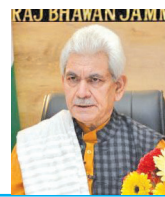


Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGandK



A nation's true strength lies not only in its wealth or might, but also in richness of its spirit, depth of its traditions & the vitality of its culture. India is a land where knowledge blossomed, traditions endured, and culture remained the soul that bound its people together.

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Imported cherry varieties fetch premium prices in Kashmir

Local growers eye good returns despite less yield; prices likely to cross Rs 500 per kg



JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Kashmir's cherry season continue to go on a promising note, with newly introduced imported varieties continuing to command premium prices in wholesale and retail markets across the Valley.

According to the details available, although erratic weather conditions during the flowering stage have reduced overall production this year, growers and traders remain optimistic as strong market demand is ensuring attractive returns.

The early-ripening cherry

cultivars, particularly those imported from Italy and Bulgaria, have already reached markets and are fetching significantly higher prices compared to previous years. Their arrival has provided a boost to growers at a time when traditional cherry varieties are still nearing maturity and awaiting harvest.

Fruit trader Irfan Ahmad from the Fruit Mandi in Shopian said that despite lower production caused by adverse weather during the flowering period, market rates have remained highly encouraging.

"Production has declined this year because

RANG-E-KASHMIR CULTURAL FESTIVAL

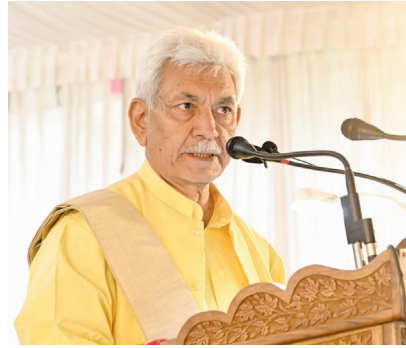
J&K living canvas, painted with centuries of wisdom, innovation, craft: LG Sinha

Says nation's true strength lies not only in its wealth, but also in richness of its spirit

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: "A nation's true strength lies not only in its wealth or might, but also in richness of its spirit, depth of its traditions and the vitality of its culture," Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said Thursday, adding that India is a land where knowledge blossomed, traditions endured, and culture remained the soul that bound its people together.

"A nation's true strength lies not only in its wealth or might, but also in richness of its spirit, depth of its traditions and the vitality of its culture. India is a land where knowledge blossomed, traditions endured, and culture remained the soul that bound its people together," the Lieutenant Governor said while attending the 'Rang-e-Kashmir Cultural Festival' in Srinagar. This week-long event showcases J&K's priceless hand-



looms and handicrafts and draws both art lovers and buyers. Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said that Jammu Kashmir is a living canvas, painted with centuries of wisdom, innovation, artistry, and craft.

The Lieutenant Governor applauded

the efforts of Pumbuch Cultural Heritage Foundation and its Director Mrs. Superna Sapru, for conserving, nurturing, and reviving Jammu Kashmir's abundant cultural heritage. He said the mission of foundation, injects new energy into traditions so the voices of our artisans, craftsmen, and traditional artists will continue to resonate for generations to come.

Culture is not the static artifact of history but in fact it is a living force that shapes our present and guides our future. Jammu Kashmir is home to exceptional artisans who can turn an ordinary piece of wood into something timeless. There are hundreds of esteemed craftspeople who weave thousands of years of cultural stories into fabric. There are papier-mache artisans who carve the very soul of Jammu Kashmir into each piece,"

LG Attends 'Rishiwar' Inter-Faith Conference 2026 in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha Thursday attended the 'Rishiwar' Inter-Faith Conference 2026 in Srinagar. Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said that the idea of honoring all faiths equally

has been woven into fabric of India's philosophy for millennia.

"While many nations today struggle with challenge of coexistence, diversity has been our natural rhythm of life. While many societies have devised measures to safeguard unity, India embraced ethos and value of coexistence

and practiced seamlessly for thousands of years," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that respecting all ideas and beliefs has always been tradition of Sanatan Dharma. He said that India has consistently emphasized unity in diversity and shown respect to every

Rain lash J&K parts; cloudburst hits Reasi village

LG directs DC to provide relief to affected families



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Rains lashed several parts of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, bringing relief from the recent spell of hot weather, while a cloudburst in Reasi district damaged several houses. However, no casualties were reported.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, in a post on X said: "Spoke with the DC Reasi to assess the situation following a cloudburst at Village Bathoi. While several houses suffered damage, fortunately, no casualties have been reported. I have directed the DC to immediately

provide relief and assistance to the affected families."

Meanwhile, light to moderate rainfall was reported from many areas across Kashmir and parts of Jammu. The showers brought daytime temperatures down in most parts of the Valley, making the weather pleasant for residents and tourists alike.

According to the Meteorological Centre here, one or two spells of rain, thundershowers, hailstorms and gusty winds are likely at most places across the Union Territory till Friday.

Brief intense showers are also expected at isolated places during the period, it said.

Demand for 'alternate airport' gains pace as Sgr runway closure plan raises tourism concerns

Tourism players warn of major disruption during peak season; seek Awantipora airport operations

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Tourism stakeholders in Kashmir on Thursday strongly pitched for an "alternate airport facility" in the Valley after Srinagar International Airport proposed a partial and complete runway closure for maintenance works later this year, saying the move could severely affect passengers and the tourism sector during the peak season.

As per the proposed plan issued by Srinagar Airport, the runway may remain unavailable on every Monday and Tuesday from July 01 to September 30, 2026, while a complete shutdown of operations has also been proposed from October 01 to October 16 due to maintenance works



being undertaken by the Indian Air Force.

The proposed restrictions are expected to impact more than 12,000 passengers who use Srinagar airport daily for arrival and departure flights during the busy tourism season.

Srinagar airport currently witnesses an average daily footfall of over 12,000 pas-

sengers, including tourists, business travellers, pilgrims and locals, making it one of the busiest airports in north India during the summer months.

Chairman of the J&K Hoteliers Club, Mushtaq Chaya said the Valley's tourism sector could face major losses if alternative arrangements are not

CS reviews impediments, steers measures to accelerate solarisation across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Thursday chaired a high-level meeting of all the concerned Government stakeholders to review the progress of large-scale solarisation initiatives being undertaken in Jammu and Kashmir and to resolve the bottlenecks identified by the Science & Technology Department in advancing these efforts across the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department; Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Commissioner Secretary, Forest, Ecology & Environment Department; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir; Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology Department; Managing Director, JPDCL/KPDCL, besides representatives of several other concerned departments.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary stressed the need for sustained and result-oriented



follow-up by the Science & Technology Department on the issues deliberated upon, observing that a clear roadmap for addressing the challenges had emerged through collective consultations with all stakeholders.

He underscored that the department should fully leverage the support being extended by the Finance Department and other agencies to achieve the solarisation targets within defined timelines.

Emphasizing the immense potential of renewable energy in Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Secretary

'Inadequate Reactive Power Leaves J&K Grid Gasping for Voltage Stability'

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: Deficiency in reactive power support has left the J&K grid gasping for voltage stability—exposing the transmission system of the region as woefully unprepared to meet real-time operational demands.

The severe voltage triggered by insufficient reactive compensation in J&K is raising serious questions about the region's power reliability.

Northern Regional Power Committee (NRPC) has said, "Due to inadequate reactive compensation in J&K State Transmission Utility (STU) network, severe low voltages have been observed in J&K grid."

Reactive power compensation is the management of reactive power to improve the efficiency, stability, and power quality of an Alternating current (AC) electrical system.

In May-2026, KNO reported that authorities have revealed power voltages in Jammu and Kashmir have slumped to severe low levels.

The authorities earlier had further revealed that key 400kV and



220kV bus voltages across have slumped to severe low levels at 347kV and 178kV respectively—thus raising serious concerns of the power supply.

The NRPC in that meeting had stated that the 400kV as well as 220kV bus voltages at various stations in Kashmir valley are remaining critically low, also reaching

347kV and 178kV respectively.

"The low voltage is a perennial issue, and it has been deliberated in various meetings as well as in the recent meeting held in 2025," it reads.

It also said, "Further Grid-India in quarterly operational feedback 2025 also highlighted low voltages at 400kV Amargarh,"

'People disappointed with Omar govt'

NC using statehood for political mileage: BJP

WARIS FAYAZ

BARAMULLA: BJP Rajya Sabha MP Ghulam Ali Khatana on Thursday termed the National Conference's proposed protest for restoration of statehood to J&K as a "political stunt".

Speaking to reporters during his visit to Pattan village in North Kashmir, Khatana said, "The National Conference had relied on political theatrics during the Assembly election campaign and was now attempting to divert attention from what he described as its failure to fulfil promises made to the people."

"The National Conference was high on dramas during the election campaign and made tall promises to the people. They cannot give statehood. It is the Centre that has to restore statehood and both the Prime Minister

and Home Minister have already made their position clear on the issue," he said.

BJP MP alleged that the ruling party secured electoral support through political rhetoric but had failed to address key public concerns during its nearly two years in office.

"It has been close to two years and people are not happy with the promises made in the party's manifesto. The situation in education and healthcare sectors remains unsatisfactory," he said.

Khatana claimed that several schools continue to face an acute shortage of teaching staff, with some institutions functioning with only one or two teachers despite having hundreds of students. He also alleged that many hospitals are struggling due to a shortage of doctors and cited Banihal as an example.

RED FORT BLAST CASE

Accused Including Kashmiri Doctors Produced Before Patiala House Court



GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Several accused persons, including doctors and other individuals named in the National Investigation Agency's (NIA) chargesheet in the Red Fort car blast case, were produced before the Patiala House Court on Thursday as judicial proceedings continued in one of the agency's most closely watched investigations.

The development comes weeks after the NIA filed a massive chargesheet running into thousands of pages against 10 accused persons following its investigation into the November

2025 vehicle-borne blast near Delhi's Red Fort.

Among those facing proceedings are Dr. Muzamil Shakeel Ganai of Pulwama, Dr. Adeel Ahmed Rather, originally from Anantnag and later based in Saharanpur, religious preacher Mufti Irfan Ahmad Wagay of Shopian, and several other accused named by the agency. Dr. Shaheen Saeed, popularly referred as "Madam Surgeon," is reported to be from Lucknow and was also named in the investigation.

Investigators have alleged the existence of a sophisticated network involving educated

MP Khatana Visits Uri, conducts Public Darbar in Lagama



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Ghulam Ali Khatana Thursday visited Uri and conducted a Public Darbar at Town Hall Lagama to listen to public grievances and assess developmental needs of the area.

During the Public Darbar, various delegations and public representatives from different blocks of Uri, including Paranjilla, Bijhama and Boniyar, met the MP and apprised him of several issues and demands

concerning infrastructure development, public services, healthcare, education and other local concerns.

The MP patiently heard the grievances and suggestions put forth by the delegations and assured them that their genuine issues would be taken up with the concerned authorities for appropriate action.

Later, Ghulam Ali Khatana chaired a meeting with district and sectoral officers to review the status of public services and developmental works in the region. He stressed the need for prompt redressal

of public grievances and directed officers to ensure timely and effective resolution of issues affecting the people.

The MP reiterated his commitment to the welfare and development of Uri and emphasized coordinated efforts among all departments to improve service delivery and address public concerns in a responsive manner.

Officers from various departments, local representatives and members of the public were present during the programme.

DC Budgam visits Markazi Imambara Bemina

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Thursday visited Markazi Imambada Yousuf Abad, Bemina, to review the arrangements being put in place for the smooth observance of the ensuing holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram.

During the visit, the DC inspected the facilities available at the Imambara and interacted with local residents, religious leaders, and members of the management committee to assess their requirements and concerns ahead of the month.

The local representatives projected several demands and issues which included repair and restoration of damaged stretches on the Mirgund Bemina Road, ensuring uninterrupted power supply with adequate backup arrangements, augmentation of potable water supply, strengthening of medical facilities, and development of a dedicated parking space at the Imambara to facilitate devotees and visitors.

During the visit the DC directed the concerned departments to take all necessary measures to ensure seamless arrange-



ments during Muharram-ul-Haram.

He instructed the Roads & Buildings (R&B) Department to examine and address the damaged road stretches on priority.

He also emphasized the need for a comprehensive traffic management plan to ensure the convenience of mourners.

The DC further directed the Power Development Department (PDD) to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply and adequate backup arrangements during religious gatherings.

He also instructed the Jal Shakti Department to maintain regular and sufficient water supply throughout the Muharram days.

Regarding healthcare services, the DC directed the Health Department to ensure the availability of medical teams, ambulances, and essential healthcare facilities during major congregations.

He also assured the local

representatives that the proposal for development of parking facilities at the Imambada would be examined and taken up with the concerned authorities.

The DC stressed the importance of close coordination among all line departments and directed officers to complete all necessary arrangements well in advance.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that the District Administration has already initiated advance preparations for the smooth and peaceful observance of Muharram-ul-Haram across the district.

He informed that necessary directions have been issued well in advance to all concerned departments to ensure adequate arrangements and essential facilities for mourners, including power and water supply, healthcare services, sanitation, traffic management, and other public utilities.

STC reviews Kashmir division's tax compliance, enforcement measures

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Commissioner, State Taxes Department, P.K. Bhat, Thursday chaired a review meeting of the State Taxes Department, Kashmir, to assess the progress of tax compliance, enforcement, and revenue monitoring across the division.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Commissioner, State Taxes Kashmir, Parveez Ahmad Raina, along with State Taxes officers from all circles of the Kashmir Division.

During the meeting, the Commissioner reviewed the action taken report on cases identified through BISAG, audit cases, and the demand raised and realised for the year 2021-22. He also took stock of action initiated against non-filers, taxpayers who have received TDS payments but have not filed tax returns, scrutiny cases assigned for the year 2022-23, scrutiny of credit flow, and follow-up on notices issued by the department.

The review further covered action taken against taxpayers whose registrations have been cancelled, as well as those who have filed R1 and passed credit but have not filed GSTR-

3B. The Commissioner also directed special focus on circles with a predominant hotel industry, keeping in view the revival in tourism activity, so as to check any possible revenue leakages and ensure proper tax compliance.

Commissioner P.K. Bhat emphasized the need to leverage technological tools such as PRIME, BISAG, and BIFA for more effective tax compliance, detection of irregularities, prevention of fraud, and promotion of fair trade practices. He underscored that the department must continue to strengthen enforcement mechanisms while ensuring taxpayer facilitation and accountability.

In his concluding remarks, the Additional Commissioner appreciated the efforts of the officers and urged all circles to intensify follow-up action, dispose of pending cases in a time-bound manner, and maintain a proactive approach toward revenue realization and compliance enforcement. He stressed the importance of coordinated field action, regular monitoring, and close attention to sectors with higher compliance sensitivity to further improve departmental performance.

DDC Anantnag chairs Bankers' DLRC meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: A District Level Review Committee (DLRC) meeting to review the performance of the banking sector in Anantnag district for the quarter ending March 2026 (Q4 FY 2025-26) and FY 2025-26 was held Thursday under the chairmanship of District Development Commissioner, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat at DC Office.

The meeting was attended by GM DIC, CPO, CAO, CAHO, DD Fisheries, DSWO, AD Handicrafts, District Officers KVIB, KVIC and NRLM, LDO RBI, DDM NABARD, Cluster Heads of J&K Bank, Chief Manager SBI, Director RSETI, District Coordinators of various Banks and officers from KVIB, KVIC and NRLM.

At the outset, the minutes of last DLRC meeting held in March 2026 were unanimously confirmed by the committee.

Presenting a comprehensive review, Lead District Manager (LDM), informed the chair that the total deposits in the district as of March 31, 2026 stood at Rs 9697.54 crore, while advances amounted to Rs



7433.41 crore, resulting in a Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio of 79.65%.

Under the District Credit Plan (DCP) of FY 2025-26, the banking sector disbursed Rs 3314 crore under the priority sector against a target of Rs 3676.11 crore, thereby achieving 90% of the allotted target. Non-priority sector lending stood at Rs 2083.10 crore against the target of Rs 2025.74 crore, thereby achieving 103% of the target. Cumulatively, the total credit disbursed in the district was Rs 5397.04, registering 95% achievement of the overall credit target of Rs. 5701.86 for FY 2025-26.

During the meeting, the DDC reviewed the performance of banks for the Q4 as well as the whole FY 2025-26 in detail. He laid special emphasis on improving the

Credit-Deposit (CD) Ratio and enhancing credit flow to priority areas, particularly agriculture and allied sectors.

Reviewing the status of crop loans, the DDC advised the banks to ensure adequate and timely credit to farmers. He appreciated the progress shown in crop loan disbursement and urged the banks to intensify the efforts and achieve targets in coordination with the Agriculture Department.

Observing the decline in some loan segments, the DDC directed the banks to take immediate corrective measures and improve lending performance. He further reviewed the progress of other priority sector advances and instructed the banks to increase lending to productive sectors.

The meeting stressed the need for greater awareness among farmers regarding government schemes, agricultural credit facilities and crop insurance schemes. Need for better coordination between banks and line departments to ensure effective implementation of schemes and improved credit delivery was emphasised.

On the occasion, Dr. Bilal also reviewed progress under government-sponsored schemes like Svanidhi, Mudra, PMJJBY, PMSBY, APY, PMEGP, JDY, among others. He called the Social Security and Financial Inclusion Schemes as important interventions and directed the banks and concerned departments to ensure enrollment of all prospective beneficiaries in a time bound manner.

Highlighting the need for greater coordination and streamlining credit disbursement process by banks, the DDC instructed LDM and concerned officers to ensure swift disbursement of credit to the beneficiaries under flagship initiatives like HADP, Mission YUVA and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

It was informed that

against 3784 sanctioned cases under Mission YUVA, loans to the tune of Rs 19842.00 lakh have been disbursed in favour of 3307 cases so far. Similarly, under PM Surya Ghar credit amounting to Rs 3613 lakh has been disbursed to 2143 beneficiaries.

Regarding working of RSETI, it came out that 614 candidates received training, out of which 529 cases were settled with 313 credit linkage settlements. Further, five Centres for Financial Literacy have carried out 299 outreach camps, ensuring a total of 6086 linkages.

During the meeting, it was decided that target driven methods and better procedures be adopted for improving the performance of banks in PSL, Social Security and Financial Inclusion Schemes, Mission YUVA, HADP, PM SGBMY and other key areas.

At conclusion, directions were issued to all banks to improve lending performance, strengthen financial inclusion initiatives, and work closely with line departments for overall growth, prosperity and public welfare in the district.

DC Pulwama chairs District Level Telecom Committee Meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom Thursday chaired a meeting of the District Level Telecom Committee (DLTC) at the Administrative Complex here to review the status of telecom infrastructure, mobile network coverage, BharatNet implementation and other connectivity-related issues across the district.

During the meeting, a detailed presentation highlighting the progress achieved under various telecom connectivity initiatives being implemented in the district was presented. Discussions focused on mobile tower saturation, augmentation of signals, phase-wise coverage network status, Right of Way (RoW) issues and the progress of the BharatNet project.

The Deputy Commissioner took a detailed review of the project-wise status of mobile tower installations and the progress of the BSNL 4G Saturation Project across the district. He also reviewed the status of signal augmentation, coverage in



underserved and shadow areas, and issues related to pending sites, including power connectivity, land availability and other logistical requirements necessary for their early completion.

Reviewing the progress of BharatNet, Dr. Qayoom stressed the need for expediting the remaining works to ensure seamless broadband connectivity in rural areas. He directed the Assistant Commissioner Panchayat to closely monitor the progress of BharatNet works and facilitate coordination among the concerned departments and executing agencies for their timely completion.

On the occasion, the DC also sought details from the

Superintending Engineer, KPDC, regarding the status of power extension to the constructed towers and directed him to ensure timely power extension to all constructed and planned towers.

Dr. Qayoom further directed all stakeholder departments and telecom service providers to work in close coordination for the timely completion of ongoing projects and resolution of pending issues. He emphasized the importance of strengthening digital connectivity, particularly in remote and underserved areas, to facilitate improved access to communication services, online platforms and digital governance initiatives.

Dr. Sagar Doifode Dattatray reviews functioning of APD in B'la

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: Dr. Sagar Doifode Dattatray, Special Secretary, Agriculture Production Department (APD) and Mission Director, Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Thursday chaired a review meeting at Dak Bungalow Baramulla to assess the performance and progress of Agriculture Production and Allied Departments in the district.

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, SF Hamid, along with officers from Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, Sericulture and other allied departments attended the meeting.

During the meeting, Dr. Dattatray reviewed the implementation and progress of various flagship schemes and programmes being executed under the Agriculture Production and Allied sectors.



He emphasized the need for effective coordination among departments, timely achievement of targets and greater outreach to farmers for maximizing the benefits of government initiatives.

The Deputy Commissioner briefed the chair about the district's performance under various agricultural and allied sector programmes and highlighted the measures being undertaken to strengthen service delivery and enhance farmer welfare.

Dr. Dattatray stressed the need to ensure that all Krishi Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) are fully functional and effectively cater to the needs of the farming

community. He directed the concerned officers to strengthen farmer outreach and improve the delivery of agricultural services and advisory support through these centres.

Reviewing mushroom cultivation activities, he directed officers to create awareness among mushroom growers regarding scientific packaging, branding, marketing opportunities and various support mechanisms available under government schemes. He also emphasized the introduction and promotion of additional high-value mushroom varieties to help farmers diversify cultivation and enhance their income.

CPCO Amit Sharma visits Shopian; Reviews Census operations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Chief Principal Census Officer (CPCO) and Director Census Operations (DCO), Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Amit Sharma, Thursday chaired a high-level meeting at Mini Secretariat, Shopian to review the preparations and operations of the ongoing House Listing Operations (HLO), being conducted from June 1 to June 30, 2026.

At the outset, DSEO, Bilquees Zahoor briefed the chair about the topography and preparedness regarding census enumeration process and other training programmes being held in Shopian district.

Principal Census Officer (PCO)/ Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, Shishir Gupta, also briefed the CPCO about final preparedness for ongoing HLO while attending the meeting and held discussions on the ongoing conduct of

census operations in the district.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on ensuring comprehensive enumeration of migratory households and streamlining field-level census operations.

Amit Sharma, in his address, highly appreciated the hard work of the field staff and motivated all the enumerators and supervisors to perform their duties with dedication. He emphasized the importance of co-ordination amongst the census functionaries, timely data collection and strict adherence to census guidelines to ensure accuracy and completeness of the enumeration process.

Officers were instructed to extend full support to census functionaries and undertake necessary measures for smooth conduct of the House Listing and Housing Census activities

across the district.

The meeting also reviewed preparedness at the field level and addressed various operational issues related to the census exercise.

The CPCO urged people to actively participate in the census exercise to ensure its smooth and timely completion and also co-operate with census enumerators and provide the required information. He reiterated the significance of the Census as a vital national exercise and stressed the need for collective efforts to achieve accurate and reliable population data for informed planning and development.

Arun Kumar, Joint Chief Principal Census Officer, also briefed the meeting regarding the monitoring framework of field operations and emphasized the need for real-time tracking of the data collection process.

Dir Agri stresses widespread adoption of NPSS Mobile App

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah Thursday stressed the widespread adoption of the NPSS Mobile Application, focusing on its practical implementation and strategies for enhancing user adoption, during a programme, held at the Directorate of Agriculture, Lal Mandi, Srinagar.

The programme was attended by officers and officials from across the department.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director Agriculture Kashmir highlighted the importance of digital technologies in modernizing agricultural service delivery and ensuring greater transparency, efficiency, and accessibility for farmers. He emphasized that the NPSS Mobile Application has been developed as a vital digital platform to streamline various agricultural services and facilitate real-time data management.

The Director urged field

functionaries to familiarize themselves thoroughly with the application's features and ensure its effective implementation at the grassroots level. He stressed the need for creating awareness among farmers and stakeholders to maximize the benefits of the platform and accelerate its adoption across the Valley.

During the programme, technical experts provided detailed demonstrations of the application, explaining its functionalities, operational procedures, and practical utility in day-to-day departmental activities. Participants were also given hands-on training to enhance their understanding of the platform and its field-level applications.

Interactive sessions were held to address queries and gather feedback from participants regarding the implementation process. The suggestions and observations received during the programme will help further strengthen the application and improve user experience.

CM hands over disbursement letters worth ₹1.12 crore to 6 beneficiaries under Mission YUVA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday handed over disbursement letters worth ₹1.12 crore under Mission YUVA here at the Civil Secretariat.

Under Mission YUVA, ₹209 crore has been disbursed in 3,367 cases during April and May, reaffirming Government's focus on youth entrepreneurship and employment generation.

During the event, it was informed that out of a total of 5,016 sanctioned cases amounting to ₹269 crore, ₹209 crore covering 3,367 cases have been disbursed between April 1 and May 31.

The programme was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani.

Senior officers present on the occasion included Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, ACS APD Dr. Ashish Chandra Verma, ACS Finance Shailendra Kumar, Commissioner Secretary Plan-



ning, Development and Monitoring Alice Vaz, Secretary Labour & Employment Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, Mission Director Mission YUVA, Director IIM Jammu, representatives of J&K Bank, and other concerned officers.

The Chief Minister congratulated the beneficiaries and expressed hope that the financial assistance would enable them to establish and expand sustainable business ventures, thereby generating employment and contributing to the region's economic growth.

Speaking on the broader vision of Mission YUVA, the Chief Minister said the initiative represents

a transformative step towards building a robust ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship in Jammu and Kashmir. He stated that the government is committed to ensuring that young people are not job seekers alone, but job creators who drive innovation and economic progress.

He emphasized that Mission YUVA is designed to provide structured hand-holding, access to credit, skill development, and mentorship support to aspiring entrepreneurs. The Chief Minister said the programme is intended to bridge the gap between ideas and execution by simplifying access to institutional finance and improving coordination

between banks, government departments, and training institutions.

He further added that sustained focus on youth empowerment through Mission YUVA would help unlock the immense potential of Jammu and Kashmir's young population, particularly in sectors such as services, agriculture-based enterprises, tourism, and small-scale manufacturing.

The Chief Minister reiterated that inclusive economic growth remains a top priority of the government, and initiatives like Mission YUVA are central to achieving long-term self-reliance and employment generation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Public welfare remains foremost priority of the Government: Sakeena Ito

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Ito Thursday presided over a Mega Public Outreach Programme at Banquet Hall here during which scores of public delegations, individuals and representatives of civil society organizations projected their grievances and developmental demands.

MLA Eidgah, Mubarak Gul; MLA Hazratbal, Salman Ali Sagar; MLA Lal Chowk, Sheikh Ahsan Pardesi; MLA Chanapora, Mushtaq Ahmad Guroo; Director School Education Kashmir, ADDC Srinagar, Director Colleges, other senior officers of district administration and large number of locals and public delegations were also present on the occasion.

Interacting extensively with the participants, Minister Sakeena Ito patiently listened to their concerns and assured them that the Government remains fully committed to addressing genuine public issues in a prompt and effective manner. "Public outreach programmes serve vital platforms for strengthening the connection between



the administration and the people while ensuring that governance remains accessible and responsive to citizens needs", she stated.

The Minister directed the officers present to maintain a proactive approach in resolving public grievances and stressed the importance of ensuring timely disposal of complaints. She said that every grievance must be treated with seriousness and sensitivity, adding that responsive governance is essential for building public confidence in Government institutions.

"Public welfare remains the foremost priority of the Government. Officers must ensure that issues brought before them are addressed within stipulated timelines and citizens do not face unnecessary delays in availing government services," she stated.

Sakeena Ito further

underscored the need for enhanced coordination among various departments to facilitate swift resolution of public issues. She instructed the concerned officials to undertake regular field visits, monitor developmental works on the ground and maintain continuous engagement with the people to better understand and address their concerns.

During the programme, several delegations sought augmentation of health-care services, upgradation of educational institutions, upgradation of roads, filling of vacant posts in health and education departments, improvement of civic amenities and inclusion of deserving beneficiaries under various welfare schemes. The Minister issued on-the-spot directions in a number of cases and instructed the

concerned departments to submit action taken reports on issues requiring further examination.

Highlighting the Government's vision of inclusive development, the Minister reiterated that sustained efforts are being made to strengthen healthcare delivery systems, improve educational infrastructure and expand the reach of social welfare programmes across Jammu and Kashmir. "Government is working tirelessly to ensure that the benefits of developmental schemes reach every section of society without discrimination", she remarked.

The Secretary also urged the public to actively participate in developmental initiatives and maintain close coordination with local administrations for effective implementation of welfare programmes and public projects.

Er. Hidayatullah Secures Sixth Term in High-Stakes JKEEGA Election

AZHAR HAJINI

SRINAGAR: It wasn't just another routine organizational vote on Thursday; it was a high-energy showdown that had the region's electrical engineering community gripped. When the final ballots were counted, a familiar face emerged victorious. Er. Pirzada Mohammad Hidayatullah was re-elected as General Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir Electrical Engineering Graduates Association (JKEEGA) for the 2026-28 term, proving that his bond with the rank and file remains as unbreakable as ever.

The atmosphere across the Valley was charged with anticipation as engineers turned out in droves to cast their ballots. This wasn't a landslide, but rather a hard-fought race. Hidayatullah captured 302 votes, fending off a strong challenge from Er. Mudassir Nabi, who put up a formidable fight with 222 votes. The intense interest was reflected in the sheer accuracy of the



turnout: out of 528 ballots cast at stations spanning Srinagar, Sopore, and Bijbehara, only four were rejected.

This win is nothing short of historic. By securing this victory, Hidayatullah enters an unprecedented sixth term in JKEEGA's top leadership, having cycled through the roles of both President and General Secretary over the years. In a profession where keeping everyone happy is notoriously difficult, his ability to continually win over the engineering community speaks volumes about the deep-seated trust he has built.

The smooth execution of the day was steered by Returning Officer Er.

Mudasir Amin Tibet Baqal. Standing outside the association's Bemina headquarters after the final tally, Baqal praised the candidates, the staff, and the voters for keeping the entire process transparent, peaceful, and fiercely credible.

As news of the victory spread, the Bemina headquarters quickly filled with cheers and warm embraces. For the engineers gathered there, Hidayatullah's return isn't just about a familiar name on a letterhead—it's about having an experienced, battle-tested advocate at the helm to fight for their professional growth, welfare, and collective voice in Jammu and Kashmir.

MDL demonstrates AI based Forest Fire Detection, Management System to Min Rana

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A delegation of Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), a Navratna Public Sector Undertaking under the Union Ministry for Defence, Thursday called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana and made a detailed presentation on "INFASURE", an Artificial Intelligence-based Forest Fire Detection, Firefighting and Forest Management System.

The presentation focused on the use of advanced technologies for strengthening the forest protection, early detection of forest fires, wildlife surveillance, disaster management and environmental conservation. The proposed system integrates the ground-based, aerial and satellite technologies with a centralised monitoring and command mechanism aimed at enhancing the preparedness and response capabilities.

The MDL team informed the Minister that the proposed "INFASURE" platform is an AI-enabled system



designed for early forest fire detection, forest surveillance, disaster management and real-time monitoring through an integrated command-and-control mechanism.

The team highlighted various components of the proposed solution, including forest fire detection and firefighting systems, aerial firefighting platforms, man-animal conflict detection and alarm systems and satellite-based forest management tools. The delegation informed the Minister that the technology is designed to facilitate early detection of forest fires, improve response time, strengthen forest surveillance and support effective disaster management through real-time monitoring and decision-making.

Javed Rana appreciated the presentation and emphasised the importance of adopting innovative, technology-driven solutions for protection and sustainable management of forest resources. He observed that advanced monitoring and early warning systems can play a significant role in mitigating forest fire incidents, reducing ecological losses and strengthening environmental conservation efforts.

The Minister directed the MDL team to submit a comprehensive proposal tailored to the specific requirements and geographical conditions of Jammu and Kashmir, addressing the Union Territory's unique challenges related to forest fire management, wildlife protection and disaster response.

Secretary RDD reviews sanitation preparedness on Baltal axis for SANJY-26

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BALTAL: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, Thursday conducted an extensive inspection of the Baltal axis to review the sanitation preparations for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2026.



The Secretary had a detailed on-ground assessment of sanitation facilities from Nilgrath Helipad to Baltal Base Camp and Domail Camp.

He was accompanied by Director General Rural Sanitation Anoo Malhotra, Assistant Commissioner Development Ganderbal Altaf Hussain, Block Development Officer and other district officers.

During the visit, Asad directed the field officers to closely monitor the installation of sanitation assets and accel-

erate execution to ensure completion within the prescribed timelines. He emphasized the need for increasing the daily pace of toilet installation and maintaining strict adherence to the approved plans.

The Secretary inspected waste collection system including drain cradles and directed the officials to ensure their continuous

functionality to prevent blockages. He also stressed the deployment of dedicated sanitation personnel at key road junctions and Yatra route, with clearly defined areas of responsibility.

Reviewing toilets, washrooms, dustbins, greywater drainage systems, waste segregation sites and plastic waste management units, he underscored the need for maintaining high standards of cleanliness, accessibility and uninterrupted utility services.

EMPOWERING WOMEN, REVIVING HERITAGE

H&H Launches Major Carpet Skill Upgradation Drive

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: As a major initiative to strengthen Kashmir's traditional carpet weaving sector and enhance artisans' skills, Department of Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir, through its state-of-the-art Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT), has launched a skill upgradation training programme under the Ministry of Textiles-sponsored SAMARTH Scheme.

SAMARTH (Scheme for Capacity Building in Textile Sector) is a flagship Ministry of Textiles initiative aimed at providing demand-driven and industry-oriented training to improve employability and promote sustainable livelihoods in the handicrafts sector. The programme is aligned with the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF), ensuring nationally recognized training and certification standards.

In a press handout



issued here today, a spokesperson of the Handicrafts & Handloom Department stated that under the programme, 180 women beneficiaries from eight districts of Kashmir are scheduled to receive training in Silk Carpet Weaving on Modern Steel Carpet Looms over a period of two months. "Twenty trainees have been enrolled from 8 districts, while Srinagar, a major carpet weaving hub, will accommodate 40 trainees," the spokesperson said.

Speaking on the occasion, Zubair Ahmad, Director, IICT, said that trainees

maintaining at least 80 per cent attendance will be eligible for a stipend of ₹5,000 per course, providing both skill enhancement as well as financial support. "The experienced Master Trainers engaged to impart specialized training under the programme will receive an honorarium of ₹20,000 per month, with a total training facilitation cost of approximately ₹3.60 lakh," he added.

Highlighting the scheme's robust monitoring framework, Director IICT further stated that the programme will undergo third-party audit and

verification by auditors appointed by the Ministry of Textiles to assess compliance, training quality, attendance records and implementation outcomes. "To ensure transparency and effective monitoring, the programme incorporates an Aadhaar-based biometric attendance system," he added.

Department of Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir continues to undertake focused interventions for the revival, preservation and promotion of the world-renowned Kashmir Carpet Craft. Through modernization of weaving infrastructure, skill upgradation, artisan welfare initiatives, market linkages, GI protection and capacity-building programmes such as SAMARTH, the Department remains committed to safeguarding this centuries-old heritage craft while creating sustainable livelihood opportunities, particularly for women artisans across the Valley.

CM meets delegations; discusses housing, urban infrastructure, connectivity projects

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Several public representatives, senior army officers, and civil officers Thursday called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and discussed key developmental and public welfare issues across Jammu and Kashmir.

During the day, MLAs Dr Rameshwar Singh (Bani) and Sajad Shaheen (Banihal) called on the Chief Minister and raised various constituency-related developmental and public welfare issues. The Chief Minister gave



a patient hearing to the issues projected by the legislators and assured their appropriate consideration and follow-up action.

Chairman & Managing Director, HUDCO, New Delhi, Sanjay Kulshrestha also

called on the Chief Minister. During the meeting, they discussed a wide range of housing and urban infrastructure projects, including the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF), water supply, sewerage, drainage, road connectivity and power

infrastructure, among other matters.

Later, Lieutenant General Harpal Singh, Director General, Border Roads Organisation (BRO), called on the Chief Minister and apprised him of various ongoing Beacon projects and infrastructure works being executed across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister reviewed the progress of ongoing infrastructure initiatives and reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening development delivery and addressing public issues across all regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

Yasha Mudgal reviews preparations for Cooperation Ministry's zonal review workshop

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Commissioner Secretary, Cooperatives Department, Yasha Mudgal, Thursday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the preparedness of committees constituted for the upcoming Zonal Review workshop of the Union Ministry of

Cooperation. The workshop is scheduled to be held in Srinagar from June 24 to 26, 2026.

During the meeting, the Commissioner Secretary was apprised of the operational readiness and action plans of the specialized committees constituted for the purpose. The event is expected to witness the participation of senior

officers from the Union Ministry for Cooperation besides Administrative Secretaries and Registrars of Cooperative Societies from various States and Union Territories across the country.

Reviewing the protocol and liaison arrangements, the Commissioner Secretary directed all the committees to maintain effective commu-

nication and coordination through the centralized Control and Liaison Committees. She emphasized strict adherence to timelines and instructed the Protocol & Delegate Committee and Transport Committee to work in close coordination to ensure smooth, secure and dignified movement of delegates and dignitaries.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Beyond Symbolism

The debate over the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood and constitutional rights has once again taken center stage, this time with Srinagar MP Aga Ruhullah Mehdi questioning the effectiveness of symbolic political actions.

His remarks come at a time when public patience is wearing thin. Nearly seven years after the constitutional changes of August 2019, many people are asking a simple question: What is the roadmap for restoring the rights and political status that were taken away?

Ruhullah's criticism is not merely directed at any one party or protest. It reflects a broader concern that occasional demonstrations and political statements, however well-intentioned, are unlikely to achieve meaningful results without a sustained and united campaign. His warning against reducing a serious political struggle to "theatrics" is a reminder that credibility is built through consistency, not one-day events. The National Conference's decision to hold a protest in New Delhi during Parliament's Monsoon Session underlines the importance it attaches to the issue. However, the challenge before all political parties is much larger than organizing protests. The people of Jammu and Kashmir are looking for a clear strategy, coordinated efforts and visible commitment that extends beyond political messaging.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Ruhullah's statement was his call for political unity. He argued that if parties are genuinely committed to restoring constitutional rights, they should temporarily set aside electoral rivalries and work under a common platform. In a region where political divisions have often weakened collective bargaining power, the idea deserves serious consideration.

His reference to Ladakh's united struggle for constitutional safeguards is also noteworthy. While the political realities of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir differ, the lesson remains relevant: unity often strengthens a movement's voice and enhances its ability to influence decision-makers.

Ruhullah's offer to resign from Parliament as part of a larger united movement may be seen by some as symbolic, but it also raises an important point about political sacrifice. People are more likely to trust leaders who demonstrate a willingness to bear personal and political costs for the causes they champion.

Ultimately, the demand for statehood enjoys broad support across Jammu and Kashmir. Yet support alone is not enough. What is required is a sustained, peaceful and democratic movement that can keep the issue alive both within and outside Parliament. The people are not looking for occasional displays of political unity; they are looking for a leadership that can translate promises into action.

The restoration of rights and statehood will not come through symbolism alone. It will require persistence, unity and a strategy that inspires public confidence. The real challenge for Jammu and Kashmir's political leadership is not in raising the demand—it is in proving that they are prepared to pursue it with the seriousness and consistency it deserves.

SINDHU MAHAKUMBH 2026
Celebrating the River that Shaped India's Civilization

SAHIL SHARMA

From 22nd to 27th June 2026, the sacred banks of the Sindhu River in Ladakh will once again become the focal point of a grand spiritual and cultural gathering as devotees, saints, scholars, artists, and pilgrims from across India converge to celebrate Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026. More than a religious congregation, the Mahakumbh is a profound civilizational pilgrimage that reconnects the nation with one of the oldest and most revered symbols of its identity—the Sindhu River.

The significance of the Sindhu extends far beyond geography. It is from this mighty river that the names Hindu, Hindustan, and India ultimately derive, making it not merely a river but a living embodiment of the nation's historical and cultural consciousness. Flowing through the majestic landscapes of Ladakh, the Sindhu continues to serve as a timeless reminder of India's ancient roots and enduring civilizational continuity.

The Sindhu occupies a place of unparalleled importance in Indian tradition. Revered in the Vedas, especially in the Rigveda, the river was celebrated as the mightiest among all rivers. For the Vedic seers, rivers were not merely physical entities but sacred life-giving forces that nurtured societies, sustained livelihoods, and inspired spiritual reflection. In the celebrated Nadistuti Sukta of the Rigveda, the sacred rivers of Bharat are invoked with deep reverence: "Ima Me Gange Yamune Sarasvati Shutudri Stomam Sachata Parushnya."

This ancient invocation reflects the profound respect accorded to rivers as the foundations of civilization. Among them, the Sindhu stood supreme, admired for its vastness, strength, and life-sustain-



ing power. The river nourished the ancient Sindhu-Saraswati Civilization, facilitated trade and cultural exchange, and played a pivotal role in shaping the earliest chapters of India's civilizational journey.

The story of India's identity is inseparable from the story of the Sindhu. Over centuries, the word "Sindhu" evolved into "Hindu" through Persian usage and eventually gave rise to the names by which the country came to be known across the world. Thus, every visit to the banks of the Sindhu is more than a pilgrimage; it is a journey into the collective memory of a civilization that has flourished for millennia.

In contemporary times, Sindhu Mahakumbh has emerged as a powerful symbol of national integration. Nestled amidst the Himalayas, Ladakh possesses a unique cultural and spiritual heritage. Through the Mahakumbh, this high-altitude region becomes a meeting ground for the diverse traditions, languages, and communities that together constitute the Indian nation. Pilgrims

and visitors from every corner of the country gather on the banks of the Sindhu to reaffirm the bonds that unite them beyond regional, linguistic, and cultural differences.

The festival serves as a reminder that Ladakh is not merely a frontier region but an integral part of Bharat's civilizational landscape. By drawing thousands of participants to the region, the Mahakumbh strengthens emotional, cultural, and spiritual ties between Ladakh and the rest of the country, reinforcing the sense of shared heritage and national belonging.

Sindhu Mahakumbh is also a vibrant platform for cultural exchange. Traditional Ladakhi music, folk dances, Buddhist spiritual practices, indigenous crafts, and local customs are showcased alongside the cultural expressions of various states and regions of India. Artists, scholars, and cultural groups participate in programmes that celebrate the richness and diversity of Indian civilization. In this confluence of traditions, the timeless ideal

of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"—the world is one family—finds meaningful expression.

Another remarkable aspect of the Mahakumbh is its role in reconnecting local traditions with the broader civilizational narrative of India. Through Vedic chanting, spiritual discourses, cultural performances, and ceremonial worship of the Sindhu, the festival highlights the deep historical links between the river and the cultural traditions of Bharat. Simultaneously, it celebrates Ladakh's vibrant Buddhist heritage and indigenous customs, demonstrating how diverse traditions have coexisted harmoniously within the Indian civilizational framework.

This spirit is beautifully encapsulated in the Rigvedic declaration: "Ekam Sad Vipra Bahudha Vadanti"—Truth is One; the wise describe it in many ways.

For the Sindhi community, the Mahakumbh carries a particularly profound emotional significance. The Partition of 1947 separated millions of Sindhis from the historic

homeland through which the Sindhu flowed. Yet despite displacement and geographical separation, the community has preserved a deep cultural and spiritual connection with the river. During the Sindhu Mahakumbh, Sindhi devotees from across India gather in Ladakh to pay homage to the sacred waters that remain central to their collective identity. For many, this pilgrimage is a symbolic reunion with their roots and heritage, reaffirming a bond that transcends geography and generations.

At its heart, the Sindhu Mahakumbh embodies the values of harmony, peace, and collective well-being that have long defined India's spiritual traditions. As prayers are offered on the riverbanks, the timeless benediction resonates with renewed relevance: "Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Niramayah, Sarve Bhadrani Pashyant, Ma Kashchid Duhkha Bhag Bhavet." May all be happy, may all be healthy, may all witness auspiciousness, and may none suffer.

As India moves confidently into the future, Sindhu Mahakumbh serves as a reminder of the enduring values that have shaped its civilization. It celebrates the river that gave the nation its name, strengthens the bonds between Ladakh and the rest of the country, promotes cultural dialogue, and provides a sacred space where communities reconnect with their heritage.

From 22nd to 27th June 2026, the sacred waters of the Sindhu will once again become the meeting point of history, spirituality, culture, and national unity—reaffirming the timeless spirit of Bharat: ancient in wisdom, diverse in tradition, and united in soul.

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MANAGERIAL PARASITES

Leading Universities Without Credentials

BHABANI SHANKAR NAYAK

Universities and higher educational institutions are places where secular and scientific ideas develop to shape minds and guide individuals, families, states, and societies along a progressive path. These are not merely places to disseminate information but to develop knowledge by rejecting all forms of dominant ideas, powers, and knowledge traditions. The democratization and decolonization of knowledge in these places help deepen democracy and strengthen the struggle against all forms of authoritarianism, thereby empowering people and improving their living conditions. Freedom from illiteracy and ignorance is central to all activities that help drive struggles against all forms of exploitation and discrimination in society. All these activities within universities and institutions of higher education involve both the essentialist and emancipatory goals of students and staff, who are the twin foundations of all institutions of higher learning and teaching. The managerial parasites are destroying the organic relationships between staffs and students with the culture of consumerism in the campuses across the world.

The commercialisation and marketisation of education have replaced critical thinking and knowledge production and dissemination with a singular agenda of profit-making—at the cost of students, staff, and society in particular, and the nature of knowledge production in general. The idea of employability has replaced critical thinking and reflective engagement with ideas, exist-

ing knowledge traditions, and their limitations in producing new knowledge. Such a transformation within higher education has led to the creation of an environment where teaching and learning are replaced by the idea of profit-making, which has become strategic thinking, whereas research is seen as revenue-draining. Such profit-driven market logic has destroyed higher education across the globe.

However, these narrow functionalist ideas of higher education—pursued in the name of skills transfer and employability—have helped to create compliant minds and hands, which are essential for a compliant society where the idea of emancipation and revolution has been killed, giving rise to a breed of reactionary and mindless managers of higher education. For this managerial class, students are cash cows, and staff are mere numbers on balance sheets of staff costs, salary slips, and pension sheets. These managers have nothing to bring into higher education institutions. They have nothing to offer to enhance staff and student experience by facilitating and creating an environment of creative, critical, and collaborative learning and teaching.

The credential-free managers with compliant minds have entered higher education in the name of industry experience, without understanding the nature of teaching, learning, and research environments. Some of these managers lack even the basic qualifications to be a teaching assistant. They have never taught and have never written a page worth mentioning in their entire career. These managers do not have a doctoral degree, publication credentials, or teaching



credentials—yet they become heads of departments, deans, deputy deans, deputy vice-chancellors, and vice-chancellors in the organisational hierarchy within the managerial lexicon of higher education.

Most of these deans and heads of departments control the so-called quality assurance processes without even knowing the basics of higher education. Some of these deans and other leaders of higher education can't even write an email. These leaders use ChatGPT and other generative AI applications to write emails. One of my colleagues from a UK university said that "the dean of the university writes emails to staff which is 69% copied from ChatGPT." Such people decide the nature of higher education. This is why public faith in higher education is declining—managers have destroyed universities as a social good and created a profit-driven educational system where education and training are missing, buried under tons of unnecessary policies introduced in the name of quality assurance and processes that are, in fact, detrimental to higher education.

These mindless managers without basic academic credentials also claim to be professors without having published

a page, and they lead institutions of higher education. Anyone who disagrees with their agendas is crushed under restructuring and redundancies, which produce conditions for managerial bonuses at the cost of students, staff, and universities. Most British universities are nearly collapsing due to this managerial class and their political masters, who prefer compliant citizens over critical and radically thinking global citizens. So, these credential-less managers are minions of larger governing elites of states and societies who want higher education to be merely skills-based training for employability. These forces do not want secular and scientific education for radical reorganisation of society based on equality and liberty.

These credential-less managerial parasites live on staff member's labour, student's struggle and their family savings exactly like their corporate masters of capitalism, where lies, exploitation, inequality, and discrimination are inbuilt. These managers bring this toxic culture of capitalism to universities and other institutions of higher education to destroy them from the inside. These managers are not merely parasites but are also

drunk with the power of arrogance and ignorance, working as agents of the governing class to destroy the very foundation of higher education. These managers need to be named and shamed in public, as they destroy a public good called education—which is a crucial tool of social, political, and economic change. It is important to expose the managers and their political masters in order to reveal the designs of a profit-driven capitalist educational system that destroys education itself by creating conditions of alienation among students, staff, and campuses.

The rise of hordes of managerial parasites—who lead higher education institutions without any credentials to be on campus—are not only enemies of staff and students; they are also enemies of the people, of reason, and of the scientific knowledge that society needs to progress on a path of peace and prosperity. The defeat of these toxic managers, managerialism, and the managerial class is central to the growth of a higher education environment that facilitates learning and teaching to produce knowledge, shape minds, and guide societies along a progressive path free from exploitation, discrimination, and inequalities. Universities and other institutions of higher education do not need toxic and unqualified managerial parasites, but thought leaders to facilitate an environment of learning ideas, skills, and ideals—to develop a society where there is no limit on human emancipation. Universities and other higher educational institutions for a better tomorrow are possible and inevitable.

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■ World Environment Day

Time To Move From Environmental Crisis To Sustainable Solutions

LALIT GARG

World Environment Day, observed every year on June 5, is not merely a ceremonial occasion; it is a global commitment to safeguarding the future of our planet and humanity. The 2026 observance comes at a time when climate change, plastic pollution, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, air pollution, and the reckless exploitation of natural resources have posed unprecedented challenges to the Earth's ecological balance. This year's theme, "Ending Plastic Pollution," is not only a call to reduce plastic consumption but also an invitation to rethink the consumerist lifestyles and development models that have distanced humanity from nature. Today, the world is experiencing the devastating consequences of environmental degradation. Intense heatwaves are making life unbearable in many regions, while uncontrolled rainfall and floods are causing widespread destruction elsewhere. Droughts and water shortages are threatening livelihoods and human survival. India, too, is confronting these realities. Forest fires in Uttarakhand, the rapid melting of Himalayan glaciers, alarming levels of urban pollution, severe water shortages in technology hubs such as Bengaluru, and continuously rising temperatures all indicate that environmental crisis is no longer a future concern—it is a present-day reality.

Reports from the United Nations continue to warn that climate-related disasters have claimed millions of lives and caused trillions of dollars in economic losses over the past decade. Biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution are interconnected crises that reinforce one another. Unless global warming is effectively controlled, humanity could face an unprecedented existential challenge. The 2015 Paris Climate Agreement set a target of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, yet the world remains far from achieving the pace of action required to meet that goal. One of the most concerning aspects of this crisis is that environmental issues have not received the political attention they deserve, particularly in India. While election manifestos occasionally men-



tion environmental concerns, they are often treated as symbolic commitments rather than policy priorities. Political parties frequently assume that issues such as climate change, pollution, and ecological conservation do not influence electoral outcomes. Consequently, environmental concerns rarely become central to political debates or electoral competition, despite the fact that the health, security, and future of coming generations depend upon them.

At the root of the environmental crisis lies a flawed model of development that views nature merely as a resource for consumption and profit. Forests have been sacrificed for industries, rivers have become channels for waste disposal, and fertile lands have been transformed into sprawling concrete landscapes. Nature provides the essentials of life without demanding anything in return, yet humanity has responded with exploitation rather than gratitude. The result has been widespread deforestation, shrinking wildlife habitats, depletion of groundwater reserves, and escalating pollution. Indian civilization has historically regarded nature as sacred. Trees, rivers, mountains, and forests have been revered not merely as physical entities but as life-sustaining forces. Traditional systems such as Ayurveda and herbal medicine exemplify this harmonious relationship with nature. For centuries, medicinal plants and natural remedies protected human

health. However, in the blind pursuit of modernity, both this knowledge and the natural wealth supporting it have been neglected. Today, as humanity faces new and complex health challenges, there is a growing realization of the need to reconnect with nature and restore ecological wisdom.

The current crisis is not only environmental but also economic, social, and moral. Air pollution contributes to millions of premature deaths worldwide. Water sources are becoming increasingly contaminated. Agricultural systems are under stress, and weather patterns have become highly unpredictable. The poor and vulnerable bear the heaviest burden of environmental degradation. Former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi once remarked that "poverty is the greatest polluter." Today, this observation appears even more relevant, as poverty and environmental destruction often reinforce one another in a vicious cycle.

India is not lacking in environmental legislation. From the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 to numerous environmental regulations enacted over the decades, the legal framework exists. However, a significant gap remains between legislation and effective implementation. Illegal mining, rampant deforestation, unchecked industrial pollution, and relaxed environmental clearances demonstrate that institutional commitment and enforcement mechanisms remain inadequate. Yet, there are reasons for

optimism. Environmental awareness among young people is growing rapidly. Various surveys indicate that a large proportion of youth consider climate change a serious concern and expect governments to invest more in environmental education and public awareness. This demonstrates that the younger generation views environmental protection not merely as a matter of conservation but as a question of its own future. The challenge is to transform this awareness into a powerful social and political movement.

What, then, are the solutions? First, society must abandon the false notion that development and environmental protection are opposing objectives. Sustainable development requires both economic progress and ecological responsibility. Expanding renewable energy, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, strengthening public transportation systems, promoting water conservation, encouraging large-scale afforestation, and effectively controlling plastic use are essential measures. Governments alone cannot achieve these goals; meaningful progress demands active participation from communities, industries, educational institutions, and individual citizens. Second, environmental protection must become a political priority. Just as employment, education, and healthcare dominate public discourse, clean air, clean water, green development, and climate security should also become central issues

in democratic debates. Citizens must hold their representatives accountable for their environmental commitments. When voters prioritize environmental concerns, political leadership will inevitably follow.

Third, environmental awareness must be integrated into education in a practical and meaningful manner. Children and young people should not only learn environmental concepts from textbooks but should also develop a living connection with nature through activities related to water conservation, waste management, biodiversity protection, and sustainable living. Fourth, individuals must embrace lifestyle changes. Excessive consumption, wastefulness, and convenience-driven habits have significantly contributed to environmental degradation. Responsible consumption, recycling, local resource utilization, and environmentally conscious living offer pathways toward a sustainable future. These values are deeply embedded in India's philosophical traditions, which emphasize moderation, balance, and respect for all forms of life.

World Environment Day 2026 reminds us that the environment is not merely about trees, rivers, forests, or wildlife—it is fundamentally about the survival of human civilization itself. If we fail to transform our policies, development models, and lifestyles in time, future generations may never forgive us. However, if we move forward with scientific vision, political determination, social participation, and collective responsibility, we can convert this crisis into an opportunity for renewal.

India possesses the potential to offer a new direction to the world. Its enduring principles of coexistence with nature, non-violence, moderation, and balanced development can serve as guiding lights for a planet searching for sustainable solutions. The need of the hour is to recognize that environmental protection is not an alternative to development—it is the very foundation of development. That is the message of World Environment Day. That is the pathway to a secure future. And that is our shared responsibility toward the Earth.

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Environmental Crisis

Trapped Between Development And Destruction

YOGESH KUMAR

Environmental pollution is the biggest global problem of the present time. For the last three decades, it has been felt that the biggest problem at the global level is related to the environment itself. Due to continuous human interference in nature, many natural resources on Earth have been destroyed. Due to reasons such as modern lifestyle, lack of trees and plants on Earth, the monstrous form of environmental pollution, and the ruthless exploitation of nature by humans, a terrifying chasm of imbalance is being created between man and nature.

We are now continuously experiencing the rising threats of climate change and a polluted environment. That is why, with the objective of protecting and conserving the environment, 'World Environment Day' is celebrated every year on June 5 across the whole world. This day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on June 16, 1972, in Stockholm, to bring political and social awareness towards the environment at a global level, and the first World Environment Day was celebrated on June 5, 1974. The theme of World Environment Day for the year 2026 is 'Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future.'

Although agreements regarding the protection of the environment and the proper exploitation of nature had started in Europe, America, and African countries since the 1910s, in recent decades, many countries around the world have signed several multinational agreements like the Kyoto Protocol, Montreal Protocol, and the Rio Conference. Governments of most countries do appear concerned about the environment, but amidst this environmental concern, some countries keep changing their environmental con-



servation policies keeping their own interests in mind.

The brunt of a polluted environment has to be borne not only by humans but by every living being existing on Earth. It is due to tampering with nature on a large scale that the giant forests of the world have started burning every year, which, apart from causing losses of trillions of rupees to the global economy, also reduces many species of rare animals and flora to ashes in fierce fires. During the lockdown in the Corona period, an improvement in the state of the environment was observed worldwide, which showed that if we want, the state of the environment can be improved to a great extent, but due to a lack of strong willpower, the expected steps are not taken regarding environmental conservation. Continuous rise in temperature and the constantly deteriorating mood of the weather, not only in India but at the global level, has become a matter of deep concern.

There is a lot of discussion and

concern about dealing with climate change, and various kinds of resolutions are also repeated, but due to the blind desire for comforts and resources, growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), uncontrolled industrial development, and the pressure to create more and more employment opportunities, such discussions and concerns end up becoming meaningless. In my book 'Pr' (Pollution-Free Breaths), I have explained in detail how crucial it is to understand the signs and the silent language of nature hidden behind the natural events of upheaval occurring on Earth from time to time. In the race of modernization and industrialization, we have violated the moral boundaries of nature at every moment, and all this is the result of man's atrocities against nature, the horrific consequences of which are before us.

It is due to human activities that the mixture of pollution from carbon monoxide, nitrogen, ozone, and particulate matter in the atmosphere has

The brunt of a polluted environment has to be borne not only by humans but by every living being existing on Earth. It is due to tampering with nature on a large scale that the giant forests of the world have started burning every year, which, apart from causing losses of trillions of rupees to the global economy, also reduces many species of rare animals and flora to ashes in fierce fires.

reached such a dangerous level that we are receiving incurable diseases as a gift through breathing. Whether it is the matter of discharging sewage filth into clean water sources, or flushing the acidic waste of industrial units into rivers, or the poison dissolving into the atmosphere from long queues of vehicles crawling on the roads, or the thousands and millions of tons of smoke dissolving into the air from stubble burning in fields despite strict court orders, our eyes do not open until a major wrath of nature breaks upon us.

The smoke generated from petrol and diesel has increased the amount of carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases in the atmosphere to a dangerous level. Trees and plants have been playing an

important role in maintaining environmental balance by absorbing carbon dioxide, but in the last few decades, forest areas have been converted into concrete jungles on a large scale. The temperature of the Earth is rising continuously, as a result of which ice is melting in polar regions, raising fears of several cities in the world being submerged due to rising sea levels.

Nature has been continuously warning us by showing its fierce form sometimes as cyclones, sometimes earthquakes, sometimes drought, and sometimes famine, about what the picture of our future is going to be if we continue to exploit nature's resources in this manner. But despite witnessing the fierce form of nature every time, we are inviting our own destruction by ignoring these warnings of nature. If we look at the monstrous global problem of environmental pollution worldwide, it is clear that we perhaps do not want to do anything beyond expressing global concern in the name of dealing with climate change.

It has been stated in the book 'Pollution-Free Breaths' that due to the faltering balance of the environment, people worldwide are getting trapped in the web of various dreadful diseases, their reproductive capacity is being adversely affected, and their working efficiency is also getting impacted. A major part of people's earnings is spent only on the treatment of diseases. Nature is like our mother, who provides us with plenty of valuable things from her natural treasure, but if, due to our selfishness, we start making the mistake of considering ourselves the master of nature, then how can we blame nature for natural devastation?

Author is a journalist active in journalism for 36 years, environmental expert and the author of several acclaimed books, including 'Pradushan Mukht Saansein' on environment

Javed Rana reviews development works in B'la Constituency

Asks for expeditious clearances, timely completion of key schemes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Thursday directed the officers to expedite clearances, resolve pending issues and ensure timely completion of key developmental and public utility projects in Baramulla Assembly Constituency. The directions were issued during a review meeting convened by the Minister at the Civil Secretariat to assess the status of ongoing development works and public welfare schemes in the constituency represented by MLA Javid Hassan Baig. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held regarding afforestation and greening initiatives for Baramulla town, pending issues related to the Janbazpora-Kandikhan Irrigation Scheme and



progress on the Sheeri Lift Irrigation Schemes under Phase-I and Phase-II. The Minister directed the concerned officers to take all necessary measures for expeditious completion of works and early resolution of the pending issues. Regarding establishment of the City Forest at Azad Gunj, Baramulla, Javed Rana directed the concerned officers to actively pursue the proposal pending with the Government of India. He

emphasized the need for close coordination and regular follow-up with the concerned authorities so that the project is accorded due priority and taken up at the earliest. The Minister said that the proposed City Forest would not only enhance the green cover in the area but also provide recreational spaces for the public while promoting environmental conservation and sustainable urban development. During the meeting, issues concerning the

tribal welfare also came up for discussion, particularly those related to forest clearances, road connectivity in tribal areas, public utility infrastructure and implementation of tribal rights. The Minister directed the concerned officers to proactively address the pending forest-related issues, improve access to essential services in tribal habitations and ensure effective implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) so that the rightful benefits envisaged under the Act reach tribal communities in a timely and transparent manner. He reiterated the government's commitment towards safeguarding the rights and interests of tribal people and promoting their socio-economic development through improved infrastructure, connectivity and public service delivery. Regarding the Girls

Hostel in Baramulla, the Minister directed to complete all the pending formalities related to its handover and takeover at the earliest. He stressed that the hostel should be made fully operational without further delay so that benefits reach the students, particularly girl students from remote and underserved areas, thereby strengthening access to educational facilities and accommodation. The Minister also reviewed matters relating to the Sangri Top-Sheeri Road, Kattianwali Road and Kawhar Road, particularly issues concerning forest clearances and No Objection Certificates (NOCs). He instructed the Forest Department to facilitate timely processing of cases in accordance with prescribed norms so that developmental works are not unnecessarily delayed.

Sakeena Ito reviews performance, functioning of J&K Medical Supplies Corporation Limited

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Ito Thursday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the performance and functioning of the Jammu & Kashmir Medical Supplies Corporation Limited. During the review, the Minister undertook a detailed assessment of procurement mechanisms, inventory management, medicine distribution networks, quality assurance protocols, supply chain operations, vendor performance and ongoing procurement projects relating to medicines, medical equipment and healthcare infrastructure. Addressing the officers, Sakeena Ito underscored the pivotal role played by JKMSCL in ensuring uninterrupted availability of quality medicines, surgical consumables, diagnostic supplies and medical equipment in government healthcare institutions. She

observed that a responsive and well-monitored supply system is fundamental to strengthening public healthcare services and improving patient outcomes. She directed the officers to install procured equipments at designated health facilities well on time, besides process should be expedited for procuring other necessary medical equipments. The Minister reiterated the government's commitment towards strengthening healthcare delivery through an efficient, transparent and accountable medical procurement and distribution system across Jammu and Kashmir. The Minister emphasized that transparency, accountability and efficiency must remain the guiding principles of JKMSCL's operations. She directed the corporation to further strengthen monitoring mechanisms and adopt best practices in procurement and distribution to eliminate delays, reduce wastage and ensure optimal utilization

of resources. Highlighting the importance of quality assurance, Sakeena Ito stressed that no compromise should be made on the quality of medicines and medical equipment supplied to healthcare institutions. She instructed the corporation to reinforce quality control procedures at every stage, from procurement and testing to storage and final delivery, while ensuring strict adherence to established standards and regulatory norms. The Minister also called for regular quality audits, enhanced laboratory testing and rigorous vendor evaluation processes. Expressing concern over delays in the supply of essential drugs and equipment, the Minister directed the corporation to maintain strict timelines for procurement and delivery. She instructed the concerned officials to closely monitor supplier performance and initiate appropriate action against firms failing to meet contractual obligations.

..... FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Imported cherry

of unfavorable weather conditions during flowering. However, the market is responding positively. On Thursday, cherries were sold at rates ranging between Rs 150 and Rs 300 per kilogram. As the season progresses and demand increases, prices are expected to rise further and may even cross Rs 500 per kilogram," he said. The imported varieties have gained popularity among growers due to their ability to withstand light and moderate rainfall, a critical advantage in Kashmir's unpredictable weather conditions. Traditional cherry varieties are highly susceptible to rain damage, which often affects fruit quality, appearance and market value. Growers say the staggered ripening pattern of the imported cultivars is another major advantage. Unlike conventional varieties that mature almost simultaneously and flood markets within a short period, the newer cultivars ripen gradually, ensuring a more balanced supply and helping growers secure better prices over an extended period. Basheer Ahmad Basheer, President of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Union, said the rates are going on good despite reduced output due to weather conditions and recent hailstorms were salts were salt on the wounds of growers. "Overall production is lower this year, but prices have been encouraging from the very beginning of the season. We expect rates to improve further in the coming weeks as demand picks up and more varieties enter the market," Basheer said. He added that the arrival of imported varieties has extended the harvesting season, creating additional employment opportunities for both local workers and migrant labourers engaged in picking, grading, packing and transportation activities. According to growers, the traditional cherry harvest generally begins in mid-June and continues until early July. However, the introduction of imported cultivars has effectively stretched the harvesting period to nearly two months, allowing growers to market their produce over a longer duration and avoid distress sales. Despite the increasing popularity of imported cherries, traditional varieties continue to dominate Kashmir's production landscape. Basheer said nearly 70 percent of the Valley's cherry output still comes from conventional cultivars such as Siyah, Makhmali, Awal Number, Jadi, Holland, Double, Mishry, Splendor and Steela. "These traditional varieties are renowned for their superior taste, colour, crunch and quality. As harvesting begins in the coming days, growers are hopeful they will receive equally rewarding prices," he said. Jammu and Kashmir remains India's leading cherry-producing region, with annual production exceeding 1.5 lakh metric tonnes. More than 2,300 hectares of land across the Union Territory are under cherry cultivation, with Shopian, Ganderbal and Srinagar emerging as major production hubs. As traditional orchards prepare for harvest and market demand remains robust, growers across Kashmir are hopeful that the 2026 cherry season will deliver healthy returns despite the challenges posed by weather-related losses earlier in the year—(KNO)

tion and innovation converge, where the old inspires the new, and where people come together to celebrate the diversity that defines us. I believe one of our foremost responsibilities is to connect Jammu Kashmir's youth with handloom, handicraft, and the arts. The future of our culture rests in youth's hands and they must be made aware of the invaluable heritage," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor felicitated various renowned artists for their significant contribution at the event organised by Pumbuch Cultural Heritage Foundation in collaboration with Department of Tourism J&K. Shri Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce; Ms. Superna Sapru, Director, Pumbuch Cultural Heritage Foundation; Shri Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Shri Masrat-ul-Islam, Director Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir; senior officials of police and civil administration, members of Pumbuch Cultural Heritage Foundation and prominent artists and artisans were present.

LG Attends

faith that emerged thousands of years after Sanatan Dharma. The Lieutenant Governor said that the Rigveda also teaches that hearts and minds should be aligned, our aim should be the same, our feelings in harmony, and our thoughts united. "Scholars and researchers worldwide agree that the spirit of equal regard for all religions finds its philosophical roots in the ancient traditions of our great country. When I reflect on the ideals and philosophies India has gifted humanity, it becomes evident that through both thought and deed, our Vedas, Upanishads, saints and seers have illuminated a path toward lasting world peace," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor stated that every thread of society must be woven together, advancing with a shared commitment to the welfare of humanity. "That is precisely what humanity needs most today. The ethos of equal respect for all religions is India's most precious gift to the world. We must continuously nurture it so we can move forward together in unity and bring prosperity to every community," the Lieutenant Governor said. Highlighting Jammu Kashmir's exceptional performance during the three phases of the Vande Mataram initiative, the Lieutenant Governor described the achievement as extraordinary and a testament to the people's enduring patriotic spirit. The Lieutenant Governor also lauded the overwhelming public support for the Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan. He said that participation from all sections of society has been organic and inspiring. He called upon citizens, institutions and community leaders to embrace the campaign as a people's movement and work together towards building a drug-free and healthier society. Shri Justice Sanjay Dhar, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Dr. Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, Chairperson, J&K Waqf Board, Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice-Chancellor, Kashmir University, Prof. Meena Sharma, Organiser (Convener), saints, senior officers of the judiciary, police and civil administration, faculty members of various universities, students and public in large number attended the conference.

IndiGo suspends

scheduled, in appropriate lead time. The carrier also stated that it has managed to retain majority of its international operations -- over 1,800 weekly international

flights -- despite this realignment. "These measured changes are designed to align capacity with current market conditions and demand trends, while ensuring the airline maintains reliability and network integrity across its global destinations," the statement said. The airline will continue to monitor the situation, given the elevated operating costs and continued airspace restrictions, it added. (PTI)

Rain lash

The weather office said conditions are likely to remain generally cloudy on Saturday, with brief showers at scattered places. From June 7 onwards, weather is expected to remain generally hot and dry across Jammu and Kashmir, it added. The department has issued an advisory warning of thunderstorms, lightning, hailstorms and gusty winds with speeds of 40-50 kmph, gusting up to 60 kmph, at isolated scattered places during the ongoing wet spell. People have been advised to stay indoors during thunderstorms and strong winds and avoid venturing into vulnerable areas during adverse weather conditions. The advisory also called for suspension of boating and shikara operations during periods of inclement weather. The department warned that brief intense showers at isolated places in both Kashmir and Jammu divisions could trigger flash floods, mudslides and localised waterlogging. The rainfall comes after a sharp rise in temperatures across the Valley over the past week due to prolonged hot and dry weather. The change in weather has brought relief to people and improved conditions at several tourist destinations, including Pahalgam, which continued to record relatively lower temperatures compared to many other parts of the region. Thousands of tourists have arrived in Kashmir in recent days to escape the intense heat prevailing in several parts of the country, officials said. The Meteorological Department said it was monitoring the weather situation and advised people to follow official advisories and take necessary precautions during the forecast period—(KNO)

Demand for 'alternate

made in advance. "This decision will impact the entire tourism industry. Thousands of passengers travel through Srinagar airport every day, and any disruption during peak season will directly affect tourism, hotels, transporters and other sectors linked with travel," Chaya told KNO. He said tourism players have already raised the matter with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. "We spoke to the Chief Minister, and he assured us that he will discuss the matter with the Prime Minister in Delhi. We are also going to meet Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and request him to ensure alternative arrangements," he said. Chaya said stakeholders want Awantipora airport to be explored as a temporary alternative for civilian flight operations during the closure period. "Till the maintenance work is completed, Awantipora airport should be considered for civilian use. Besides that, more direct train services from Delhi and other major cities should be introduced to reduce inconvenience for tourists and locals," he added. President of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK), Rouf Trambo, said the tourism industry is already witnessing

concern among travellers over the proposed restrictions. "At present, we need an alternative airport because this is peak tourism time. A prolonged closure will create serious operational problems for tourists and travel operators," he said. Trambo said travel agents are receiving constant queries from domestic and international clients regarding scheduled trips. "We are getting calls from B2B operators and tourists asking what will happen to their travel plans and bookings. There is uncertainty among travellers, and that can affect tourist inflow if timely alternatives are not arranged," he said. Mukhtar Ahmad, a hotelier from Srinagar, said the Valley's hospitality sector depends largely on uninterrupted air connectivity. "Hotels and tourism businesses rely heavily on flight connectivity. Even a temporary disruption can impact bookings, occupancy and employment associated with tourism activities," he said. Gowhar, a houseboat owner at Dal Lake, said any disruption in flight services during the summer months would directly impact small tourism-dependent families. "Most tourists prefer air travel to Kashmir. If flights are affected, houseboat bookings and tourism activities will also decline. Thousands of families linked with tourism may suffer financially," he said. Stakeholders urged the administration and the Civil Aviation Ministry to finalise contingency plans well in advance to minimise inconvenience to passengers and ensure that Kashmir's tourism sector does not suffer during the crucial travel season—(KNO)

CS reviews

advised the department to undertake a comprehensive review of the land parcels identified on the PM Gati Shakti Portal and assess their suitability for establishment of mega solar parks under Government of India-supported programmes. He called for a focused and mission-mode approach, directing the department to set measurable targets for the next six months, one year and two years, and ensure visible progress on the ground at each stage. The meeting held detailed deliberations on a range of issues critical to the successful implementation of solar projects, including land acquisition and transfer, obtaining statutory clearances from various departments, execution of Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with distribution companies for evacuation of power generated from solarized buildings, and measures required to maintain grid stability for optimal utilization of solar energy assets. Discussions also centred on the installation of Virtual Net Metering systems in Government buildings, adoption of a Unified Billing System for departments in place of separate billing for individual buildings, and provision of fresh power connections wherever required to facilitate seamless implementation of solar projects. The stakeholders further deliberated upon the need for rationalization and levelling of rates for projects being implemented under the Renewable Energy Service Company (RESCO) model to ensure greater efficiency of solar energy solutions across departments. The meeting also reviewed the long-term roadmap for development of mega-scale solar power infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir. Detailed discussions were held on issues relating to land transfer, execution of PPAs and feeder segregation, which are considered essential for efficient integration and utilization of future solar power assets

in the Union Territory. Reaffirming the Government's commitment towards clean and sustainable energy, the Chief Secretary called upon these departments to work in close coordination and expedite action on the decisions taken during the meeting so that Jammu and Kashmir catches up with other leading renewable energy developing regions of the country.

Inadequate Reactive Power

Wagoora and Wanpoh S/s, 400kV voltages are reaching 360kV at Amargarh, Wagoora and Wanpoh substations." NRPC also said that due to inadequate compensation in J&K STU network, severe low voltages have been observed in J&K grid. As already reported by this news agency, Jammu and Kashmir has indicated that a power load requirement of up to 7 Gigawatts (GWs) by the coming five years needs to be considered in the winter season—signalling major infrastructure upgrades to avoid seasonal blackouts—(KNO)

NC using statehood

He claimed that dissatisfaction existed within the ruling party itself and said even some of its legislators were unhappy with the leadership. "The Omar Abdullah-led government has left people on God's mercy and failed to address their day-to-day issues," he alleged. Highlighting the role of youth, Khatana said young people in Jammu and Kashmir were increasingly focusing on education, sports, entrepreneurship and social reform initiatives. "The youth of Jammu and Kashmir are taking the lead in sports, startups and the fight against drugs. They are moving towards development, peace and progress and turning away from those who used them for vested interests over the past several decades," he said. The BJP MP also praised the efforts of security forces, saying their coordinated work alongside the public had helped improve the overall situation in the region. "Our security forces deserve appreciation for their role in bringing peace and stability. Through coordinated efforts with the people, they have helped Jammu and Kashmir move away from stone pelting, bloodshed and mourning towards an atmosphere of peace and development," he said—(KNO)

Accused Including Kashmiri

professionals and associates operating through financial, logistical and communication channels. Media reports quoting investigative findings have described the probe as involving an alleged "white-collar" network, a description that has drawn significant public attention because several accused are medical professionals. The NIA has alleged that the accused were involved in various aspects of planning, facilitation, financing and support activities connected to the case. The agency's investigation subsequently expanded across multiple states, leading to searches and arrests at various locations. The accused have not been convicted, and all allegations remain subject to judicial scrutiny during the trial process. Thursday's proceedings before the Patiala House Court formed part of the continuing legal process following the filing of the chargesheet. The court is expected to consider the material submitted by the investigating agency as the matter progresses further. [KNT]

PM Modi expresses confidence in Yogasana's future Olympic prospects

IAN S

AHMEDABAD/NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday expressed confidence that Yogasana could eventually secure a place in international multi-sport competitions, including the Olympics, as he virtually inaugurated the first World Yogasana Championship in Ahmedabad.

Addressing athletes from more than 60 countries, PM Modi said the championship marked the beginning of a new phase in yoga's evolution by providing Yogasana with a platform as a competitive sport.

"Through this championship, Yogasana will gain a new identity as a competitive sport. I am confident that in the future, Yogasana will also secure its place in international sports. Whether it is the Olympics or multi-sport events, if we work hard enough, positive results can certainly be achieved," he added.

He said that the inaugural championship in Ahmedabad would play a major role in advancing those ambitions.

The event, being held from June 4 to 8, is the first-ever World Yogasana Championship and has brought together more than 400 athletes from over 60 nations. It is considered a significant step in efforts to establish Yogasana as a recognised global sporting discipline.

Prime Minister Modi also highlighted the wider economic opportunities associated with the growth of Yogasana as a sport.

"We know that every major sport brings with it an entire ecosystem. It creates new employment opportunities. As Yogasana Sports expands, new possibilities associated with it will also grow," he said.

According to the Prime Minister, the development of the sport could generate



PM Modi urges athletes to become ambassadors of Ayush Ministry's 'Yoga 365' campaign

IAN S

Prim Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called on athletes participating in the inaugural 'World Yogasana Championship' to become global ambassadors of the Ayush Ministry's 'Yoga 365' campaign when they return to their home countries.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the championship in Ahmedabad, PM Modi said the campaign had been launched to encourage year-round engagement with yoga and promote healthier lifestyles across communities.

"Taking this thought forward, the Ministry of AYUSH has launched the 'Yoga 365' campaign," he added.

The Prime Minister linked the initiative to this year's International Day of Yoga theme, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing", and said yoga offered an accessible way for people to remain active and healthy throughout their lives.

PM Modi urged athletes from across the world to help spread awareness about yoga beyond the championship.

"When you return to your respective countries, take this message of yoga with you. All of you can become ambassadors of 'Yoga 365' in your own countries. Your experience and your faith in yoga can connect the entire world with this message," he said.

The appeal came as Ahmedabad hosted the first World Yogasana Championship, which has attracted more than 400 competitors from over 60 countries.

The event is being held from June 4 to 8 and is regarded as a landmark effort to develop Yogasana as a structured international sport. PM Modi said yoga's appeal extended beyond physical fitness and offered a practical approach to preventive health.

"Yoga frees people from indulgence and also from disease. Most importantly, it is

one of the best ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle with a minimum budget," he added.

The Ayush Ministry has been at the forefront of government initiatives aimed at expanding yoga participation in India and internationally.

The World Yogasana Championship has also received support from the Ministry alongside sports authorities and organising bodies involved in promoting Yogasana globally.

PM Modi said the championship represented more than a sporting competition and offered an opportunity to spread the broader message of yoga worldwide.

Congratulating the organisers and participants, the Prime Minister added: "The athletes' experiences and commitment to yoga could help strengthen international awareness of the practice and contribute to the continued growth of yoga-related initiatives throughout the year."

opportunities for athletes, trainers, sports scientists, researchers and event managers.

Efforts to secure wider international recognition for Yogasana have gained momentum in recent years.

The championship is being conducted under stan-

standardised competition rules and includes athletes competing across multiple age categories and disciplines.

Officials say the event also features an electronic scoring system designed to improve transparency and judging consistency at the international level.

Prime Minister Modi said all participants were already champions by virtue of being part of what he described as an "important chapter in sporting history" and said their performances would inspire young people around the world.

'India's diplomacy helping to secure energy security amid Middle East crisis'

IAN S

NEW DELHI: With the conflict still raging in the Middle East, India is among the most exposed major economies with a heavy dependence on Persian Gulf oil and gas supplies as well as fertilisers.

Approximately 50 per cent of the country's crude oil imports (2.5-2.7 million barrels/day), 68 per cent of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas), and over 85 per cent of LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) usually transit the Strait of Hormuz.

Any disruption significantly impacts India's economic growth, particularly in areas such as fertiliser production, power generation, and household and commercial fuel availability, according to an article published by the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS).

The article states that India has pursued the diplomatic path very vigorously to safeguard its interests amid disruptions due to the Iran war.

India has secured a notable concession as Iran initially allowed several Indian-flagged tankers, Shivalk Nanda and Devi, safe passage through the Hormuz Strait after several one-on-one engagements with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi. Since then, several other Indian-flagged vessels, including Piramal and Pushpak, have safely transited the waterway. This reflects New Delhi's seriousness in keeping all its channels of communication open.

Delhi Hotel fire: Owner faces interrogation as hunt for manager intensifies

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The investigation into the massive fire at a bed-and-breakfast establishment in south Delhi's Malviya Nagar, which claimed 21 lives, intensified on Thursday even as a court sent owner Lavkesh Bajaj to four days' police custody.

While police teams continue their search for the absconding manager, Jai Mishra, forensic experts are examining evidence from the site to assess alleged violations that may have contributed to the tragedy.

Delhi Police have launched a manhunt for Mishra, the manager of the property, who has been missing since the fire broke out on Wednesday morning.

Police have registered a case against Bajaj under several provisions of the

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including culpable homicide not amounting to murder, mischief by fire, negligence endangering human life, causing grievous hurt through negligence, damage to property, and negligent conduct related to fire safety.

Police reconstructed the sequence of events that resulted in the blaze. Forensic examination of everything pertaining to the incident is being carried out, officials told the media.

A team of forensic experts has collected samples and evidence from the site to determine the origin of the fire and assess whether safety lapses contributed to the scale of the disaster. Authorities are also reviewing the establishment's compliance with fire safety regulations and licensing requirements.

The investigation has

increasingly focused on Mishra, the hotel's manager, who allegedly oversaw the day-to-day functioning of the property, say police officials. According to police, Bajaj informed investigators that Mishra was responsible for managing operations at the establishment.

Mishra is reported to have been absconding since the incident occurred around 8.45 a.m. on Wednesday. Police teams are trying to trace and nab him, officials said.

The fire erupted on Wednesday morning, trapping numerous guests inside the building and triggering a large-scale rescue operation. Among the deceased were 12 foreign nationals who were reportedly staying at the facility while accompanying relatives receiving treatment at nearby hospitals.

India, UK well-positioned to build future-oriented, mutually beneficial partnership: EAM Jaishankar

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Hailing ties between India and the UK, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar said on Thursday that the two nations are well positioned to build a new "future-oriented and mutually beneficial partnership."

In his opening remarks ahead of his meeting with visiting UK Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper in New Delhi on Thursday, EAM Jaishankar highlighted the remarkable developments between India-UK ties, which included UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer's visit to India in October last year and PM Narendra Modi's visit to the UK in July last year.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, India's High Commissioner to UK, P Kumaran and other officials were also present during the meeting.

"Your presence is of course today both reaffirmation of our Comprehen-



sive Strategic Partnership and also an opportunity to review its progress. Now, our relationship has moved from being a historical and perhaps cultural connection today to a forward-looking highway of shared economic ambitions and high technology," EAM Jaishankar said.

"Our bilateral relations really saw some remarkable developments last year marked by a two-way visits of Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Starmer within months of each other. With the signing of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade

Agreement (CETA) and the adoption of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that of the Defence Industrial Roadmap as well," he added.

EAM Jaishankar stated that he and Cooper will discuss the India UK Vision 2035 under all five pillars of growth, technology and innovation, defence and security, climate and clean energy as well as education," he mentioned.

Highlighting the progress made on India UK Vision 2035, EAM Jaishankar added, "I would like to take the opportunity to recognise some of the significant progress recently on the Vision 2035 which includes the signing of the CETA, the UK India UK technology security initiative, the adoption of the defense industrial roadmap, the climate technology startup fund, the offshore wind energy task force, and of course the coming to India of universities from the UK of which the most recent is the University of Liverpool whose decision was announced today."

ing resilient supply chains and addressing concerns about trade, energy, food and economic security. Today's meeting will be an opportunity to discuss the India UK Vision 2035 under all the five pillars of growth, technology and innovation, defence and security, climate and clean energy as well as education," he mentioned.

Highlighting the progress made on India UK Vision 2035, EAM Jaishankar added, "I would like to take the opportunity to recognise some of the significant progress recently on the Vision 2035 which includes the signing of the CETA, the UK India UK technology security initiative, the adoption of the defense industrial roadmap, the climate technology startup fund, the offshore wind energy task force, and of course the coming to India of universities from the UK of which the most recent is the University of Liverpool whose decision was announced today."

RBI issues compounding order for FEMA violations in Myntra case

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a compounding order, under Section 15 of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA), in the case of M/s Myntra Designs Private Limited, which has resulted in the termination of investigation against the company for alleged contraventions of the provisions of FEMA, with a fine of Rs 2.88 lakh, according to a statement issued by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on Thursday.

The order has been passed by the RBI after issuance of "no objection" by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on Thursday.

Section 15 provides a mechanism for individuals or companies to voluntarily admit to a violation of FEMA regulations, pay a penalty, and regularise the contravention without undergoing lengthy litigation or legal proceedings.

In this case, based on the credible information received, an investigation was taken up by ED for contraventions of FEMA, which included a delay in submitting annual performance reports (APRs) under Regulation 15(iii) of FEMA (Transfer or Issue

of Any Foreign Security) Regulations, 2004, involving an amount of Rs 42.85 crore. The company, also in breach of regulations, undertook a financial commitment by way of overseas direct investment pending submission of APRs under the Regulation, covering Rs 3.03 crore.

Under FEMA guidelines, submission of an APR (Annual Performance Report) is a mandatory yearly compliance for any Indian resident or entity holding Overseas Direct Investment (ODI). It requires reporting the financial and operational health of foreign joint ventures or wholly owned subsidiaries to the RBI.

The case was under investigation while the company filed an application before the RBI for compounding of the said contraventions under FEMA as per the provisions of Section 15 of the Act. On reference from the RBI, the ED issued no objection for such compounding in line with the true spirit of the Act. Accordingly, the RBI, on the basis of no objection issued by ED, has compounded the said contraventions vide compounding order dated April 20, with a one-time payment of Rs 2.88 lakh, the statement added.

No resumption of train services between India, Bangladesh amid demand

IAN S

KOLKATA: The Bangladesh government has not initiated talks with India regarding resumption of passenger train services between the two countries, despite a demand from its citizens.

Services of the Maitree Express that ran between Kolkata and Dhaka and the Bandhan Express, connecting Khulna to the capital city of West Bengal, have been suspended indefinitely since July 19, 2024.

The connectivity was severed due to unrest in Bangladesh that finally led to the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5, 2024.

Relations between the two countries soured thereafter with an interim government coming to power under Chief Advisor Mohammad Yunus.

After general elections were held in the country earlier this year and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) swept into power, relations between the two neighbours improved but there have been no talks on the resumption of the railway links.

"The services were extremely popular among Bangladeshis. The Maitree Express was running five days a week when services were suspended. Most passengers were Bangladeshis who travelled to India for treatment or other purposes," an Eastern Railway official said.

"We can resume services only after a nod from the Ministry of External Affairs, which will take the final decision on the matter," he added.

The worst sufferers are those travelling to India from Bangladesh on medical visas.

Travelling by road is an inconvenience, while air travel is expensive.

"We brought our uncle for treatment to Kolkata. The airfare was around Rs 8,000 per person. Had the Maitree Express been running, the tickets would have cost Rs 2,500 only. For four persons, we could have saved at least Rs 20,000 each way. This would have helped as a lot is being spent on treatment," Towhid, a young Bangladeshi, said outside a hospital in Kolkata.

DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH SERVICES KASHMIR

BEMINA BYE PASS SRINAGAR

Subject:- First Tentative Seniority List of Head Assistants Division Cadre Kashmir

CIRCULAR

It is hereby notified for the Information of all concerned that the First Tentative Seniority List of Head Assistants (Divisional Cadre Kashmir) working under the Directorate of Health Services Kashmir has been prepared on the basis of available service records maintained in this Directorate and information furnished by the subordinate offices.

While due diligence has been exercised in compilation of the said seniority list, the possibility of inadvertent omissions, clerical errors, or discrepancies in the service particulars cannot be ruled out.

Accordingly, the Tentative Seniority List of Head Assistants, is hereby circulated for information of all concerned and for inviting objections, if any. All the concerned Head Assistants are advised to carefully verify their particulars.

In case of any discrepancy, the concerned official may submit a representation duly supported with documentary evidence through proper channel to this Directorate within a period of seven (07) days from the date of issuance of this circular.

That no objection received after the stipulated period shall be entertained and no claim shall be considered without supporting documentary proof.

The Tentative Seniority List shall also be uploaded on the official website of this Directorate and will be published in two leading newspapers of the Valley for wider circulation:-

| S. No. | Name of Official | Designation | D.O.B | Date of 1st Appointment | Date of Promotion as Jr. Assistant | Date of Promotion as Sr. Assistant | Date of Promotion as Head Assistant | Present place of posting |
|--------|--------------------|----------------|------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Mohd Maqbool Malla | Head Assistant | 16.04.1968 | 11.09.1989 | 11.09.1989 | 22.01.1997 | 09.06.2023 | CMO Pulwama |
| 2. | Riyaz Ahmad Bhat | Head Assistant | 25.10.1968 | 11.09.1989 | 12.09.1994 | 22.07.2000 | 09.06.2023 | DHSK |
| 3. | Shah Zaman | Head Assistant | 01.02.1978 | 28.11.2000 | 28.11.2000 | 07.02.2004 | 09.06.2023 | JLNM Hospital |
| 4. | Shaheena Banoo | Head Assistant | 30.06.1976 | 28.05.1998 | 28.05.1998 | 22.02.2004 | 09.06.2023 | SDCT Srinagar |
| 5. | Faroq Ahmad Bhat | Head Assistant | 07.03.1972 | 03.09.2004 | 03.09.2004 | 27.06.2009 | 09.06.2023 | GMC Anantnag |
| 6. | Junaid Iqbal | Head Assistant | 30.11.1982 | 16.12.2003 | 16.12.2003 | 06.03.2014 | 09.06.2023 | CHC Rajpora, Pulwama |
| 7. | Pervaz Ahmad Yatoo | Head Assistant | 10.05.1980 | 29.09.2007 | 29.09.2007 | 06.03.2014 | 09.06.2023 | DHS Kashmir |
| 8. | Zubair Ahmad Bhat | Head Assistant | 18.03.1979 | 20.03.2010 | 20.03.2010 | 06.03.2014 | 09.06.2023 | DHSK |
| 9. | Rizwan Ahmad | Head Assistant | 05.03.1981 | 05.05.2010 | 05.05.10 | 06.03.2014 | 09.06.2023 | CMO Anantnag |
| 10. | Hamid Sultan | Head Assistant | 21.03.1979 | 05.05.2010 | 05.05.10 | 06.03.2014 | 09.06.2023 | DHSK |
| 11. | Shiraz Ah Tantray | Head Assistant | 25.03.1975 | 30.03.2010 | 30.03.2010 | 06.03.2014 | 09.06.2023 | DHSK |
| 12. | Gh. Rasool Dar | Head Assistant | 15.06.1974 | 05.05.2010 | 05.05.2010 | 06.03.2014 | 09.06.2023 | CMO Baramulla |
| 13. | Anayat Hussain | Head Assistant | 02.08.1976 | 22.11.1973 | 22.11.1973 | 22.01.1997 | 24/07/2025 | DH Ganderbal |
| 14. | Rajesh Bhat | Head Assistant | 06.11.1969 | 01.03.1999 | 01.03.1999 | | 24.07.2025 | CMO Office Budgam |
| 15. | Manmeet Singh | Head Assistant | 01.02.1978 | 03.04.2000 | 03.04.2000 | 07.02.2004 | 24.07.2025 | DH Kulgam presently working in Civil Secretariat |

No: Est-5th/NG/1808-1923
Dated: 02/06/2026

DIPK-1828-26
DT: 04/06/2026

Sd/-
Director Health Services
Kashmir

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL AND HOSPITALS DIVISION SRINAGAR

(Tele-fax No: 019-2496089, e-mail id: exen-mechospsgr@jk.gov.in)

Subject:- Shifting of 625 KVA DG SET from Govt GB Pant Hospital to Govt. Chest Disease Hospital Srinagar

Ref:- This office NIT No: M&HDS/TS /2026-27/11/e-tendering Dated: 18.04.'2026

CANCELLATION

Due to change in BOQ, the above referred e-NIT floated for above subject work is hereby cancelled and shall be re-tendered soon.

No: M&HDS/TS/1179-82
Dated:04-06-2025
DIPK-1839-26
DT: 04/06/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Mechanical & Hospitals Division,
Srinagar.

Gill's red-ball success will play a big role in redefining India's Test team: Ashwin

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has backed Test captain Shubman Gill to become the cornerstone of India's red-ball future, saying the opener's success in the longest format could play a defining role in shaping the team's next era.

Ahead of India's one-off Test against Afghanistan at the PCA New International Cricket Stadium in New Chandigarh beginning June 6, Ashwin praised Gill's leadership and batting performances during India's recent tour of England, where the youngster impressed in his first assignment as Test captain.

"Shubman Gill had a fantastic series in England. As soon as he was made captain, he went there and delivered, both with the bat and with his leadership. He scored runs in tough conditions and handled the pressure of captaincy with maturity. That showed his class and his ability to bat long," Ashwin told Jio Hotstar.

The veteran spinner credited Gill's recent technical adjustments for his success in seaming conditions, highlighting improvements in his defensive game against the moving ball.

"He has worked hard on his technique, especially keeping his bat close to the pads, which helped him reduce the gap between bat and pad, making him more solid against the moving ball," Ashwin explained.

While Gill is yet to produce a major innings at home since taking over the Test captaincy, Ashwin believes the 26-year-old is poised for a strong showing



in familiar conditions.

"Yes, he hasn't fired with the bat yet on home soil as captain, but with this change in his batting technique, I expect him to go all guns blazing at home too. His success in Test cricket will play a big role in redefining India's Test team. He is the kind of player who can lead the batting line-up for years to come," he added.

The former off-spinner also shared his thoughts on India's spin resources for the Afghanistan Test, with all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja unavailable. Ashwin expects wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav to spearhead the attack, while all-rounder Washington Sundar provides control and balance.

"Kuldeep Yadav will lead the spin attack against Afghanistan in the absence of Ravindra Jadeja. He has been bowling with great rhythm and confidence. His ability to turn the ball both ways and his experi-

ence in home conditions make him a huge threat," Ashwin said.

"Washington Sundar will play the supporting role. He is more of a defensive, containing bowler who can also bat lower down the order. His accuracy and ability to bowl long spells will be useful on a wearing track. Both will be key to India's success in this Test match," he added.

Ashwin also expressed excitement about the possibility of domestic stand-out Harsh Dubey making his Test debut. "However, my eyes will be on Harsh Dubey. I am curious whether he will get a chance. We will have to wait and see if the team goes with Manav Suthar or Harsh Dubey. But I am particularly interested in Dubey because of his strong domestic season. He also had a very good IPL season. Those performances work in his favour. I am looking forward to seeing him make his debut," he said.

Scindia Cup 2026: Ankush Singh stars as Chambal Ghariyals cruise past Malwa Stallions in MP League T20

IAN S

INDORE: Chambal Ghariyals came up with a complete all-round performance to defeat Malwa Stallions in the Madhya Pradesh League (MPL) T20 Scindia Cup 2026 at the Holkar Stadium in Indore on Thursday.

After winning the toss, Chambal Ghariyals chose to bowl first and made an immediate impact. Avesh Khan set the tone with a superb opening spell, striking early alongside Akshay Singh as the duo reduced the Ashutosh Sharma-led Malwa Stallions to 23/3 in just 4.1 overs.

With wickets falling regularly at the other end, Rishabh Singh Chauhan stood firm and anchored the innings with a well-crafted, unbeaten 57 off 41 balls. He received valuable



support from Prashant Kasde, who played an important cameo of 29 off just 19 deliveries lower down the order.

Their efforts helped the Stallions recover from a difficult start and put

up 154/7 in 20 overs. The Stallions responded well with the ball and enjoyed early success. Harshwardhan Singh removed both Apurve Dwivedi and captain Shubham Sharma to reduce Chambal Ghariyals

to 32/2 in just 3.3 overs.

However, opener Ankush Singh and Rohit Kumar Gupta turned the game around with a brilliant partnership of 73 runs for the third wicket. The duo played positive

cricket, taking on the bowlers and regularly finding the boundary.

Ankush, in particular, looked completely in control throughout the chase. He kept the scoreboard moving at a brisk pace and punished every loose delivery, remaining unbeaten at 58 off just 36 balls, an innings studded with four sixes and three boundaries. Gupta also played a crucial supporting role with a fluent 37 off 23 deliveries, which included five fours and two sixes.

The Ghariyals suffered a minor setback when Gautam Raghuvanshi, who looked in good touch, was dismissed for 17 off 12 balls. However, there were no further hiccups as Tripuresh Singh joined Ankush in the middle and the duo calmly guided the team home, sealing a comprehensive victory for Chambal Ghariyals.

.....Determination on Display

GUPS Rahmoo Girls Sprint to Runner-Up Finish in Kho-Kho

MUKHTAR DAR

PULWAMA: In a remarkable display of determination and teamwork, the Girls' Kho-Kho team of Government Upper Primary School (GUPS) Rahmoo has brought laurels to the institution by securing the Runner-Up position in the recent Kho-Kho tournament held at the Indoor Stadium Rajpora. The event was organized under the auspices of the Zonal Physical Education Office, Shadimarg, and witnessed the participation of numerous talented teams from across the region.

The GUPS Rahmoo girls showcased exceptional athletic skills, sportsmanship, and a spirit of healthy competition throughout the event. Their disciplined approach, strategic gameplay, and unwavering spirit impressed both spectators and officials alike. The



players demonstrated their dedication and hard work, which was evident in their outstanding performance on the field.

This achievement is a testament to the relentless efforts of the students combined with the dedicated guidance and support of the school's coaching staff and physical education department. The school's management, teachers, and parents have expressed their pride and

congratulated the team for their commendable feat.

The success of the Girls' Kho-Kho team has not only brought pride to GUPS Rahmoo but also served as an inspiration for other students to pursue excellence in sports and academics. The school community hopes that this achievement will motivate more students to engage in sports and strive for greater accomplishments in the future.

Indonesia Open: Sindhu, Ayush lose as India's singles campaign ends; Hariharan-Arjun advance

IAN S

JAKARTA: India's challenge in the singles discipline at the Indonesia Open came to an end on Thursday after PV Sindhu and Ayush Shetty suffered losses in their respective pre-quarterfinals matches, but the men's doubles pair of Hariharan Amsakuran and Ruban Kumar Rethinasabapathi Arjun kept the tricolour flying with a hard-fought victory.

Sindhu's campaign ended at the hands of world No. 1 An Se Young, who continued her dominance over the Indian star with a 21-17, 21-15 win in the women's singles Round of 16.

The two-time Olympic medalist matched the South Korean for significant periods of the opening game and showed glimpses of her attacking best. However, An's ability to raise her level during crucial exchanges once again proved decisive. After edging ahead late in the first game, the top seed



dictated proceedings in the second with her trademark consistency and court coverage to secure a place in the quarter-finals.

With Sindhu's exit, India's hopes in the singles draw rested on rising youngster Ayush Shetty. The 21-year-old made an impressive start against Hong Kong China's Lee Cheuk Yiu, claiming the opening game 21-16 after producing an assured display.

However, Lee tightened his control in the rallies and wrapped up the second game 21-13 to force a decider. Although Ayush opened the third game brightly, the experienced Hong Kong shuttler responded with a decisive burst of points and maintained the advantage to complete a 16-21, 21-13, 21-14 victory.

Have more experience now, but need to play more Tests, says Afghanistan skipper Shahidi



IAN S

NEW CHANDIGARH: Afghanistan skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi said his side has gained valuable experience playing Test cricket in recent years but stressed the need to play more longer-format matches to continue their growth ahead of their one-off game against India, starting on Saturday.

Afghanistan were granted Test status in 2018 and took on India in their inaugural game, which ended in a heavy two-day defeat for the visitors at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru. Since then, Afghanistan have featured in only 12 matches in the format over the past eight years. Their last outing in the longest format came in October 2025 against Zimbabwe in Harare, where they lost by an innings and 73 runs.

"That 2018 match was our first-ever game in red-ball cricket, and compared to now, we didn't have any experience back then.

After that, we played more cricket and learned a lot. With time, you gain experience. Personally, I have gained a lot of experience compared to that time.

"We have more experience now, but we need to play more Tests. We play only one or two Test matches per year, so the boys don't have that much experience playing red-ball cricket.

"But when it comes to our domestic structure, we have good first-class cricket in our country. Every boy plays six to seven games each and every year in red-ball. So that experience is also with us," said Shahidi in a press conference on Thursday.

Afghanistan had a three-week preparatory camp in Jalalabad, where they adjusted to the rigours of red-ball cricket and playing under scorching heat. "The weather was around 34°C to 35°C over there, so we got used to it. Most of us are okay with the hot weather.

"I have two double-hun-

dreds in my Test career across 10 or 11 games. Rahmat Shah has scored a double hundred, and other guys have scored hundreds for Afghanistan in this format. This shows we have the patience and we know how to score runs here.

"As everyone knows, the best format of this game is Test cricket. If anyone is better at red-ball cricket, they will definitely be good at white-ball cricket. That's why we have a lot of talent in Afghanistan... everyone is excited to play," added Shahidi.

The challenge of facing India in their backyard is enormous, and Shahidi signed off by saying, "We know India is a big country and they have a lot of players who can step up; there is no doubt the Indian players are very talented. But at the same time, I am the opposition captain, so I really want them not to do well in this game. I want my team to do well - we don't hide or step backwards," concluded Shahidi.

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 (U/A16+) 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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