11,500 feet, ensuring seamless all-weather connectivity

between the Kashmir Valley and Kargil, and significantly enhancing connectivity, mobility and economic activity in the strategically vital region.

The 13.15-km tunnel, being developed beneath the Zojila Pass at an altitude of around 11,500 feet, is expected to provide year-round road connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and the Ladakh region, reducing dependence on the weather-sensitive mountain pass.

Harpal Singh, joint chief operating officer of Megha Engineering and

DC Srinagar holds Grievance Redressal Camp at Rajbagh under Block Diwas

Reviews public issues, developmental demands; assures timely redressal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: As part of the ongoing Block Diwas programme aimed at strengthening public outreach and ensuring responsive governance, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo Wednesday conducted a Grievance Redressal Camp at Joggers Park Rajbagh, where he interacted with local residents and took stock of their issues and developmental requirements.

During the camp, a large number of residents and representatives of Rajbagh, Ikhrajpora, Jawahar Nagar, Kursu Padshahibagh and other adjoining areas of K.P Bagh in Tehsil South of the District participated and projected various public grievances and demands pertaining to civic amenities, infrastructure development, sanitation, drainage, road connectivity, street lighting, augmentation of water supply, upgradation of health facilities and other issues of public importance.



The DC gave a patient hearing to the grievances and demands raised by the participants and emphasized the administration's commitment towards addressing genuine public concerns in a prompt and effective manner. He directed the concerned officers to examine the issues raised during the camp and ensure necessary follow-up for their early resolution.

While reviewing the developmental needs of the area, the DC reiterated that the District Administration is committed to promoting participatory governance by reaching out to people at the grassroots level and incorporating their feedback into the planning and execution of

developmental initiatives.

He assured the participants that other genuine issues including jurisdictional issues and demands would be taken up with the concerned departments and addressed in a time-bound manner. He further stressed the importance of sustained public engagement in ensuring efficient service delivery and inclusive development.

On the occasion, the DC passed on the spot directions to Officers from various line departments present on the occasion who responded to several grievances on the spot, while issues requiring further intervention were noted for appropriate action.

The DC further empha-

sized the need for coordinated efforts among all line departments to ensure timely redressal of grievances and effective implementation of developmental works on the ground.

The participants appreciated the initiative and expressed satisfaction over the opportunity to directly interact with the District Administration and highlight issues affecting their localities.

The programme was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Mir Imtiaz Ul Aziz, Chief Planning Officer Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Secretary SMC, Tahir Ahmad Magray, Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Tahir Sajad, District Social Welfare Officer, Mohammad Yousuf, Executive Engineer R&B, Farid Ahmad Khan, Executive Engineer, R&B, Khalid Mehmood, Executive Engineer Water Works, Aijaz Rafiq, Executive Engineer PDD, Tasaduk Nabi, Dy CEO Anjuma Raja, Tehsildar South, Sajad Rasool Shah and other District and Sectoral Officers.

DDC Anantnag convenes Block Diwas at Srigufwara

Assures time bound resolution of genuine public grievances

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: To address the concerns and grievances of the local community and ensure efficient public service delivery, the District Development Commissioner (DDC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat Wednesday visited Srigufwara and convened a Block Diwas cum grievance redressal camp at Tehsil Office, Srigufwara.

The program was attended by ADC, SDM and Tehsildar Bijbehara, BDO, officials from Health, Education, R&B, PDD, PHE, I&FC, Agriculture, Horticulture, Banks and other departments besides Ex PRI and civil society members and local public.

During the program, the DDC gave a patient hearing to the residents who raised issues pertaining to surface connectivity and widening of roads, health-care services, school infrastructure, beautification and tourism promotion, water and power supply including infrastructure and utilities, functioning of lift irrigation facilities, public transport including bus/taxi stands, telecom connectivity in upper reaches, compensation for



crop damage by adverse weather, relocation of government offices, encroachment on state land, rural sanitation, release of wages under MGNREGA, among others.

Addressing the gathering, the DDC assured that major issues would be taken up with the suitable authorities and emergent ones shall be resolved by the concerned departments in a time bound manner. He issued on spot directions to the concerned authorities for prompt redressal of genuine public concerns ensuring efficient and hassle free service delivery.

Terming people's welfare paramount responsibility of district administration, the DDC said that such programs help to get valu-

able public feedback so that necessary measures can be taken as per their requirement and local aspirations. He directed the revenue authorities to take immediate action on certain grievances raised by locals related to land access, encroachment, etc during the outreach program.

At conclusion, the DDC said there is need to conduct more such camps in the area and assured public that the outreach will continue in near future.

Local public and civil society members hailed the initiative hoping such programs will be held in routine for their overall welfare and community development.

Following the Block Diwas, the DDC visited PHC Srigufwara to take

stock of the health care facilities being provided by the centre. He interacted with the medical staff, officials and patients and inspected various sections of PHC. He further directed the staff to ensure compliance with the duty roster and provide all available services to the patients in a smooth manner.

The DDC was accompanied by ADC, SDM, Tehsildar, Medical Officer and other concerned officials.

Later, the DDC visited HSS Srigufwara to assess its functioning and inquire about any issues faced by the educational institution. He interacted with the staff and students to take their valuable feedback and suggestions to enhance the educational and learning outcomes in the school.

Asking the students to focus on education and sports, the DDC advised them to channel their energy on productive activities so they become responsible citizens and realise their career ambitions.

Engaging in a question answer session with students, the DDC said that they can pursue their careers in different fields as per their abilities and interests.

Nasha Mukht J&K Campaign

Mission Vatsalya B'pora conducts Anti-Tobacco Awareness Drive

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: As part of the ongoing 100 Day Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, Mission Vatsalya (Child Protection Services), Bandipora, organized a district-wide anti-tobacco awareness and enforcement drive around educational institutions to protect children from substance abuse.

The campaign covered schools in Nahidal, Garoora, Argam, Ajas, Sudnara, SK Payeen, SK Bala, Madwan, and Hajin. Officials inspected shops operating near schools and educated shopkeepers about the harmful effects of tobacco on children and adolescents.

During the drive, vendors were warned against selling tobacco products near educational institutions and were informed about the provisions of Section 77 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015,



which prohibits supplying intoxicating substances, including tobacco to minors. Authorities also highlighted the penalties for violating the law.

Mission Vatsalya officials appealed to the public to support child protection efforts by reporting violations through Child Helpline 1098 or Emergency Helpline 112. Anti-tobacco awareness posters were installed at strategic locations near schools to spread awareness about the dangers of tobacco use.

The team also imposed fines on violators found breaching regulations, demonstrating the admin-

istration's commitment to strict enforcement.

Members of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), including Mohd Hashim Rather and Rasikh Ramzan, participated in the initiative.

Officials stated that the drive is part of the government's broader efforts to create a safe, healthy, and child-friendly environment under the Nasha Mukht J&K campaign.

Similar awareness and enforcement programmes will continue to safeguard children and curb tobacco and drug abuse across Bandipora district.

DC Pulwama reviews Arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Wednesday chaired a meeting at Circuit House Pulwama to review and finalize arrangements for the smooth observance of Muharram-ul-Haram across the district.

During the meeting, the DC took a detailed review of the arrangements being put in place by various departments for the forthcoming religious observances.

Discussions were held regarding the provision of essential services including uninterrupted power and water supply, health-care facilities, sanitation, traffic management, fire and emergency services, public transportation, and other civic amenities.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of close inter-departmental coordination to ensure that all necessary facilities are made available to the general public during the holy month. He directed the concerned officers to remain proactive in



addressing public requirements and to ensure that all arrangements are completed well in advance.

During the meeting, delegations and representatives from various areas projected various issues and demands related to Muharram arrangements. The DC gave a patient hearing to their concerns and assured them that all genuine issues would be addressed in a timely manner through coordinated efforts of the concerned departments.

Dr. Qayoom directed the concerned officers to conduct advance site visits to all congregation venues and procession routes to assess on-ground requirements and make adequate

arrangements for the holy month. He further directed the Rural Development Department and Municipal authorities to undertake comprehensive sanitation drives at all major congregation sites, Imambaras and along procession routes, besides ensuring proper cleanliness, waste disposal and upkeep of public spaces to facilitate the smooth observance of Muharram-ul-Haram.

Emphasizing the need for seamless service delivery, the DC instructed all stakeholder departments to maintain close liaison with local representatives and ensure prompt response to public concerns during the observance of Muharram-ul-Haram.

Colleges organize awareness programmes under NMBA in Bandipora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Various educational institutions across Bandipora organized awareness programmes under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) to spread awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle among youth.

At HKM Govt Degree College Bandipora, the NCORD Cell in collaboration with the Department of Kashmiri organized an Interaction-Counseling Session on "Drugs and Their Negative Impact on Society." Speakers highlighted the social, psychological, and health-related consequences of substance abuse and encouraged students to make informed and responsible life choices.

The programme was organized under the guidance of Prof. Irfan Ahmad Wagay, Convener NCORD Cell. A pledge ceremony was also organized by the Red Ribbon Youth Club in collaboration with the Department of Botany, where students reaffirmed their commitment towards a drug-free society. Meanwhile, the NCC

Youth Club of HKM Government Degree College Bandipora organized counselling interaction sessions with students appearing in mid-term examinations under the guidance of Dr. Nasarul Islam, CTO NCC Unit. Students were sensitized about the physical, psychological, social, and economic consequences of drug addiction and motivated to adopt a disciplined and healthy lifestyle.

At Government Degree College Sumbal, a Walkathon and Essay Writing Competition were organized under the patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Shabeena Iqbal Shawl, Principal of the College, as part of the ongoing NMBA activities.

The programmes were organized by the NMBA Committee under the mentorship of Ajaz Ur Rehman. Students and faculty members participated enthusiastically in the walkathon, while students from different semesters took part in the essay writing competition, highlighting the social and psychological impact of substance abuse and the importance of collective efforts in building a drug-free society.

Startup India, DPIIT, JKEDI to organize TEJAS workshop in Kupwara on June 06

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a significant step towards strengthening the startup and entrepreneurial ecosystem at the district level, the Startup India, DPIIT in collaboration with the JKEDI and District Administration Kupwara, is organising the TEJAS Workshop on June 06, 2026 at District Kupwara.

The workshop aims to bring together aspiring entrepreneurs, startups, innovators, students, industry experts, institutional stakeholders, and government representatives on a common platform to promote entrepreneurship-led economic growth and innovation.

The event will be attended by Ateesh Kumar Singh, Additional Secretary, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. Senior officers and officials from the J&K Government shall

also attend the event.

The workshop is being organised with the objective of creating awareness about startup opportunities, government support mechanisms, innovation-driven entrepreneurship, incubation support, and market linkages for emerging enterprises. The event will focus on enabling local entrepreneurs to understand the evolving startup ecosystem and explore pathways for business growth, funding, mentorship, and institutional support.

The agenda includes inaugural and context-setting sessions highlighting the entrepreneurial landscape and opportunities in the district. Key sessions during the workshop will cover Startup India initiatives and benefits, insights into the startup ecosystem, innovation and design thinking, intellectual property awareness, incubation support, entrepreneurship development, and strate-

gies for building scalable and sustainable ventures.

The workshop under TEJAS initiative is expected to serve as a catalyst for fostering innovation, encouraging youth entrepreneurship, promoting women-led enterprises, and building a vibrant startup ecosystem.

The workshop will also feature interactive sessions on business model development, financial planning, investment readiness, startup showcases, founder interactions, and networking opportunities aimed at inspiring aspiring entrepreneurs and strengthening collaboration among ecosystem stakeholders.

Students, academia, industry representatives, and other stakeholders including entrepreneurs of the area should actively participate in the workshop and benefit from the knowledge-sharing and networking opportunities being offered through the event.

DC Shopian chairs Block Diwas at Keller

Listens to public importance issues, assures action

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta Wednesday chaired a Block Diwas programme here at Keller block of the district.

The outreach and public contact program was held with the view to listen to public importance issues and grievances for redressal.

During the interaction, the public projected several issues and demands related to completion of sports stadium Gatipora, Play-ground at Keller, road connectivity and macadamization, drinking water supply, dearth of staff in sub-district hospital, Keller, repairs of roads, construction of Battafojan bridge, Manloo footpath bridge, functioning of filtration plant Dumpora,



electricity, healthcare, education, irrigation and other developmental demands.

The Deputy Commissioner listened patiently to the issues and grievances and issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned officers for their prompt redressal. Matters requiring higher-level intervention were noted for appropriate follow-up action.

The DC assured the people that genuine

public concerns would be addressed in a time-bound manner. He emphasized that Block Diwas serves as an effective platform for strengthening public outreach, ensuring transparency and accelerating development at the grassroots level.

Officers from various departments provided updates on various welfare and developmental schemes being implemented in the area.

Peer Training, Pledge activities held across B'pora under NMBA



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Various educational institutions across district Bandipora on Wednesday organised peer training programmes, pledge ceremonies and awareness activities under the ongoing Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA).

At HSS Gadakhud, a peer leaders' training session was organised under the 100-days Anti-Drug Campaign. Resource persons sensitised students about constructive communication, identifying signs of substance abuse, supporting affected individuals and promoting preventive awareness.

At PM SHRI Government High School Odina and HSS Quilmuqam, peer

training orientation programmes and pledge ceremonies were conducted, where students pledged to stay away from drugs and spread awareness against substance abuse.

Peer training and orientation activities were also held at HSS Nowgam and GHS Naidkhai, while awareness and pledge programmes under NMBA were organised at HS Ketson, HS Koragbal, HS Panar, GHS Nadihal and HSS Chuntimulla.

The programmes witnessed active participation from students and staff members, reflecting the continued commitment of educational institutions towards strengthening anti-drug awareness and preventive outreach under NMBA.

CM Omar flags off Cyclothon on World Bicycle Day, launches Jammu Cyclothon campaign



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday flagged off a Cyclothon at the Royal Springs Golf Course (RSGC) here to mark World Bicycle Day, reaffirming the government's commitment to promoting fitness, healthy lifestyles and sports culture among the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

The event, organized by the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council under its flagship initiative "My Youth My Pride", witnessed enthusiastic participation from cyclists, youth, students and sports enthusiasts from different parts of the Valley.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister launched the mascot, jersey and

publicity campaign for the forthcoming Jammu Cyclothon and announced the dates for the event. He also announced the conduct of the Kashmir Cyclothon as a national-level event, aimed at attracting participation from cyclists across the country and promoting Jammu and Kashmir as a hub for adventure and sporting activities.

Interacting with the participants, the Chief Minister appreciated the growing interest in cycling and emphasized the importance of adopting active lifestyles to ensure better physical and mental well-being. He highlighted cycling as an environmentally sustainable mode of transport that contributes to public health while supporting

efforts towards environmental conservation.

The Chief Minister also lauded the initiatives being undertaken by the Youth Services & Sports Department and the J&K Sports Council to encourage mass participation in sports and recreational activities. He said such events not only promote fitness but also strengthen community engagement and create awareness about important social issues.

The cyclothon carried the message of combating sedentary lifestyles, drug abuse and excessive screen time among youth, while promoting the spirit of fitness and sports. The event echoed the theme: "Say No to Drugs, No to Screen Addiction and Yes to Fitness & Sport."

Minister for Youth

Services & Sports Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Commissioner Secretary Youth Services & Sports Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Secretary RSGC Haris Ahmed Handoo, Secretary J&K Sports Council Nuzhat Gul and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

The cycling awareness ride commenced from RSGC and proceeded towards Duck Park on Foreshore Road, covering a distance of approximately 20 kilometres.

A large number of participants from different age groups took part in the event, which passed through designated routes in the city.

CS fixes accountability for completion, utilization of hostel buildings across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Wednesday chaired a meeting to assess the status of hostels constructed by various departments across Jammu and Kashmir and to devise a roadmap for making all such assets functional and beneficial for the intended beneficiaries at the earliest.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, School Education Department; Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department; Managing Director, Samagra Shiksha; Managing Director, RUSA; Directors of School Education, Jammu and Kashmir, besides other concerned officers.

Taking a comprehensive review of the hostel infrastructure created by different departments over the years, the Chief Secretary expressed concern over a number of hostel buildings that are yet to be made operational despite substantial public investment.

He emphasized that assets created through public funds must be put to optimal use and directed all concerned departments to take immediate measures for completion and operationalization of such facilities.

The Chief Secretary impressed upon the School Education Department to fix accountability at the district level by making the respective Chief Education Officers (CEOs) responsi-



ble for ensuring completion and operationalization of hostel projects falling within their jurisdictions.

He further directed that a dedicated mentoring officer be designated for each hostel to closely monitor progress and facilitate timely resolution of issues hindering their completion and functioning.

Underscoring the need for efficient utilization of public resources, the Chief Secretary urged the departmental heads and Directors to focus on making all completed hostel buildings functional without further delay. He observed that considerable public funds had been invested in the creation of these assets and, therefore, they should not be allowed to remain idle or underutilized.

He also called upon the departments to undertake a detailed assessment of all hostel structures that may not be suitable for their originally intended purpose and explore alternative strategies for their productive utilization in the larger public interest. He stressed that

every public asset should contribute meaningfully towards social welfare and human development.

The Chief Secretary further directed all concerned departments to furnish comprehensive details regarding the sanctioned capacity, present occupancy and enrollment status of each hostel established under their respective schemes so that informed decisions could be taken regarding their effective utilization and future management.

During the meeting, the Commissioner Secretary, School and Higher Education Department, Ram Niwas Sharma presented a detailed overview of hostel infrastructure under the sector, including functional and non-functional hostels as well as those presently under construction.

He informed the meeting that hostels have been established across districts under Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) and other schemes, including boys' and girls' hostels catering to students in schools and higher educa-

tional institutions across Jammu and Kashmir.

Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Sarmad Hafeez, also presented a detailed assessment of hostel facilities developed for students belonging to Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Pahari community outlining their current status and measures being undertaken to improve their utilization.

The representatives of the Tribal Affairs Department apprised the meeting about the availability, occupancy status and operational readiness of hostels established by the department for tribal students. He also provided details of hostels presently under construction and those awaiting operationalization.

The departments assured the meeting that concerted efforts are being made to make all such facilities functional at the earliest in accordance with the directions issued by the Chief Secretary today.

CIK Conducts Searches Across Six Kashmir Districts in UAPA Case



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Counter Intelligence Kashmir (CIK) on Wednesday carried out searches at eight locations across six districts of the Valley in connection with a decade-old case involving alleged cross-border networks, radicalisation activities and unlawful associations.

The searches were conducted as part of the investigation into FIR No. 02/2015 registered at Police Station CIK Srinagar under provisions of the Foreigners Act, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Arms Act.

According to officials, the searches were launched following recent intelligence inputs, technical analysis and sustained investigation into the case.

The operation covered two locations each in Srinagar and Baniptora, besides one location each in Kupwara, Anantnag, Kulgam and Sopore in Baramulla district.

Officials said the indi-

viduals under scrutiny were suspected of maintaining contact with handlers based across the border through encrypted communication platforms and were allegedly involved in dissemination of extremist content, radicalisation efforts and facilitation activities linked to unlawful networks.

An official said the searches were aimed at recovering incriminating material, establishing linkages, identifying associates and facilitators, and gathering actionable intelligence to further the investigation.

He added all required legal formalities had been completed and search warrants obtained from the competent court before conducting the operation.

The searches were carried out under established legal procedures with security arrangements and technical support teams deployed at the identified locations. Officials said further investigation in the case is underway. [KNT]

Wagoora Panchayat wins National Panchayat Award 2025

Ranks 3rd among 2.5 Lakh Panchayats across India

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: In a landmark achievement for rural Jammu & Kashmir, Wagoora Gram Panchayat in Budgam district has secured the third position at the national level for the prestigious Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSPV) 2025, winning a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh.

The award, conferred under the category "Socially Just and Socially Secured Panchayat," was presented during the National Panchayat Awards function at the Scope Convention Centre in New Delhi. Union Minister for Panchayati Raj, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh and Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj, Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel, handed over the honour to a five-member delegation from Jammu and Kashmir's Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj.

The honour recognises Wagoora's outstanding performance in inclusive governance, social justice, and sustainable rural development. The Gram Panchayat emerged victorious after a rigorous national-level evaluation process that involved thousands of Panchayats from across the country.



Officials credited the achievement to the visionary leadership of Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar and the sustained guidance of Secretary, Rural Development Department & Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad.

Under Aijaz Asad's leadership, the department adopted a focused strategy to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions, improve grassroots governance, and ensure effective implementation of welfare programmes. Regular reviews, handholding of Panchayats, and continuous monitoring were instrumental in enabling Wagoora to achieve this national distinction.

The award reflects the collective efforts of Panchayati Raj Institutions, elected representatives, local communities, and field functionaries

in strengthening grassroots democracy across Jammu & Kashmir.

Officials termed the achievement as a testament to the growing strength of participatory planning, social welfare delivery, community-led development, and effective local governance in the Union Territory.

The Rs 25 lakh prize money is expected to be utilised for further developmental initiatives in the Gram Panchayat, setting a benchmark for others to follow.

Wagoora's achievement is especially significant given the scale of competition and the rigorous evaluation process, which goes far beyond documentation and self-reporting.

Unlike conventional award processes, the DDUPSPV 2025 evaluation involved a dedicated inspection team from the

Ministry of Panchayati Raj that physically visited Wagoora Gram Panchayat for an on-ground assessment.

The visiting team conducted a thorough inspection of community assets, infrastructure, and service delivery mechanisms, verifying the actual status of welfare scheme implementation across multiple line departments.

The MoPR team assessed the functioning of key departments including Health, Education NRLM and other associated agencies.

They physically verified the condition and operational status of Anganwadi centres under ICDS, examining their facilities, beneficiary registers, nutrition supplies, and early childhood services. The Sub-Health Centre and Primary Health Centre infrastructure under the National Health Mission (NHM) was also reviewed for service delivery, medicine availability, and staffing.

The team further assessed the NRLM-linked Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for financial activity, bank linkages, and livelihood outcomes, along with the MGNREGA work-site assets and their quality and utility.

Sunil Sharma Links Statehood Restoration to Lasting Peace; Targets NC, PDP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma on Wednesday linked the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir with sustained peace and stability, asserting that the promise made by the Bharatiya Janata Party remains intact but would be fulfilled only when the Centre is fully satisfied that violence and public disorder have become a thing of the past.

Addressing reporters, Sharma accused the National Conference and Peoples Democratic Party of pursuing politics that, according to him, thrived on instability and unrest.

He claimed that there was presently no militant recruitment, no stone-pelting and that, barring the recent Pahalgam incident, civilians had largely been spared from violence.

"Statehood is the promise made by the BJP and it will be restored once Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah are convinced that there will be no more bloodshed and stone-pelting," Sharma said.

Turning to the ruling National Conference's meeting at Dachigam, Sharma described it as



a "floor test" aimed at assessing internal support for Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

He alleged that Omar Abdullah convenes such meetings whenever he feels his position is under threat and predicted that similar exercises would be held again in the coming days.

"Mark my words, another such meeting will be called. Whenever Omar Abdullah feels his chair is in danger, he calls a floor test," Sharma remarked.

The BJP leader also targeted the Congress party, alleging that it had lost its independent political identity in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to Sharma, Congress had become a proxy of the National Conference and was functioning under its influence rather than pursuing an independent political agenda. [KNT]

Out-of-State Vehicles, Unregistered Motorcycles Come Under Scanner

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Kulgam Police on Wednesday conducted intensive vehicle checking and search operations across the Yaripora, Frisal and Behibagh areas as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen security and maintain law and order in the district.

During the operation, police personnel established checking points and carried out verification of vehicles moving through the identified areas.

Officials said special emphasis was laid on the inspection of out-of-state vehicles and motorcycles, particularly those operating without registration number plates or valid documents.

Police teams scrutinized

vehicle records and conducted searches to ensure compliance with legal requirements and to prevent misuse of vehicles for unlawful activities.

The operation formed part of a broader security exercise aimed at enhancing vigilance and monitoring movement in sensitive areas.

Kulgam Police said such drives would continue in different parts of the district to ensure public safety and strengthen preventive policing measures.

Officials reiterated their commitment to maintaining law and order and ensuring the security of residents through regular inspections, verification drives and area domination exercises. [KNT]

National conference on technological integrations in agriculture begins at SKUAST-K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A three-day national conference on "Technological Integrations in Agriculture, Veterinary and Ecological Sciences for Viksit Bharat (TIC-2026)" Wednesday commenced at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir, Shalimar campus.

The conference, organised in association with the Society for Integrated Development of Agriculture, Veterinary and Ecological Sciences (SIDAVES), aims to serve as a national platform for deliberations on emerging challenges and

opportunities in agriculture, horticulture, livestock, fisheries, veterinary sciences, and ecological sustainability.

Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, who was the chief guest at the inaugural session, emphasised that technological integration is crucial for transforming India's agricultural landscape and achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. He described the conference theme as both timely and highly relevant in the current agricultural and ecological context, noting that SKUAST-K has long served as a hub for interdisciplinary research and technological innovation in agri-



culture and allied sciences.

Prof. Ganai highlighted the transformative potential of digital agriculture, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, precision farming, climate-smart technologies, and entrepreneurship in elevating Indian agriculture and realising the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. He further underscored the need for stronger collaboration among researchers, policy-

makers, industry stakeholders, and farmers to ensure sustainable agricultural growth and food security.

Director Extension, Prof. Raikhana Habib Kanth, who delivered the inaugural address, outlined the objectives of the conference and its significance in promoting innovation-driven agricultural development through interdisciplinary collaboration and technological

advancement. The inaugural was also attended by Director Education, Prof. Mohamad Altaf Bhat; Registrar, SKUAST-K, Prof. Azmat Alam Khan; and Prof. Jag Paul (JP) Sharma, Founder President of SIDAVES.

The event witnessed participation from eminent scientists, academicians, policymakers, industry representatives, and delegates from leading agricultural institutions and allied organizations across the country, including ICAR institutes, State Agricultural Universities, research organizations, and extension agencies.

Over the course of three days, experts will participate

in eight technical sessions focusing on precision agriculture, nanotechnology, machine learning, genetic resource management, regenerative agriculture, post-harvest technologies, biodiversity conservation, and climate change management.

A special lecture on "Speed Breeding" is scheduled to be delivered by Prof. Vikas K Singh, Director and Lead South Asia at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). These deliberations are expected to generate innovative solutions and policy recommendations to shape future strategies for sustainable agricultural development.

Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

Why We Can't Afford To Forget Our Traditional Boatmen

When we talk about Kashmir, we talk about its soul, and a massive part of that soul floats on water. Tourism isn't just a line item in our budget; it's the heartbeat of the Valley. It's what keeps the kitchens running for thousands of families, from the weavers in downtown Srinagar to the drivers navigating the mountain passes. Every year, we see flashy new campaigns and heavy investments aimed at bringing the world to our doorstep. Yet, if you look closely at the ripples on our lakes, you'll see a community that feels entirely left behind. Kashmir's traditional motorboat owners are quietly slipping into the shadows.

For generations, these boatmen have been the unsung custodians of our tourism industry. Long before luxury resorts and high-speed water sports arrived, it was their wooden boats that carried travelers across the glassy waters, offering a front-row seat to the Valley's magic. They didn't just provide a ride; they provided an experience, a memory, and a warm Kashmiri welcome. They are as tethered to the identity of Dal and Nigeen lakes as the mountains themselves. Today, however, that legacy is fraying.

The reality on the ground, or rather, on the water, is stark: Aging Fleets: Most traditional motorboats are decades old and desperately need a lifeline. The Eco-Dilemma: Boatmen want to upgrade. They want safer vessels and greener, eco-friendly engines, but the capital to do so is completely out of reach. Silenced Pleas: For years, their requests for modernization grants and technical support have been met with bureaucratic silence.

What stings the most for these families is the glaring double standard. While traditional boatmen struggle to patch up their aging vessels, shiny new jet-powered boats and modern commercial water attractions are welcomed with open arms, subsidies, and official fanfare. Progress shouldn't require erasure. Innovation is fantastic, but it becomes cruel when it pushes the very people who built the industry to the margins. True development has to be inclusive. If we only incentivize the new while starving the traditional, we aren't just losing businesses—we are losing our heritage. If these boats disappear, a piece of Kashmir's unique charm dies with them.

What these men are asking for isn't charity; it's a fair partnership. The government needs to step in with a targeted, empathetic support package. We need: Modernization Grants: To help owners transition to cleaner, safer, and more efficient technology. Soft Loans: Low-interest financial assistance that doesn't trap struggling families in debt. Technical Training: Equipping traditional boatmen with the skills needed to navigate a modern, eco-conscious tourism landscape.

Kashmir's tourism story should be a narrative of shared prosperity, not exclusion. The men who have spent their lives guiding travelers through our waters have earned our respect, our gratitude, and above all, a fair chance to ride the wave of the future. It's time we gave it to them.

When The Water Cycle Became A Commodity

DR GOPABANDHU DASH

The United Nations University recently reported that humanity has entered an era of "global water bankruptcy" a state in which long-term water usage persistently exceeds natural replenishment, permanently depleting water "savings" such as natural aquifers and glaciers. The term "water bankruptcy" describes a new global reality: humanity's freshwater usage has so far exceeded natural replenishment that critical water systems have become insolvent and irreversibly damaged.

Under the neocapitalist framework, which prioritizes privatization, commodification, and free-market logic, water creates economic opportunity for capitalist states. No longer viewed as a limitless utility, a renewable resource, or a global common good free for all, water rights are now traded on financial markets, treating a basic human need like oil or gold. This allows corporations to corner markets and bet on scarcity. In this neocapitalist world order, water bankruptcy is weaponized through the prioritization of accumulation over reproduction. The result is often water regimes that serve corporate and industrial needs while rationing water for the poor.

The United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU INWEH) has characterized water bankruptcy as a shift from a temporary crisis to a persistent state of failure. Unlike "water stress," bankruptcy implies that historical baselines cannot be restored; the damage to aquifers and ecosystems is effectively permanent. Seventy percent of major aquifers are in long-term decline, and 75 percent of the global population now lives in water-insecure countries. The report argues that surface water and rain represent "income," while groundwater, glaciers, and wetlands constitute "savings." By "bankruptcy," they mean the exhaustion of these savings, leading to a permanent state of systemic collapse.

In a neo-capitalist system, water scarcity is rarely a technical accident it is a governance choice. In this system, supplies are diverted to protect high-value sectors such as data centers, agribusiness, and corporate industrial sites, while informal settlements, small farmers, and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe farmers face severe rationing.

The benefits of over-extraction and attendant pollution accrue to powerful users, while the environmental and social costs of extraction are socialized—or borne by peasants, landless marginalized tenants, and others. Small



landholders and indigenous communities suffer the earliest and hardest impacts, leading to displacement and migration as rational responses to ecological insolvency. The loss of wetlands alone is estimated at \$5.1 trillion, equivalent to the combined annual GDP of the 135 poorest countries. Half of the world's food production occurs in areas where water storage is already unstable, creating hydrological fault lines for global trade. Due to the failure of water systems, social tensions and conflicts arise—particularly when cuts are perceived as unfair or skewed toward corporate interests.

The global water cycle is the lifeline of planet Earth. It is an enormous environmental pump, with forests transpiring moisture and replenishing atmospheric rivers of freshwater. It regulates the climate through evaporation and cloud formation. It acts as a filter, purifying water as it percolates through soils and wetlands. This global common has come under strain owing to the competing interests of neo-capitalist corporate conglomerates—who weaponize global water bankruptcy to deprive ordinary people of their rightful claim over the water cycle.

Erik Berglöf, in an article in Orissa Post, highlights this issue, noting that an estimated \$7 trillion is needed to close the global financing gap for investment in water infrastructure by 2030. Multilateral development banks such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the World Bank have an important role in mobilizing finance toward water cycle preservation. However, according to AIIB estimates, water-related projects account for a decreasing share (around 14%)

of total development assistance. It is therefore imperative to boost investment across the water cycle, integrating natural, engineered, and digital infrastructure, promote economic reforms to align fiscal policies across borders, and mobilize private finance toward water-focused initiatives.

Emerging science and technology could transform water governance through satellite data, remote sensing, and improved modeling. These tools allow for real-time monitoring of water flows, infrastructure performance, and environmental conditions. Leveraging these technologies to improve governance would lay the groundwork for scaling up investment in the water cycle.

Neo-capitalist policies advocate for more market and less state. This has eroded social spending on water infrastructure and prevented governments from managing resources for the collective good. Addressing global water bankruptcy requires moving away from the assumption that economic prosperity requires ever-increasing water withdrawals. The economic and environmental reset requires the following policy commitments.

- Transitioning to structured recovery, transparent water accounting, and enforceable limits.
- Democratizing water management to guarantee basic human rights over corporate profit.
- Treating water as a foundational public good, halting over-extraction that causes irreversible damage to ecosystems.
- Recognizing that globalized supply chains enable virtual water trading, where water-stressed regions, especially the Global South, export water-inten-

This allows corporations to corner markets and bet on scarcity. In this neo-capitalist world order, water bankruptcy is weaponized through the prioritization of accumulation over reproduction.

sive agricultural products to wealthier countries. This drains the water savings accounts of developing nations to support consumption elsewhere. This practice must be stopped.

Acknowledging that nearly 70% of global freshwater goes toward agriculture. Neoliberal globalization incentivizes water-intensive, export-oriented cash crop farming in arid or semi-arid regions. This extraction disrupts local water cycles and fundamentally alters humanity's relationship with nature, leading to aquifer depletion.

Understanding that in the neoliberal framework, water is treated not as a public right but as an economic good. This facilitates the transfer of water management from state to non-state actors, who prioritize financial efficiency, debt servicing, and shareholder returns over equity and sustainable access to global commons.

The world is moving towards a more uncertain, water-insecure future, it is incumbent upon governments to ensure the restoration and maintenance of the water cycle for the common good, not for corporations. Water, needless to emphasize, is the foundation that connects every aspect of human existence. It is too risky to weaponize "water bankruptcy" to deprive people of their rightful claims over the water cycle.

Author is Researcher, Bhuvaneshwar, Odisha

When Social Media Content Becomes Death



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

In recent days, videos depicting the brutal murder of an innocent child and the tragic killing of a shopkeeper in Hansi have been posted and shared extensively on social media. Just a glimpse of these videos is enough to send shivers down the spine of any sensitive individual. Very few people have the courage to watch the entire video. Anyone who watches them is distraught by their horror and inhumanity. Such videos carry no message, no positive intention, but only pain, fear, and mental discomfort. Therefore, it's natural to question whether the open dissemination of such content on social media is justified, and shouldn't platforms be responsible for removing it immediately?

In the digital age, the exchange of information has become much faster than ever before. Any incident reaches millions of people within minutes. This is a positive aspect of technology, as it provides people with instant information. However, when this same technology is used to spread horrific images of murder, accidents, or personal tragedies, it becomes a matter of concern. There is a clear distinction between information and sensationalism. While reporting an incident may be necessary, repeatedly broadcasting gruesome images of that incident is in no way justified.

When a child is murdered or a person is brutally killed,

it's not just a news story. Behind it lies a family's pain, countless shattered dreams, and a lifetime of grief. When such videos go viral, the suffering of the affected families is exacerbated. Those already

Sometimes, people post videos claiming they are showing the truth, when in reality, they are unknowingly or intentionally turning a traumatic event into a digital spectacle.



are unknowingly or intentionally turning a traumatic event into a digital spectacle. Using someone's death or suffering as a means to gain popularity is not only a sign of insensitivity but also a sign of the erosion of social values.

Such videos are also extremely harmful psychologically. Viewing violent and bloody scenes can increase stress, fear, anxiety, and mental distress in people. Many sensitive individuals are left with long-term distress. The impact on children and adolescents can be even more severe. They may either become extremely fearful or begin to accept violence as normal behavior. In the open world of the Internet, it is nearly impossible to ensure that such videos remain limited to adults. Therefore, their uncontrolled spread poses a threat to society's mental health.

Another serious problem is that constantly viewing violent content can lead to increased insensitivity. Scenes that previously horrified the mind gradually begin to seem normal. Repeatedly witnessing scenes of murder, accidents, and bloodshed can weaken a

person's sense of compassion and empathy. This is not a good sign for any society. The hallmark of a healthy society is its sensitivity. If people stop empathizing with the suffering of others, the foundation of social relationships and human values begins to weaken.

This is where the responsibility of social media platforms becomes crucial. Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, and other digital platforms have advanced technology and artificial intelligence tools to identify violent content. Yet, many horrific videos remain on the platforms for hours, sometimes even days, reaching millions of people. This situation is unacceptable. Videos depicting murder, serious violence, or crimes against children must be removed immediately. Strict action must be taken against those who upload and disseminate such content.

The role of the media is also crucial in this context. The purpose of journalism is not only to attract audience attention, but also to provide information responsibly. Over the years, certain ethical standards have been established in journalism, which ensure

the dignity of the deceased, the privacy of victims, and the psychological safety of viewers. These same values must be adhered to on digital and social media as well. While information about an incident can be provided, repeatedly displaying its horror is not journalism, but sensationalism. However, blaming only the platforms and media isn't enough. Viewers and ordinary citizens also have a responsibility. It's not necessary to share violent videos after viewing or receiving them. If people report such videos, stop forwarding them, and encourage others to do the same, their spread can be significantly curbed. Digital citizenship means not just using the internet, but also using it responsibly.

The need today is to use technology to strengthen humanity, not to turn suffering into a spectacle. Our first reaction to a tragic event should be empathy, sympathy, and a demand for justice, not the forwarding of horrific videos. The murder of an innocent child or the death of an innocent person is a matter of grief and introspection for society, not entertainment or curiosity.

In fact, the hallmark of any civilized and sensitive society is its respect and compassion for its most vulnerable and suffering. If we broadcast someone's final suffering as social media content, we are not just sharing a video but also losing a part of our sensitivity. Therefore, the need of the hour is for social media platforms to immediately remove such content, for the law to take its course, and for society itself to resolve to make humanity and compassion viral, not tragedy. This is the greatest moral imperative of the digital age.

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

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■ Coaching Or Crutch?

What India's Exam Mania Is Doing To Our Kids



DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH

In India, education has been considered a medium of knowledge, culture, and social change for centuries. Teachers have enjoyed special respect in society because they not only impart subject knowledge but also shape the personality and character of students. However, changes in the field of education over the past few decades have significantly impacted this idealistic concept. In particular, the increasing number of competitive examinations, the attraction to government jobs, and the pursuit of better careers have transformed the coaching industry into a huge economic sector. Today, in many cities across the country, coaching institutes have established a parallel system within the education system, the impact of which is visible on schools, students, parents, and even policymakers.

In recent years, the proliferation of social media and digital platforms has further accelerated this trend. Many teachers and coaching institutes are reaching millions of students through YouTube, Instagram, and other mediums. This isn't inherently bad. Technology has made education more accessible and played a vital role in providing quality content to students in remote areas. The problem arises when the purpose of education shifts from knowledge acquisition to personal brand building, promotion, and business expansion.

Recently, senior journalist Anjana Om Kashyap's jibe at a YouTube teacher during a popular TV debate sparked widespread discussion on social media. Opinions on this incident may vary. Some consider it a sharp journalistic comment, while others see it as disrespectful to teachers. However, this controversy has raised an important question: has the field of education

Many families, putting a heavy financial burden on their families, send their children to expensive coaching classes. Thousands of students from small towns and rural areas migrate to cities considered coaching hubs.

become increasingly publicized and commercialized? Is an environment being created to influence students and parents in which coaching is presented as a prerequisite for success?

The reality is that many parents today believe that their children cannot succeed in any competitive exam without coaching. This belief has gradually become so ingrained that the usefulness of school education is being questioned. Many families, putting a heavy financial burden on their families, send their children to expensive coaching classes. Thousands of students from small towns and rural areas migrate to cities considered coaching hubs. In this process, family savings, children's mental health, and social life are all affected.

This situation isn't just a result of students' mindsets. It also reflects some genuine challenges within the education system. There's often a disconnect between the curriculum taught in schools and the requirements of competitive exams. Many competitive exams require topics outside the school curriculum, specialized reasoning skills, or exam-specific strategies. As a result, students and parents feel that school education alone is insufficient. The coaching industry capital-



izes on this perception and presents itself as the key to success.

However, it must be acknowledged that not all coaching institutes can be viewed with the same prism. Many institutes and teachers are sincerely providing quality guidance to students. They have provided opportunities to students who otherwise would not have access to better resources. Online education has made study materials accessible to millions of young people at low costs. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to portray the entire coaching sector negatively. The problem lies in the trend where publicity, personality cults, and unrealistic claims take center stage over education.

In the age of social media, some teachers have established themselves as brands. Their videos, posts, and advertisements are constantly presented to students. Success stories are highlighted, while the number of students who fail is less discussed. It is often given the impression that joining a particular teacher or coaching institute guarantees success. However, the reality is that success in any exam depends on many factors—a student's hard work, family support, mental state, study resources, and time management are among them.

Another worrying aspect is the growing personality-centric culture

in education. Some teachers seem more focused on self-promotion than on their subject or institution. Huge billboards, constant advertising, social media campaigns, and the resources spent on personal image-building raise the question: is the student the center of education, or the teacher's brand? The goal of education should be the dissemination of knowledge, not the blind imitation of a personality.

The comparison of Hindi-medium and English-medium coaching culture has also been a topic of discussion. It's often suggested that some Hindi-medium teachers rely heavily on publicity, while English-medium institutions prioritize institutional recognition. While this distinction isn't entirely accurate, it's clear that the trend toward personal branding through social media is more pronounced in certain areas. This also impacts students, who become more influenced by popularity and follower counts than the quality of content.

The role of the government and education regulators is also crucial in this entire scenario. If school education is strong enough to provide basic preparation for competitive exams, excessive reliance on coaching will naturally decrease. The National Education Policy has made efforts to make school education more skill-

based and practical, but the impact of these reforms will take time to be felt on a widespread scale. Furthermore, the structure, curriculum, and evaluation system of competitive exams must be transparent and balanced, ensuring that there is no unnecessary gap between school learning and exam expectations.

The role of parents is no less important. They must understand that coaching can be a means to success, but not the sole prerequisite. It's not advisable to accept the claims of any institution or teacher without due diligence. It's essential to understand the difference between advertising and actual results. It's more important to focus on children's interests, abilities, and mental health rather than putting unnecessary pressure on them.

Students also need to understand that no teacher, no matter how popular, can replace their hard work. Digital platforms are excellent tools for learning, but they must be used judiciously. Popularity and quality are not always the same thing. Choosing a teacher or institution should be based not on their publicity, but on their educational value, subject expertise, and tangible benefits to students.

Ultimately, the question isn't about a single journalist, a YouTube teacher, or a particular institution. The real issue is the increasing commercialization of education and the mindset that sells success as a commodity. The purpose of education is to develop thinking, understanding, and social responsibility. If this purpose is lost in the chaos of publicity, branding, and commercial competition, it will not only be the students who suffer, but society as a whole.

The need of the hour is to reconnect education with its original purpose. Strengthen schools, balance competitive exams with curriculum, establish transparent standards for coaching institutes, and convince students that their own hard work, discipline, and learning are the key to success. Only then will education truly become a vehicle for nation-building, not just a lucrative business.

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

■ Drug Addiction

But For How Long, If Addiction Takes Over?

LALIT GARGG

India today stands among the countries with the largest youth population in the world. Nearly 65 percent of its population is below the age of 35. This youthful demographic is India's greatest strength, its most valuable asset, and the cornerstone of its bright future. The nation's achievements in science, technology, industry, education, sports, and innovation have been driven largely by this vibrant young generation. Yet, ironically, this very segment of society is increasingly falling into the trap of substance abuse.

Addiction is no longer merely a personal weakness or a public health concern; it has emerged as a serious threat to national security, social stability, economic development, and cultural values. The periodic seizure of narcotics worth millions and even billions of rupees across different parts of the country demonstrates that drug trafficking has evolved into a vast and highly organized international criminal network. Border states such as Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and several northeastern states have become particularly vulnerable due to cross-border smuggling. Frequent interceptions of large consignments of heroin, opium, charas, cocaine, and synthetic drugs by security agencies indicate that India is increasingly being viewed as a lucrative market for narcotics.

According to reports from the National Crime Records Bureau and various government studies, millions of young Indians are addicted to one form of substance abuse or another. A comprehensive survey conducted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment revealed that crores of Indians consume tobacco, alcohol, and other intoxicating substances, with a significant proportion being young people. What is especially alarming is the growing penetration of drugs into schools and colleges. Several states have reported cases where adolescents have been used in drug distribution



and trafficking networks.

The escalating drug menace also carries a significant national security dimension. Many security experts believe that after repeatedly failing in direct military confrontations, Pakistan has increasingly resorted to proxy warfare tactics such as terrorism, counterfeit currency, and drug trafficking to destabilize India. For years, Punjab has witnessed the smuggling of narcotics across the border through drones and other sophisticated means. Jammu & Kashmir, too, is now experiencing the growing impact of this threat. As terrorism-related incidents decline, the spread of narcotics is emerging as a new weapon aimed at weakening the nation's youth and eroding the vitality of society.

In this context, the "Drug-Free Jammu & Kashmir" campaign launched in the Union Territory has gained considerable significance. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the initiative emphasizes not only administrative action but also community participation. Its most notable feature is the effort to involve educational institutions, social organizations, religious groups, and ordinary citizens. The sup-

port extended by communities in districts such as Kulgam and elsewhere underscores an important reality: a challenge as complex as drug addiction can only be overcome through collective action.

The most tragic and devastating impact of addiction falls upon the younger generation. Youth symbolizes energy, creativity, ambition, and dreams, but addiction destroys these possibilities. Once trapped in substance abuse, an individual gradually loses physical health, mental stability, financial security, and social respect. Self-confidence erodes, while depression, stress, and criminal tendencies often take root. Addiction does not merely destroy an individual; it destabilizes entire families. Economic hardship deepens, relationships deteriorate, and social harmony is disrupted.

Drug abuse is not driven by trafficking alone. Its roots also lie in social, economic, and psychological factors. Unemployment, uncertainty about the future, intense competition, family conflicts, social fragmentation, loneliness, mental stress, and negative peer influence often push young people toward substance abuse. The rise of consumerist culture has fur-

ther promoted a mindset of instant gratification and artificial pleasure. In the absence of purpose, direction, and positive motivation, individuals become more susceptible to destructive habits. The connection between addiction and crime is equally profound. Numerous studies have shown that theft, robbery, violence, road accidents, and other criminal activities are increasingly linked to substance abuse. Many young addicts turn to crime to finance their addiction. This not only undermines law and order but also creates an atmosphere of fear and insecurity within society.

Governments at both the national and state levels are making sustained efforts to address this challenge. Joint operations by the Narcotics Control Bureau, the National Investigation Agency, the Border Security Force, and state police forces have dismantled several major drug syndicates. Special drives in Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Jammu & Kashmir have intensified the crackdown on traffickers and their networks. In this struggle, social and spiritual movements have an equally vital role to play. Laws can create deterrence, but lasting transformation comes only through awareness, self-discipline, and moral awakening. Revered spiritual leader Acharya Tulsi transformed de-addiction into a mass social movement through the Anuvrat Movement. By promoting self-restraint, ethical conduct, and personal discipline, he inspired millions to embrace a life free from addictions. His campaign achieved remarkable success in many regions.

Similarly, Acharya Mahashraman, through his historic Ahimsa Yatra, has inspired millions across India and neighboring countries to renounce intoxicants. One of the central objectives of his extensive foot journeys has been to awaken moral consciousness and encourage young people to adopt a drug-free lifestyle. Covering thousands of kilometers, he has carried the message from village to village and city to city that freedom from addiction is not merely a matter of protecting

health—it is the foundation of self-development, family well-being, and nation-building. The need of the hour is a comprehensive and multidimensional strategy to combat addiction. Border surveillance and technological security mechanisms must be further strengthened. Advanced systems should be deployed to prevent drone-based smuggling. Swift judicial processes must ensure stringent punishment for traffickers, creating a strong deterrent effect. Anti-drug education should become an integral part of school and college curricula. Greater opportunities in employment, sports, skill development, and cultural activities should be created so that youthful energy can be directed toward constructive pursuits. Simultaneously, rehabilitation centers must be expanded and upgraded to provide effective treatment and reintegration support.

For Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, and other affected regions, the fight against addiction is no longer merely a social reform initiative; it has become a matter of national security and nation-building. This battle cannot be won by governments and law enforcement agencies alone. Families, educational institutions, religious organizations, social groups, the media, and responsible citizens must join hands to transform it into a people's movement. Just as the Swachh Bharat Mission succeeded through public participation, the dream of a Drug-Free India can also be realized through collective commitment and sustained effort. India's youth are its greatest national asset. If this immense human potential falls prey to addiction, the country's progress will inevitably suffer. However, if the youth are nurtured to become healthy, disciplined, aware, and purpose-driven, India can emerge as a powerful global leader. The fight against addiction, therefore, is not merely a social campaign, it is a solemn commitment to securing the future of the nation.

The author can be mailed at lalitgarg11@gmail.com

DIPR Bids emotional farewell to Information Officer Syed Jeelani Qadri

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Wednesday accorded a warm and emotional farewell to Information Officer, Syed Jeelani Qadri on his superannuation after rendering dedicated and distinguished service to the department.

A grand farewell function was organized by the DIPR in honour of the retiring officer, which was presided over by Director Information, Shreya Singh.

Joint Director Information (Hqrs), Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina; Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari; Deputy Director Informa-



tion (PR/AV), Javid Ahmad Rather; Deputy Director (PR) Srinagar, Rafiq Ahmad; Deputy Director (Hqr) Kashmir, Zubair Ahmad; other officers and officials of DIPR were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Information highlighted the invaluable contributions, commitment, and professionalism of Syed Jeelani throughout

his illustrious career. She recalled his sincerity, work ethic and amiable personality that earned him widespread respect across the department.

Addressing the gathering, Joint Director, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina highlighted Qadri's unwavering dedication and significant role in strengthening the department's communication and public outreach

initiatives 24x7. He lauded his exemplary service record and wished him a healthy, happy and fulfilling post-retirement life.

Deputy Director Information (PR/AV), Javid Ahmad Rather in his address described him as a dependable and compassionate professional whose guidance and cooperative spirit inspired many during his tenure.

In his farewell address, Syed Jeelani Qadri expressed heartfelt thanks to the department's leadership and his colleagues for their support, cooperation, and camaraderie over the years. He described his tenure in DIPR as a rewarding journey filled with learning, growth, and cherished memories.

Functioning of ministers comes under scanner at CM's meet with MLAs

Legislators gun for Deputy CM, allege bias in allocation of funds by R&B Department

UMER MAQBOOL

SRINAGAR: MLAs of the ruling National Conference as well as independent legislators supporting the government gunned for Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary during a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at Dachigam here on Wednesday, accusing him of biased allocation of funds in the key Roads & Buildings Department headed by him.

Contrary to speculations, governance-particularly the functioning of ministers-dominated discussions during the seven-hour-long meeting, even as some MLAs spoke about expediting efforts for restoration of statehood.

Sources confirmed that legislators from both NC and independents questioned the functioning of the Roads & Buildings Department under the Deputy CM's control.

"Most of the MLAs expressed resentment over discriminatory allocations made by R&B Minister as well as his behavior with them," sources said.

According to sources, MLAs-particularly from Pir Panchal-targeted the Deputy CM for allocating lion's share in funds/projects to the Nowshera Assembly segment while leaving other constituencies with meagre amounts.

Citing figures of distribution of funds under NABARD, SASCI, Capex

bridge programme and other schemes, the MLAs alleged that the Deputy CM had resorted to brazen discrimination in fund allotment.

Sources said Aijaz Jan (MLA Poonch Haveli), Javid Choudhary (MLA Budhal), Muzaffar Khan (MLA Thanamandi), and Choudhary Akram (MLA Surankote) were vociferous against Surinder Choudhary, who also hails from Pir Panchal.

They added that MLAs from the Kashmir Valley, especially Javid Baig (MLA Baramulla) and Ali Muhammad Dar (MLA Chadoora), also spoke against the functioning of Choudhary.

"They also alleged that there has been discrimi-

nation with them in fund allocation by R&B Department," sources said adding that one legislator from Kashmir also demanded that he should be sacked.

According to sources, CM Omar Abdullah reportedly told the Deputy CM to address these complaints within one month.

Some MLAs also complained about the functioning of Javid Rana (Minister for PHE, Irrigation & Flood Control) and Satish Sharma (Minister for CAPD & Youth Services and Sports).

Repeated attempts to seek comments of these ministers proved futile. The KNO will update their version or NC's version on the matter as and when they are available to speak—(KNO)

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

CM Omar Holds

journalist said. Another reporter said the scene, marked by constant live updates and the movement of political leaders, briefly turned Dachigam into the Valley's media focal point.

The meeting concluded after nearly nine hours of deliberations. During the session, the party also finalised its plan to stage a protest in New Delhi on the opening day of Parliament's Monsoon Session, reiterating its demand for restoration of statehood and constitutional guarantees—(KNO)

The Surprise Venue

been kept ready in advance. When media personnel saw MLAs coming out of the CM's residence, they were taken by surprise about the destination of the meeting.

At 10:38 AM, in a post on X, CM Omar Abdullah, as per news agency—KNO, said they were heading for an off-site to spend the day reviewing the last 19 months of his government.

"We are off for an off-site to spend the day taking stock of the last 19 months—the good, the not so good, and everything in between," Omar wrote in his post.

Adding to the curiosity, NC MLA Bashir Ahmad Veeri posted on X seven minutes later that they had crossed Shalimar and were heading to an unknown destination. Interestingly, both Veeri and the CM were travelling in the same vehicle.

At around 11:00 AM, they reached Dachigam National Park and headed to the guest house commonly known as Indira Guest House—the place where former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi used to stay.

The meeting was held in the lawns of the guest house, with MLAs as well as ministers keeping their phones switched off—(KNO)

LG, CM Mourn

recovery to those injured, and expressed solidarity with everyone affected by the tragedy.

The cause of the fire has not yet been officially disclosed. Authorities have initiated an investigation to ascertain the circumstances that led to the incident.

The tragedy has drawn condolences from leaders across the country, while emergency and civic agencies continue relief and support measures for those impacted.

Congress Can Join

it decides to alter its stance. "One ministry post is still vacant for them. If they seek a ministry berth, I am ready to give it to them," he said.

The Chief Minister further stated that if required, he would take up the matter with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and complete the formalities necessary for Congress joining the government.

Omar maintained that both National Conference and Congress share a common objective regarding restoration of statehood and are waiting for the Centre to fulfill its commitment. [KNT]

Trekkers Urge

to remain shut. Ahmad said the bookings for trekking activities begin as early as February, and the summer months are critical for the sector.

"While we start our bookings in February, the months of June, July and August are crucial for earning our livelihood. Adventure tourism is community-based and provides employment opportunities right at the local doorstep," he said.

The guide said the prolonged closure has pushed more than 200 adventure tour operators into financial hardship. "Many operators are struggling to repay bank loans, and several accounts are on the verge of turning into NPAs. Hundreds of families are directly or indirectly dependent on adventure tourism for their livelihood," Ahmad added.

Another trek operator said, "The Great Lakes trek is among Kashmir's most sought-after adventure attractions. Keeping these routes closed for an extended period is affecting not only trekkers but the entire tourism ecosystem linked to the sector."

Fayaz Ahmad, a local trekking guide from Sonamarg, said they are receiving numerous inquiries from tourists specifically seeking trekking packages, but operators are unable to confirm bookings due to the continued closure of trekking routes.

"We are getting regular queries from tourists interested in trekking, but we have been forced to keep bookings on hold as the routes remain closed," he said.

The trekkers appealed to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to intervene and facilitate the reopening of the routes while ensuring all necessary safety measures are in place.

They said the Great Lakes trek plays a vital role in generating seasonal employment and attracts a large number of domestic and international tourists to the region every year—(KNO)

CS Reviews Preparedness

training of all functionaries associated with the implementation of the scheme. He emphasized that every employee at the district, block and Gram Panchayat level should be adequately trained and fully conversant with the provisions, procedures and technological platforms under VB-G RAM G before its rollout.

During the meeting, the Secretary Rural Development, Aijaz Asad apprised that extensive awareness and outreach campaigns have been conducted across all districts, covering all 4,291 Gram Panchayats through special Gram Sabhas, community engagement programmes, social media campaigns and newspaper outreach initiatives.

Reviewing the planning process under the Yuktdhara platform, the Chief Secretary was informed that all 20 districts, 285 blocks and 4,291 Gram Panchayats have been onboarded with 100 per cent login creation. Planning activities have commenced in more than 94 per cent Gram Panchayats, while over 92 per cent have already submitted their plans. Around 3,849 Gram Sabhas have approved development plans and more than 63,000 works have been identified, providing a robust shelf of projects to cater to anticipated labour demand under the new programme.

The meeting was further informed that Jammu and Kashmir has emerged among the top-performing States and Union Territories in e-KYC coverage and face authentication compliance of MGNREGA workers, with all Gram Panchayats achieving full coverage. The Chief Secretary noted that the adoption of technology-driven governance mechanisms under VB-G RAM G, including face authentication, geofencing, AI-enabled analytics and real-time monitoring dashboards, would further strengthen transparency, account-

ability and service delivery.

Regarding the operational readiness of the new scheme, the meeting was apprised that the draft notification for implementation of VB-G RAM G has been prepared and submitted for approval, while the rules, dedicated accounts, budgetary provisions and integration of financial management systems are being pursued in accordance with timelines prescribed by the Ministry of Rural Development. The categorisation of Gram Panchayats and other preparatory activities are also progressing as scheduled.

The Chief Secretary also called for sustained public outreach and close monitoring at all levels so that the objectives of the flagship rural employment and development initiative are realized effectively across Jammu and Kashmir from day one of its implementation.

Drung Emerges As Cool

cool weather, is equally famous for its winter transformation when the stream partially freezes, creating stunning icicles and ice formations that draw tourists from across the country—(KNO)

Fertility Rate,

high at 94.8 per cent, while early antenatal registration during the first trimester improved to 89.9 per cent from 86.6 per cent.

The survey further noted a substantial increase in the number of mothers completing at least four antenatal check-ups, which climbed to 90.6 per cent from 81.1 per cent. Coverage of Mother and Child Protection cards among registered pregnancies also improved, reaching 99 per cent against 97.3 per cent recorded earlier.

According to the findings, public health-care institutions accounted for 80.3 per cent of all institutional deliveries in Jammu and Kashmir. Meanwhile, the proportion of caesarean-section births witnessed a significant increase, rising to 51 per cent from 41.7 per cent in NFHS-5.

The survey also reflected gains in education, financial inclusion and digital connectivity across Jammu and Kashmir. The proportion of females aged six years and above who had attended school rose to 71.3 per cent, compared to 70.1 per cent in the previous survey.

Access to the internet witnessed a marked improvement, particularly among women. Around 63.6 per cent of women reported having used the internet, up from 43.3 per cent in NFHS-5. Among men, internet usage increased from 62 per cent to 80.8 per cent during the same period.

Health security coverage expanded significantly, with 96.3 per cent of households reporting coverage under a health insurance or financing scheme, a steep rise from 13.8 per cent recorded earlier.

The findings further showed improved early childhood engagement, with attendance in pre-school among children aged 2-4 years increasing to 40.1 per cent from 27.2 per cent. Financial inclusion also strengthened, as 98.7 per cent of households reported having a bank or post office account, compared to 96.8 per cent in NFHS-5.

The survey also flagged a shift in family planning preferences. The use of traditional contraceptive methods among women increased considerably to 21.8 per cent from 7.3 per cent, while adoption of modern contraceptive methods declined to 39.4 per cent from 52.5 per cent in the previous survey—(KNO)

Zojila Tunnel Breakthrough

Infrastructures Limited, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that excavation has entered its final phase, with only a few metres of digging left before the two ends of the tunnel meet.

He said work on the main tunnel was undertaken simultaneously from the Baltal side in Kashmir and the Minamarg side in Ladakh to accelerate construction.

The project, awarded in 2020 and taken up for execution in 2021, has witnessed construction under challenging Himalayan conditions, including weak rock formations, water seepage and difficult terrain. More than a thousand engineers, technicians and workers are currently involved in the project.

Constructed at an estimated cost of about Rs 2,600 crore, the tunnel is designed as a single-tube, two-lane structure with a horseshoe-shaped profile. It is being built using the New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM), which is considered suitable for complex mountain geology.

Following the breakthrough, focus will shift to internal works, including concrete lining, installation of ventilation systems and other safety infrastructure.

The tunnel will also feature a dedicated walkway for maintenance and emergency operations. Once completed, it is expected to significantly improve connectivity, mobility and economic activity in the region throughout the year—(KNO)

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DC Srinagar reviews progress of infrastructure upgradation projects

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, Wednesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting at Meeting hall of the DC Office Complex to assess the progress of healthcare infrastructure projects and traffic decongestion measures being executed by multiple departments at Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura and Associated hospitals under Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by the Administrator Associated Hospitals GMC Srinagar, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Superintending Engineers of various departments, Additional CEO and Chief Engineer of Srinagar Smart City Limited, Medical Superintendent SKIMS Soura, Executive Engineers of R&B, Mechanical and Hospital Divisions, representatives from Police Housing Corporation, KPDC, Water Works Division, District Youth Services & Sports Department, Traffic Police, Revenue Department and other concerned officers.

During the review, the Deputy Commissioner took



stock of several key initiatives relating to the expansion of healthcare infrastructure, implementation of traffic decongestion measures, enhancement of access to SKIMS Soura through road widening, and identification of land for the proposed new OPD block of the institute.

The DC also reviewed progress on projects aimed at improving sports and recreational infrastructure, library and smart classroom facilities, sanitation and civic services, hostel amenities, landscaping, and overall campus development at GMC Srinagar.

Emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts among all stakeholder departments, the Deputy Commissioner directed the executing agencies to ensure the timely comple-

tion of all approved projects. He underscored that the initiatives are important for making healthcare institutions under GMC Srinagar and SKIMS Soura more patient-friendly.

On the occasion, the DC stressed the importance of prioritizing traffic decongestion measures ensuring hassle-free movement of patients, attendants and emergency vehicles within and around the major healthcare facilities. He called for enhanced inter-departmental coordination and regular monitoring to remove bottlenecks and facilitate the swift execution of projects aimed at strengthening healthcare infrastructure and improving public service delivery.

The DC further underscored the need for sustained efforts towards

enhancing healthcare and educational infrastructure, stating that these projects will contribute substantially to improving facilities for medical students, healthcare professionals, patients and the general public.

The meeting was informed that administrative approval has been accorded for the development of a badminton court, basketball court, gymnasium, and reading room at the Girls Hostel of GMC Srinagar. In addition, projects for the establishment of a Reading-cum-IT Room and Indoor Sports Hall at the Nursing Hostel, as well as a jogging walkway, gym and Reading-cum-IT Room at the Boys Hostel, have also been approved. Installation of proper signage across the GMC campus is being undertaken to improve accessibility and navigation.

1st IFFJK to be held in Jammu and Kashmir from Sept 7-11

DIPR, NFDC to collaborate for landmark event

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a landmark initiative aimed at positioning Jammu and Kashmir as a vibrant destination for cinema, culture and creative industries, the Government has accorded sanction for the organisation of the 1st International Film Festival of Jammu & Kashmir (IFFJK), scheduled to be held at SKICC Srinagar and other prominent destinations from September 7 to 11, 2026.

The prestigious international event will be organised by the Directorate of Information & Public Relations (DIPR), Jammu & Kashmir, in collaboration with the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC). The festival is envisioned as a major platform to showcase cinematic excellence, promote cultural exchange and highlight Jammu and Kashmir's immense potential as a preferred destination for film production and tourism.

The International Film Festival of Jammu & Kashmir will bring together filmmakers, producers, directors, actors, industry experts, critics and

cinema enthusiasts from across India and abroad. The event is expected to feature screenings of acclaimed national and international films, panel discussions, master classes, interactive sessions, cultural programmes and networking opportunities for stakeholders from the film and entertainment sector.

The festival is also expected to provide significant exposure to local talent, encourage emerging filmmakers, and create avenues for collaboration between the regional film fraternity and the global cinema industry. Through this initiative, the Government aims to further strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's growing reputation as a hub for filmmaking and creative expression.

The maiden edition of the International Film Festival of Jammu & Kashmir is expected to mark a significant milestone in the Union Territory's cultural calendar and contribute substantially to the promotion of tourism, creative industries, youth engagement and economic activity associated with the film sector.

Horti Deptt issues Advisory for Hail-Affected Orchards in Bandipora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: In view of the recent hailstorm reported in some areas of District Bandipora, the Department of Horticulture, Bandipora has issued an advisory for orchardists, recommending various fungicidal and nutritional sprays for affected fruit crops.

According to the advisory, orchardists cultivating apple and pear crops have been advised to spray any one of the recommended fungicides, including Trifloxystrobin + Tuboconazole 75 WG @ 40g/100Lts of water or Zineb (68%)+ Hexaconazole(4%) 72 wp @ 125g/100Lts of water or Carbendazim 12%+ Mancozeb 63% (75% wp) @250g/100L of water or Propineb 70% wp @ 300g/100Lts of water or Mancozeb 75% wp @ 300g/100Lts of water or Zineb 75% wp @ 300g/100Lts of water.

Similarly, for Cherry, Apricot, Plum and Peach orchards, the advisory recommended Carbendazim 50 wp @ 50g/100L of water or Carbendazim 12%+ Mancozeb 63% (75%wp) @ 250g/100L of water or Thiophanate Methyl 70 wp @ 50g/100L of water.



The advisory further stated that a follow-up nutritional spray should be applied three days after fungicide spray. Orchardists have been advised to spray 0.2% urea solution (200g per 100 L water) to promote recovery and stimulate new growth in apple trees, while micronutrient spray may be required after 8-12 days for improvement of tissue repair.

The Department also advised orchardists to collect and remove fallen leaves, fruits and twigs, avoid water stagnation under all circumstances, and carry out spraying during cool and dry periods preferably in the early morning or evening hours.

The advisory added that if systemic fungicide was sprayed 2-3 days prior to the hailstorm, fungicide application should be delayed by 4-5 days

Hoteliers Association meets SMC Comm; Civic Infra, Sanitation measures reviewed

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A delegation of the Hoteliers Association Wednesday called on the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, and held detailed deliberations on a range of civic, sanitation, and urban service-related issues affecting the hospitality sector across Srinagar.

During the meeting, the delegation highlighted concerns regarding sanitation management, waste collection, cleanliness of public spaces, and the need for intensified civic interventions in areas witnessing significant tourist footfall and a high concentration of hotels and guest



houses. The members urged the Corporation to undertake focused sanitation drives and strengthen routine civic services in these localities to ensure a cleaner and more welcoming urban environment.

The representatives emphasized that maintaining high standards of sani-



tion and civic infrastructure is essential not only for the hospitality industry but also for enhancing the overall visitor experience and reinforcing Srinagar's image as a premier tourist destination.

Giving a patient hearing to the issues raised by the delegation, the Commis-

sioner assured the members that all genuine concerns would be addressed in a time-bound manner. He reiterated SMC's commitment to providing efficient civic services and maintaining robust sanitation standards across the city.

The Commissioner further stated that the Corporation remains focused on stakeholder engagement and collaborative governance, recognizing the important role of the tourism and hospitality sector in the economic growth of Srinagar. He emphasized that sustained coordination between civic agencies and industry stakeholders is vital for creating a clean, sustainable, and tourist-friendly urban ecosystem.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT H S BUGH QAIMOH

RE-ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE NO: 02- OF CDPO (H S BUGH) 2026
DATED: - 30/05/2026

Subject: Re-advertisement for Recruitment of Sangini (AWWs) and Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in Anganwadi Centres of POSHAN Project H S Bugh.

References:

1. Government Order No.222-JK (SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30.11.2022.
2. Government Order No.103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated: 28.04.2023.
3. Approval Letter No. - MD/Poshan /47205-12 Dated: 24-12-2025.
4. No. DPO/POSHAN/KUL/ 2025-26/555 Dated: - 29-12-2025.
5. Advertisement Notice No. 01 of 2026 Dated:01-02-2026.

Offline applications are invited from the eligible candidates for the posts of Sangini (AWWs) and Sahayikas (AWHs). The said posts have been already advertised vide this office Advertisement Notification No: - 01 of 2026 Dated:01-02-2026, but no /poor response have been received from the various locations, now these posts are being re-advertised for the locations mentioned below:

S.No	Name of Project	Name of Post	No. of Post
1	Poshan HS Bugh	Sangini (AWWs)	01
		Sahayikas (AWHs)	19

Candidates should carefully read the instructions regarding eligibility criteria before applying for the said posts and should primarily verify her name in panchayat voter list, if she finds her name only then she should complete the rest formalities.

The important dates/details with regard to the posts are as under:
Date of commencement for submission of applications 01.06.2026.
Last date for submission of applications is 10.06.2026.

Annexure A- Name of the Post, Location/Ward, Qualification and Criteria for selection
Application form Annexure-B
Annexure C- Affidavit.

ANNEXURE 'A' Format of Application

1. Name of POSHAN Project: - POSHAN H S BUGH
2. Name of Anganwadi Centre _____
3. Post applied for _____
4. Name of the Candidate _____
5. Father's Name _____
6. Husband's Name _____
7. Residence _____
8. Ward. No. _____
9. Contact No. _____
10. Address for Correspondence _____
11. Date of Birth _____
12. Age as on 01.01.2026 _____

Photograph Attested by
Gazetted Officer

Academic Qualification:

Sr. No.	Examination passed	Board	Year of Passing	Marks Obtained	Total Marks	Percentage

13. Do the candidate belong to Retiring AWW/AWH (YES/NO) (only applicable for the post of AWW)
14. Documents Attached: _____

Signature of the candidate

ANNEXURE 'B'

Detail of Vacant Posts of Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers) along with name and location of AWC.

S.No	Name of AWC	Ward No.	Name of the Post	No. of Posts
1	Gassipora -A	04	Sangini (AWW)	01

B-For Anganwadi Workers (Sanginis)

1. The candidate must be domicile of the UT of J&K.
2. Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years shall be eligible.
3. The candidate should be a resident of the electoral ward where Anganwadi Centre is situated. Name in the voter list for the ward shall be considered as a proof of residence of the candidate. In case the name of the candidate appears in the voter list along with her parents, then she must provide certificate of being un-married issued by the concerned Tehsilidar. Where ever, there is any dispute with respect to residence for any reason, then a residence proof certifying the ward of residence from the concerned SDM/ACR shall be considered.
4. Minimum qualification for Anganwadi Worker shall be 10+2 and maximum Graduation.
5. If at any time it would be found that candidate's qualification is more than Graduation her candidature shall be rejected without any notice or information
6. In case suitable candidate is not available in the concerned ward, candidate from the nearest/ adjoining ward within the panchayat can be considered subject to the approval of the MD, Mission POSHAN J&K.
7. Weightage shall be given on the basis of marks obtained in 10+2 and selection shall be done purely on merit basis and no other criteria to be considered.
8. In case of tie in merit of the eligible candidate, candidate with higher age will be preferred.

Detail of Vacant Posts of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) along with name and location of AWC.

S.No	Name of AWC	Ward No.	Name of the Post	No. of Posts
1	Arwani-B	01	Sahayika (AWH)	01
2	Trubjee-A	01	Sahayika (AWH)	01
3	Frival-B	09	Sahayika (AWH)	01
4	Kokergund-C	07	Sahayika (AWH)	01
5	Gassipora-B	01	Sahayika (AWH)	01
6	Wanpoh-B	06	Sahayika (AWH)	01
7	Sicop	11	Sahayika (AWH)	01
8	Shamsipora-C	02	Sahayika (AWH)	01
9	Kujar-D	06	Sahayika (AWH)	01
10	Batapora-C	04	Sahayika (AWH)	01
11	Uranhall-A	01	Sahayika (AWH)	01
12	Pazalpora-B	02	Sahayika (AWH)	01
13	Batengoo-B	01	Sahayika (AWH)	01
14	Hangalbush-B	03	Sahayika (AWH)	01
15	Bogund-A	05	Sahayika (AWH)	01
16	Lalipora	03	Sahayika (AWH)	01
17	H. S Bugh-A	05	Sahayika (AWH)	01
18	Nai Basti Qaimoh	02	Sahayika (AWH)	01

Eligibility for Anganwadi Helpers

1. The selection of Helper shall be restricted to the electoral ward where Anganwadi Centre is located.
2. Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years shall be eligible.
3. The candidate must be domicile of the UT of J&K.
4. Minimum qualification for Anganwadi Helper shall be matriculation.
5. In case no matriculate candidate available in the ward, candidates with qualification not less than 8th standard shall be considered.
6. The condition regarding unmarried candidate being selected only if no married candidate is available in the ward.

Document Verification

- 1) The candidate who is shortlisted will be required to appear for Document Verification along-with the original documents as well as self-attested Photostat copy of each document as per the Advertisement Notification. The candidate must be in possession of the prescribed academic qualification and other document like Domicile Certificate on or before the last date of submission of application form.
 - a) Marks sheet(s)/ Diploma/Degree of the qualification prescribed for the post as per Advertisement Notification.
 - b) Date of Birth/Matriculate Certificate.
 - c) Domicile Certificate.
 - d) Unmarried Certificate (where required)
- 2) Candidates have to bring two passport size recent colour photographs and one original Photo ID proof. Photo ID Proof can be:
 - i) Aadhaar Card
 - ii) Voter ID card.
- 3) The candidate, who is supposed to furnish various certificates issued by or before the prescribed cut-off date, shall be required to produce them at the time of Document Verification or as may be sought by the Committee; in case of failure, the committee shall take necessary decision which shall be final.

ANNEXURE-C

All applicants to submit affidavit from Judicial Magistrate stating following facts:

1. All Documents submitted are correct, without any mismatch, scanning, duplicate or fallacious in nature. If found incorrect or in any of the above stated situation the candidature of deponent may be cancelled and liable to action under law.
2. For Anganwadi Worker → that my maximum qualification is Graduation and this is as per facts and onus of proving it to be true lies with the deponent.
3. For Anganwadi Helper → that my minimum qualification is Class 10th and this is as per facts and onus of proving it to be true lies with the deponent.
4. The deponent has read the HR policy no. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated: 30.11.2022 and is well versed with all salient features of the policy and shall be applicable to the deponent in case of selection as Anganwadi worker/ Anganwadi Helper.

No.: - CDPO/ HSB/POSHAN/2026/200-212
Dated: -30-05-2026

DIPK-1798-26
DT: 03-06-2026

Sd/-
Child Development Project Officer
Poshan Project H S Bugh

French Open: Cobolli ends Auger-Aliassime's hopes, reaches first major semifinal



SIANS

PARIS: Italy's Flavio Cobolli broke new ground in the French Open on Wednesday, storming into his maiden major semifinal with a four-set victory over Felix Auger-Aliassime in the men's singles under the Chatrier roof at Stade Roland Garros in Paris.

The Italian 24-year-old hit back from losing the first set to storm back to a 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 victory to move into his first semifinal at a major level. With this win, Cobolli will set up a clash with either Matteo Berrettini or Matteo Arnaldi in Friday's semifinals, which guarantees an Italian presence in the men's final on Sunday.

The youngster from Rome began the event as the world No.14 and moved up to No.10 in the live ATP list, the highest ranking of his career. "It's been the best week of my life," the Italian said on court.

In an explosive performance under the roof on Court Philippe-Chatrier, the 24-year-old Italian earned a 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 win against fourth-seeded Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime, who was aiming to reach the last four at a major for the third time.

"I think we played two different matches today. The first set was incredibly windy and tough to play," Cobolli said of the windy first-set conditions before the roof was closed at the start of the second set. "I went to the toilet to think a bit and change something. This is the best court I have played on in my life because I can bring my best tennis. I said to myself to fight as I felt this would be the chance of my life, and I have to give everything in my matches, and today I did it."

After not dropping a set in his first three matches in Paris, Cobolli showed a few nerves in his win against Zachary Svajda in the fourth round. The three-time tour-level titlist eventually overcame the American in a fourth-set tie-break and looked more assured throughout his three-hour, 23-minute victory against Auger-Aliassime.

The Italian demonstrated great footwork to dictate on his forehand, while he played well on the pressure points, winning 10 of 14 30/30 points in the match. It is the first time Cobolli has defeated a Top 10 opponent at a major (1-6), and he is up four spots to No. 10 in the PIF ATP Live Rank-

ings. The 24-year-old will make his Top 10 debut on Monday if Jakub Mensik fails to win the title. The Czech meets Alexander Zverev in the other semifinal on Friday.

Just two wins from winning his maiden major title, Cobolli will play a countryman in the semi-finals: Matteo Berrettini or Matteo Arnaldi. It is the third time two Italians have reached the semi-finals at a major after Nicola Pietrangeli and Orlando Sirola at Roland Garros in 1960 and Jannik Sinner and Lorenzo Musetti in Paris last year.

"I will do the same routine as every day. I will go to dinner with my friends. I will go to bed and sleep," Cobolli said when asked if he would watch the second quarter-final. "It will be a Matteo in the semi-finals with me. Two of my good friends from the Tour and I wish them good luck, and I hope they enjoy the match."

With his quarterfinal victory, Cobolli has also guaranteed a first all-Italian men's major semifinal in history, and there will be an Italian in Sunday's final. The last time an Italian man won Roland Garros was in 1976, when Adriano Panatta triumphed.

India drub Chinese Taipei 13-1 to enter semifinals of U-18 men's Asia Cup hockey

AGENCIES

KAKAMIGAHARA (JAPAN): The Indian men's hockey team produced a clinical display, thrashing Chinese Taipei 13-1 in its last Pool A match to storm into the semifinals of the U-18 Asia Cup 2026 here on Wednesday.

India ended their pool engagements with wins against Kazakhstan, Korea and Chinese Taipei, while losing to hosts Japan. It gave them nine points from four matches.

The team's attacking prowess was on full display against Chinese Taipei, with Ashish Tani Purti emerging as the standout performer with a hat-trick (27th, 35th, 42nd minutes), while Gazeer Khan (40th, 44th), Siddharth Ben (30th, 52nd) and Rahul Yadav (20th, 54th) scored a brace each.

Karan Gautam (7th), Premchand Soy (11th), captain Ketan Kushwaha (13th) and Varinder Singh



(50th) also contributed to the tally.

India made their intentions clear from the outset, dictating the tempo with incisive play that constantly troubled the Chinese Taipei defence. They broke the deadlock in the seventh minute as Karan converted India's first penalty corner of the match.

Premchand then dou-

bled the lead with a field goal, while skipper Kushwaha added a third in quick succession to put his side firmly in control by the end of the first quarter. India continued their dominance in the second quarter. Yadav added a fourth before Purti converted a penalty corner to make it 5-0.

Siddharth rounded off a

prolific second quarter for India with another field goal right at the stroke of half-time.

However, Yong-Jyun Jhang (30th) pulled a goal back for Chinese Taipei, scoring from a penalty corner just before the hooter to make it 6-1 at the break.

India resumed with the same intensity after the

break. Purti bagged his second goal from another set-piece in the 35th minute to make it 7-1.

Khan then got into the act, converting a penalty corner to extend India's lead even further.

Purti completed his hat-trick by converting another penalty corner, while Khan added his second as India went into the final quarter with a commanding 10-1 lead.

The fourth quarter saw India maintaining their relentless pressure as they remained clinical from set-pieces.

Varinder converted a penalty corner before Siddharth scored his second goal of the match.

Yadav rounded off a fine team display with his second goal of the match.

India will play their semifinal on Friday but their opponent will be decided after the last Pool A match between Japan and Kazakhstan later on Wednesday. (PTI)

Surya set to be removed as India's T20 skipper, Shreyas, Tilak in contention

AGENCIES

MULLANPUR: Suryakumar Yadav is set to be removed as captain of the India T20 team and the all-powerful Apex Council might be informed of his status even before the squad for the UK tour is selected.

Shreyas Iyer and Tilak Varma have emerged as the top contenders to succeed Surya as the leader of the Indian T20 side.

It is expected that BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia will apprise the Apex Council about whether the national selection committee and head coach Gautam Gambhir are on the same page regarding Surya's removal.

It is clear that if Surya is removed from captaincy, he won't also remain in the side as a player after nearly 18 months of non performance.

"Surya is set to be removed from captaincy. The selectors wanted



to wait till the end of IPL to see whether he can get back to form. Since he looked completely out of form and not just out of runs... a tough call needs to be taken," a

BCCI source aware of the developments told PTI on Wednesday.

"The selectors would be dropping him from long list and had given an indication that Surya is

now out of their scheme of things. "Shreyas Iyer and Tilak Varma are contenders to become next T20 captain."

However, the choice of captaincy isn't a straightforward one.

As reported by PTI last week, there are a couple of choices. With Surya getting dropped, Shreyas, an IPL winning skipper, looks an obvious choice.

But the left-field choice could be Tilak, who many in the selection committee feel is an ideal candidate given his age.

"Tilak has been made captain for A series in Sri Lanka to check out his captaincy credentials."

It is understood that Gambhir has certain reservations about Shreyas, who was the captain of KKR in 2024, when the current India head coach was a mentor.

At the time, Shreyas had publicly spoken about being underappreciated, something that didn't go unnoticed. (PTI)

Gill's India hit ground running in New Chandigarh ahead of Afghanistan Test



SIANS

NEW CHANDIGARH: India's focus on red-ball cricket restarted right after the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 ended. Captain Shubman Gill led the first training session in New Chandigarh on Wednesday in preparation for the one-off Test against Afghanistan starting on June 6.

With most players arriving fresh from their IPL commitments, the session kicked off India's training for their first Test of the season.

The Indian players participated in an intensive net session at the PCA Stadium complex in Mullanpur. Head coach Gautam Gambhir closely watched the practice and had lengthy discussions with the players. Newly-appointed vice-captain KL Rahul spent a lot of time batting in the nets with opener Yashasvi Jaiswal and wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant as the batting group shifted its

focus from T20 cricket to the longer format.

Gill, who recently led the Gujarat Titans to the IPL 2026 final, joined the national team after the tournament. He was actively involved during the session alongside fielding coach T. Dilip. The skipper will lead a Test side that looks somewhat fresh, as it is missing senior players Jasprit Bumrah and Ravindra Jadeja.

India's pace attack seemed to be working hard, with fast bowlers Mohammed Siraj and Prasidh Krishna bowling long spells. However, Siraj's ability to play in the Test is uncertain due to workload-management issues after he participated in every match of the Gujarat Titans' IPL campaign. A decision on his availability is expected soon.

If Siraj is rested, uncapped Jammu & Kashmir pacer Auqib Nabi is likely the top candidate for a call-up after an impressive domestic season where

he took 60 wickets in the Ranji Trophy. Nabi is currently among a group of net bowlers helping the Indian squad, which also includes Gurjapneet Singh, Prince Yadav, Saransh Jain, Zeeshan Ansari, and Shivang Kumar.

Another key player in the camp is express pacer Mayank Yadav, who has joined as a net bowler. The Lucknow Super Giants speedster, whose career has been impacted by injuries, is helping India's batters prepare for Afghanistan's pace attack while working on his own return to competitive cricket.

India's squad for one-off Test vs Afghanistan: Shubman Gill (C), Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul (vc), Sai Sudharshan, Rishabh Pant (wk), Devdutt Padikkal, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Manav Suthar, Gurnoor Brar, Harsh Dubey, Dhruv Jurel (wk)

Movies

SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, 4TH JUNE

- PEDDI** (U/A16+)
HINDI - 12:30 PM, 06:00 PM
- BHOOTH BANGLA** (U/A16+)
Hindi - 04:20 PM
- PATI PATNI AUR WOH DO** (UA16+)
Hindi - 04:25 PM
- CHAND MERA DIL** (U/A16+)
HINDI - 10:45 AM, 01:30 PM, 06:55 PM
- OBSESSION** (A)
ENGLISH - 11:00 AM, 01:20 PM, 03:40 PM, 07:35 PM

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