

Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

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CM Urges Civil Aviation Ministry To Reconsider Srinagar Airport Closure Plan

Seeks Review Of October Closure Schedule, Urges Measures To Safeguard Tourism



GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has separately met Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Minister for Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Ramohan Naidu in New Delhi and raised concerns over the proposed closure of Srinagar International Airport from October 1 to 16, 2026, scheduled under Phase III of the runway resurfacing project.

During the meetings, the Chief Minister underscored the importance of maintaining uninterrupted air connectivity to Jammu & Kashmir, particularly during the peak autumn tourism season when the Valley attracts a large number of visitors from across the country.

While acknowledging that the resurfacing works are essential for operational safety and fully respecting the operational assessment of the Indian Air Force, Omar Abdullah expressed

concern over the timing of the final phase of the project, which coincides with one of the busiest periods for the tourism sector.

The Chief Minister informed the Union Ministers that air services to the Valley have already been curtailed since April owing to the earlier phases of the resurfacing programme. He noted that a complete suspension of flights during the first half of October would adversely affect tourism, hospitality, transport, handicrafts and allied sectors that sustain thousands of livelihoods across Jammu & Kashmir.

Highlighting the broader economic implications, Omar Abdullah said the proposed closure could lead to large-scale travel disruptions and cancellations, causing inconvenience to residents and visitors alike while impacting business activity during a crucial tourism season.

In his meeting • P-06

HM Shah Directs Multi-Layered Security Grid, Drones, CCTV Deployment For Amarnath Yatra

Chairs High-Level Meet In Delhi, Says Pilgrim Safety Top Priority Of PM Modi-Led Govt



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting in the national capital to review security preparedness for the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, with a strong focus on ensuring a safe and smooth pilgrimage for devotees.

An official said that during the meeting Shah stressed that the safety of pilgrims remains the top priority of the PM Modi-led government.

Shah directed officials to put in place a comprehensive, multi-layered security grid along the Yatra routes through close coordination

between Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), the Jammu and Kashmir Police, and other security agencies.

The meeting was attended by the National Security Advisor (NSA), Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, the Army Chief, Director General of CRPF, and other senior officials.

During the meeting, he said emphasis was laid on integrating modern technology with traditional security mechanisms. Officials were asked to ensure extensive deployment of drones, CCTV surveillance, and advanced monitoring systems to further strengthen situational awareness and threat response capabilities.

The Home Minister also instructed that senior officers from CAPFs and the Jammu and Kashmir Police be deployed at key camp locations to maintain continuous oversight of arrangements on the ground throughout the duration of the Yatra.

Reviewing logistical preparedness, the Home Minister underlined the need for robust arrangements for registration of pilgrims, accommodation, healthcare services, and disaster management. He called for seamless coordination among departments to ensure that essential services are delivered efficiently.

In a move to streamline management • P-06

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LG Sinha Calls On Home Minister Shah In New Delhi



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday called on Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi.

MHA, posted on X: "Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha met with the Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri@ Amit Shah today."

Earlier the Union Home Minister chaired a high level meeting in the National Capital and reviewed Amarnath Yatra preparations.

The meeting was attended by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, the Union Home Secretary, Army Chief, Intelligence • P-06

MeT Forecasts Rain, Storms Across J&K



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: The Meteorological Centre Srinagar has forecast rain, thunderstorms and gusty winds across Jammu and Kashmir over the coming days, while warning of flash floods and mudslides in vulnerable areas.

Even as temperatures remained above normal across the Jammu and Kashmir, the weather department advised caution amid the likelihood of lightning, hailstorms, strong winds and brief intense showers through next week.

The Valley and Jammu region have witnessed intermittent rainfall in recent days, with the MeT Department urging people to avoid risky outdoor activities and stay away from vulnerable structures during adverse weather conditions.

On Friday, the Meteorological Centre Srinagar forecast light to moderate rainfall, thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds across Jammu and Kashmir over the next several days, while warning of possible flash floods and mudslides in isolated areas.

According to the weather department, Jammu recorded the • P-06

Syed Salahuddin, Head Of Proscribed Outfit, Declared Proclaimed Offender

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: A Special Court designated under the NIA Act in Srinagar on Wednesday issued a proclamation against Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin and three other accused in connection with a 1996 militancy-related case registered by Police Station CIK Srinagar, directing them to appear before the court by July 14, 2026.

The proclamation has been issued against Mohammad Yousuf Shah alias Syed Salah-ud-Din, son of Ghulam Rasool Shah and a resident of Soibugh in Budgam district, who is the chief of the proscribed terrorist organisation Hizbul-Mujahideen (HM), Ghulam Nabi Khan alias Amir Khan, son of Ghulam Rasool Khan, a resident of Liver Srigufwara in Anantnag, is Deputy Supreme Commander of Hizb, Sher Mohammad alias Bahadur alias Riyaz, son of



Sher Ahmad, a resident of Malangam in Bandipora, is also a commander of Hizbul-Mujahideen; and Nasir Yousuf Qadri, son of Mohammad Yousuf Qadri, originally from Sheeltang Dar Mohalla in Habba Kadal and presently residing at Abu-Baker Colony, Bemina, Srinagar, who is associated with the proscribed organisation and involved in furthering its propaganda and terror narrative machinery.

According to the court order, the accused are facing charges under various provisions of the • P-06

Govt Committed To Strengthen Healthcare Infrastructure, Patient Care Across J&K: Sakeena Itoo

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, Friday said that the government is committed towards strengthening the healthcare infrastructure and ensuring quality patient care across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister made these remarks during her day-long tour of healthcare institutions and medical facilities in the Khanyar and Hazratbal constituencies.

She was accompanied by MLA Khanyar, Ali Mohammad Sagar and MLA Hazratbal, Salman Ali Sagar besides others.

During the tour, the Minister visited the Urban Public Health Centre (UPHC) at S.R. Gunj and inspected the ongoing upgrade works. She directed the concerned authorities to expedite completion of the remain-



ing works, including the rooftop, approach road and lift facility, so that the upgraded facility can be dedicated to the public at the earliest.

Sakeena Itoo said that the health centre is a significant project designed while preserving the area's local heritage which will greatly enhance healthcare services for the residents.

The Minister also visited

Gousia Hospital, Khanyar, where she announced construction of an additional block on a nearby identified site to improve healthcare facilities for the local population and address the issues of space constraints and parking.

She directed the concerned departments to ensure all required formalities are completed promptly and the Detailed Project Report (DPR) is prepared for the project.

Inspecting the Sub-District Hospital (SDH) at Habbak Chowk, Hazratbal, the Minister announced that work on the approved 50-bedded hospital block will commence shortly.

"I am thankful to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for approving this important project. I also appreciate the consistent efforts of local MLA Salman Ali Sagar in pursuing this matter and securing its approval," she said.

The Minister stated that the government is • P-06

Aharbal Closure Continues To Hurt Livelihoods



UMAISAR GULL

KULGAM: The prolonged closure of Aharbal tourist destination in south Kashmir's Kulgam district has severely impacted the livelihoods of local tourism stakeholders, prompting renewed calls for its reopening.

While tourism operators and traders report mounting financial distress, Cabinet Minister Sakina Itoo has urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to reopen the destination, while authorities have strengthened security with the installation of a 360-degree surveillance camera.

Known as the 'Niagara of Kashmir', Aharbal is a major tourist attraction and a key source of income for hundreds of local families.

The destination has remained shut following security concerns, even as tourism activities resumed in many other parts of the Valley.

Stakeholders associated with the famous Aharbal tourist destination are continuing to press for the reopening of the famous tourist destination, saying the prolonged closure has left many families • P-06

Thaejkaad Gains Momentum Across Kashmir As Farmers Battle Heat, Water Woes

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Despite intense heat and water shortages in some areas, Kashmir's annual paddy transplantation season, Thaejkaad, is underway in full swing as farmers rush to complete the process before the June 21 deadline.

Farmers across the Valley are working collectively to ensure timely transplantation, preserving a centuries-old agrarian tradition while confronting challenges posed by rising temperatures and shrinking water resources.

Thaejkaad, a key phase in Kashmir's agricultural calendar, begins after paddy saplings grown in nurseries are transplanted into prepared fields.

While the practice remains central to the Valley's farming heritage, experts warn



that declining paddy acreage, water scarcity and land-use changes have increased Kashmir's dependence on rice imports from outside Jammu and Kashmir.

Across the Valley, vast stretches of green paddy nurseries have transformed into

busy agricultural landscapes. Fields are alive with activity as farmers, labourers, and family members wade through muddy waters, carefully transplanting young paddy saplings in neat rows.

This year too, alongside local farmers, a large number of non-

local labourers have joined the transplantation drive.

While agriculture in many parts of Kashmir increasingly depends on migrant workers, the current season has witnessed remarkable community participation.

Men, women, and even children from farming households are actively contributing to the labour-intensive process, working collectively to ensure timely completion of transplantation.

Ghulam Muhammad Bhat, a veteran farmer from Litter in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, said that weather remained dry this year and paddy plantation is going as per schedule though there are some areas where people are suffering due to water shortages.

"Although temperatures have been unusually high, • P-06

NC Biggest Obstacle To J&K's Progress: BJP

NAVEED UL HAQ

BUDGAM: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Minority Morcha National President Jamal Siddiqui on Friday accused the National Conference (NC) of hindering Jammu and Kashmir's development and integration with the rest of the country.

Reacting to the NC's proposed Jantar Mantar protest seeking restoration of statehood, Siddiqui said the party had isolated J&K in the past and remained a major barrier to its progress.

The remarks come amid renewed political debate over Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, with the NC pressing for its restoration while the BJP highlighting post-2019 security, infrastructure, and connectivity gains in the Union Territory.

Speaking to reporters in central Kashmir's Budgam district, Siddiqui, while reacting to the NC's proposed protest at Jantar Mantar seeking restoration of statehood, said the people of Jammu and Kashmir had witnessed the condition • P-06

Govt In J&K Will Collapse On Its Own, BJP Won't Topple It: LoP Sharma

YOGESH

JAMMU: Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly and senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Friday said the present government in the Union Territory would "collapse on its own," asserting that the Bharatiya Janata Party would neither play a role in toppling it nor in forming it.

Speaking to reporters in Jammu, Sharma termed the political situation in the UT as unstable, claiming the government was bound to fall due to internal contradictions.

Targeting the National Conference, he said the party had built its politics around Article 370 but was now sending mixed signals to the public.

Referring to recent developments, including meetings between Chief Minister



Omar Abdullah and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sharma said the party's stand appeared inconsistent.

He added that the NC's relevance and clarity had weakened over time, alleging erosion in its support base. Sharma also claimed that senior leaders, including Farooq Abdullah, had changed their tone following recent political engagements, indicating a shift in the party's position. • P-06

LG, CM express grief over demise of JKAS Officer Mohammad Younis

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Friday express deep grief over the untimely passing of Mohammad Younis Mir, an officer of the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS).

In a condolence message, the Lieutenant Governor has said: "Saddened to learn of the untimely demise of Shri Mohammad Younis Mir. He was a committed officer who served the people of Jammu Kashmir with utmost dedication. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family in this difficult hour. I pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to the departed soul and give strength to the family members to bear this loss."



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of young JKAS officer Mohammad Younis Mir, who passed away after a brief illness.

Mohammad Younis Mir, a 2019-batch Junior Scale JKAS officer, was presently serving as Assistant Director, Handicrafts & Handloom, in the Industries and Commerce Department.

In his condolence mes-

sage, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, relatives, friends and colleagues of the departed officer and prayed for strength and fortitude for them to bear this irreplaceable loss.

The Chief Minister also prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and a place for him in the highest ranks in the hereafter.

DDC Kulgam assesses proposed PRI-Capex, MGNREGA Works in Chansar, Shouch

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Friday conducted an extensive field inspection of various Panchayats, including Chansar and Shouch, to assess the proposed works identified under PRI/Capex and MGNREGA for the financial year 2026-27.

The DDC was accompanied by the Chief Planning Officer Kulgam, Block Development Officer Kulgam, Assistant Executive Engineer REW Kulgam, and other field functionaries of the Rural Development Department.

During the visit, the DDC inspected several proposed development sites and reviewed the planning and prioritization of works aimed at strengthening rural infrastructure and improving public service delivery. Interacting with offi-



cial and field functionaries, the DDC stressed the importance of maintaining the highest standards of quality, transparency, and accountability in the execution of developmental works. He directed the concerned officers to ensure that all projects are planned and implemented strictly in accordance with approved guidelines and timelines.

The DDC also interacted with labourers engaged under MGNREGA and reviewed the progress of ongoing works, appreciating their contribution towards rural development while emphasizing

the importance of timely completion of projects.

Highlighting the significance of regular field monitoring, the DDC instructed that inspections across Panchayats of the district should continue on a routine basis to ensure timely execution of works, adherence to quality standards, and optimal utilization of public resources.

During the visit, the DDC also visited educational institutions in the area to assess the facilities available to students and emphasized the need for quality infrastructure to support better learning outcomes.

Aadhar saturation, operationalization of centres reviewed in Anantnag

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Anantnag, Vikas Ahlawat, Friday chaired a meeting at DC Office to review the progress of Aadhar saturation and the operationalization of Aadhar centres across the district.

The meeting was attended by the District Programme Officer (Poshan), Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer, District Informatics Officer (NIC), Lead District Manager, and representatives of Aadhar agencies associated with ICDS and Education Departments.

During the meeting, a detailed review of the current status of Aadhar enrolment and updation was undertaken. The ADCD emphasized the need to ensure complete Aadhaar coverage and the smooth functioning of all Aadhaar Centres to facilitate timely and hassle-free

services to the public.

Ahlawat directed all concerned departments to update the email to Gov mail and ensure mandatory biometric updation in an expedient manner. Education department was asked to update the mismatch between school records and Aadhar Cards while Health and Education Departments were instructed to immediately make the non-functional kits operational. Further, directives were issued to LDM to make all inactive Aadhar centres functional within next 15 days.

The ADCD asked the departments to compile the list of registrations made since January 01, 2026 besides saturating the left out population and updating Aadhar Cards wherever required.

On the occasion, measures to improve enrolment and update services, particularly for eligible beneficiaries and residents, were discussed in detail.

DC Kulgam reviews functioning of Revenue Department

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: A comprehensive review meeting of the Revenue Department was held Friday under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam to assess the progress of various revenue-related initiatives and ensure timely delivery of public services.

During the meeting, a detailed review was conducted regarding the digitization of revenue records across the district.

Emphasis was laid on clearing the backlog of mutations and expediting the process of attestation and updation of revenue records.

The progress achieved in the sub-parcellization of cadastral maps was also reviewed, with directions issued for accelerating the work to ensure accurate land record management.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the status of live uploading of Jama-bandies on the JK Zameen Sudhar Portal and stressed the need for maintaining accuracy and timeliness in data entry.

The disposal of grievances received through the JK Zameen Sudhar Portal was also examined, and officers were directed to ensure prompt redressal of public complaints.

The meeting further reviewed the generation and distribution of Property Cards under



the SVAMITVA Scheme. Concerned officers were instructed to complete the remaining work within the stipulated timelines so that citizens can fully benefit from the scheme.

Progress regarding the disposal of applications received through the Jan-Sugam and Revenue Plus portals under the Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA) was also discussed.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized timely disposal of applications and directed officers to adhere strictly to prescribed service delivery timelines. In addition, the status of other public grievances pertaining to the Revenue Department was also reviewed.

He instructed all revenue officers to maintain close monitoring of pending cases and ensure efficient, transparent, and citizen-centric service delivery.

The meeting was attended by senior officers of the Revenue Department, including district and tehsil-level functionaries.

World Blood Donor Day celebrated at SKIMS Medical College Bemina

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu & Kashmir State Blood Transfusion Council (JKSBTC), and J&K AIDS Control Society (JKACS), Friday celebrated World Blood Donor Day-2026 at SKIMS Medical College, Bemina, with great enthusiasm and participation from healthcare professionals, voluntary blood donors, civil society organizations, students, and members of the public.

The event was graced by Dr. Krishan Kumar, Director, National Blood Transfusion Council (NBTC), Government of India; Dr. Megha Pravin Khobragade, Deputy Director General, Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Government of India; Dr. Fazlul Qadir Parrey, Principal, SKIMS Medical College Bemina; Dr. Jehangir Bakshi, Director Health Services Kashmir and Director, JKSBTC among other distinguished guests.

The programme commenced with the inauguration of a voluntary blood donation camp by the dignitaries, reaffirming the commitment of the health sector towards ensuring the availability of safe and adequate blood for all patients in need.

The representatives of JKSBTC and JKACS highlighted the significance of World Blood Donor Day



as a global occasion dedicated to recognizing the invaluable contribution of voluntary blood donors. They emphasized that every unit of donated blood has the potential to save multiple lives and plays a crucial role in supporting emergency care, surgeries, maternal health services, treatment of thalassemia patients, and other critical medical interventions.

Director, NBTC, Dr. Krishan Kumar, thanked the Voluntary Blood Donors for their selfless contributions towards saving lives and strengthening public health services. He described blood donors as the true heroes of society whose generosity offers hope and a second chance at life to countless patients.

In his address, Dr. Jehangir Bakshi, Director JKSBTC, highlighted the special significance of the

event in view of the forthcoming holy month of Muharram. He noted that the message of sacrifice, humanity, and service to mankind associated with the teachings of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) resonates strongly with the spirit of voluntary blood donation. He called upon the youth and community organizations to transform blood donation into a mass humanitarian movement and ensure that no patient suffers due to the non-availability of blood.

Principal SKIMS, Bemina, Dr. Fazlul Qadir Parrey acknowledged the growing culture of voluntary blood donation in Jammu & Kashmir and appreciated the active participation of youth, religious organizations, civil society groups, and educational institutions in organizing blood donation

drives throughout the year.

Addressing the gathering, the dignitaries underscored the importance of strengthening voluntary blood donation and promoting regular, non-remunerated blood donation as the safest and most sustainable source of blood supply. They appreciated the efforts of blood donors, blood banks, healthcare workers, and community organizations in supporting the blood transfusion services across Jammu & Kashmir.

A major highlight of the programme was the felicitation of voluntary blood donors.

The JKSBTC and JKACS reiterated their commitment to promoting voluntary blood donation and appealed to all eligible citizens to become regular blood donors and contribute towards building a safer and healthier society.

Awareness Walks, Rallies organised across Bandipora under NMBA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Various educational institutions across district Bandipora on Friday organised awareness walks, rallies and outreach activities under the ongoing Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) as part of the 100-day anti-drug campaign.

Awareness walks and rallies were conducted by Higher Secondary School Quilmuqam, HSS Nowgam, HSS Chuntimulla, HSS Gadakhud, BHSS Alooosa, PM SHRI GHS Sumbal, Government High School Kanzalwan, Government High School Naidkhai, HS Ketson, HS Koragbal, HS Panar and other institutions to sensitize students and the general public about the harmful effects of substance abuse.

During the programmes, students and staff members participated enthusiastically by carrying placards, banners and posters bearing anti-drug messages and raising slogans promoting a healthy and drug-free society. The rallies were taken through local areas to spread awareness

among the public, particularly the youth, regarding the social, physical and mental consequences of drug addiction.

At HSS Gadakhud, a foot march was organised from the school to Mill Stop under the supervision of the Principal. Students, faculty members and civil society representatives participated in the rally and pledged to strengthen the fight against drug abuse.

Similarly, awareness rallies and pledge activities held at various institutions focused on encouraging students to stay away from drugs and act as ambassadors of awareness within their communities. Participants reiterated the message of "Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life" through public outreach and awareness campaigns.

The activities witnessed active participation from students, teaching faculty and members of the community, reflecting the continued commitment of educational institutions across Bandipora towards promoting awareness and preventive action under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

World Environment Week Celebration

GHSS Mangam organises Cleanliness Drive at Shrunz Fall



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: As part of the observance of World Environment Week, Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Mangam Wagoora organised a cleanliness drive and awareness programme at Shrunz Fall, a prominent tourist destination, with the active participation of students and staff.

During the cleanliness drive, students and staff members collected waste material from the tourist spot and contributed towards maintaining the cleanliness and natural beauty of the area. The initiative aimed to spread awareness among visitors and the local community about the importance of protecting the environ-

ment and preserving tourist destinations.

On the occasion, Lecturer Bilal Ahmad addressed the students and highlighted the significance of environmental conservation. He stressed the need for responsible behaviour, proper waste disposal and collective efforts to keep natural places clean and pollution-free.

The programme encouraged students to become ambassadors of environmental protection and motivated them to adopt eco-friendly practices in their daily lives.

The school appreciated the participation of students and staff and reiterated its commitment towards promoting environmental awareness and sustainable practices.

Nitu Gupta leads 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' at Wakura

Calls for Sustainable Farming and Soil Conservation

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: In a significant initiative aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture and safeguarding soil health, Secretary, Agriculture Production Department (APD) in Nitu Gupta, Friday participated in the 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' organised by the Chief Agriculture Officer, Ganderbal at Eidgah Wakura.

The programme brought together farmers, agricultural experts, and officials from Agriculture and allied departments to raise awareness about scientific and sustainable farming practices, government welfare schemes, and measures for preserving agricultural land and soil fertility.



Addressing the gathering, the Secretary underscored the critical importance of maintaining soil health through scientific nutrient management and environmentally sustainable agricultural practices. She urged farmers to adopt natural and climate-resilient farming methods to improve productivity while preserving the ecological balance of agricultural ecosystems.

"The long-term sustainability of agriculture depends on the health of our soils. Farmers must be encouraged to adopt balanced fertilizer appli-

cation, reduce excessive chemical inputs, and embrace sustainable farming practices that enhance soil fertility and ensure food security for future generations," she said.

The Secretary further stressed the need for greater awareness and effective implementation of farmer-centric schemes to improve agricultural incomes and strengthen the rural economy. She encouraged farmers to make full use of the support available under various Central and UT government programmes. The Secretary also interacted extensively

with farmers and listened to their concerns and suggestions regarding agricultural development and service delivery.

As part of the campaign, Soil Health Cards were distributed among farmers to encourage informed nutrient management and enhance crop productivity. Awareness sessions were conducted on Natural Farming, Organic Farming, the National Mission on Edible Oils (NMEO), Kisan Credit Card (KCC), PM-KISAN, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), and the balanced and judicious use of fertilizers.

The programme was attended by Deputy Director Law Enforcement, Kashmir, Head KVK Ganderbal, Deputy Director Horticulture Kashmir, Chief Agriculture Officer Ganderbal, officers from Agriculture and allied departments, and a large number of farmers from Wakura and adjoining areas.

Blood Donation Camp organised in Anantnag

Officials, volunteers donate for noble cause



GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Ahead of the World Donor Day-2026, the District Administration Anantnag through Red Cross Society, in collaboration with GMC Anantnag, Health and Ayush Departments, Friday organized a one day Blood Donation Camp at Dak Bungalaw, Khanabal.

Officials from administration, Health Department, GMC Anantnag and AYUSH besides volunteers and regular donors attended the camp.

During the camp, a number of officials, regular donors and volunteers donated blood, upholding the spirit of public service and social responsibility. This noble act reflected their commitment towards

a collective cause and in serving the humanity at large.

Urging healthy individuals to come forward for blood donation, the donors said that blood donation is a safe practice which may be done in routine, under proper medical guidance and supervision. They further emphasised the importance of the donated blood in addressing medical emergencies and saving precious human lives.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner (Vice-Chairman DRC), expressed gratitude to the donors as well as the technical staff for making the camp a success, adding their support reaffirmed the collective resolve towards public service and social responsibility.

Streamline infrastructure, create quality facilities for students: Min Itoo to B.Ed College Operators

Discusses issues concerning Teacher Education Institutions across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for School Education, Sakeena Itoo, Friday chaired a meeting with representatives of the Private B.Ed College Association of Jammu and Kashmir at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, to discuss issues concerning the Teacher Education Institutions across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, School Education Department, Special Secretary, Higher Education Department and other senior officers.

The Minister emphasized the need for strengthening the infrastructure and creating quality, student-centric facilities in private colleges to ensure the delivery of high-standard teacher education. She directed the manage-



ments of private B.Ed colleges to submit undertakings for addressing all identified shortcomings, including land-related deficiencies, within a period of two years. She made it clear that no further relaxation would be granted beyond the stipulated timeframe.

The Minister stressed that quality infrastructure, adequate facilities and compliance with the prescribed norms are essential for nurturing competent future educators and enhancing the overall stan-

dards of teacher education in Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, the representatives of the Private B.Ed College Association expressed gratitude to the Minister for taking up the issue of admissions in private colleges with the Union Government and relevant authorities to facilitate its early resolution.

The Minister reiterated the government's commitment to building a vibrant and robust education system through the collective contribution of both

government and private educational institutions. She said that the administration remains focused on ensuring quality education and improving academic outcomes for students in J&K.

The meeting also discussed several other issues and concerns raised by the representatives.

The Minister assured them that all their genuine demands and grievances would be examined sympathetically and addressed on priority.

Saurabh Bhagat reviews e-Office 2.0 implementation, telecom connectivity

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Commissioner Secretary, Information Technology and Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Departments, Saurabh Bhagat, Friday chaired a review meeting with the Deputy Commissioners and senior officers to assess the progress of key digital governance and citizen service delivery initiatives being implemented across Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, a comprehensive review of e-Office 2.0 implementation was undertaken.

The Commissioner Secretary emphasized the need for complete adoption of digital workflows across the government offices to enhance efficiency, transparency and accountability in public administration. He directed all the concerned officers to ensure effective utilization of the platform and further

strengthen digital governance practices.

He reviewed the status of telecom connectivity and related infrastructure projects being executed across the Union Territory. He also had detailed discussion on improving digital connectivity, facilitating seamless implementation of telecom initiatives and addressing the issues requiring inter-departmental coordination. He asked the Deputy Commissioners and concerned departments to expedite the pending matters and ensure timely progress of the ongoing projects.

The functioning of Common Service Centres (CSCs) and other citizen-centric digital service delivery platforms was also reviewed. Emphasis was laid on strengthening the last-mile delivery of services, expanding access to digital facilities in remote and underserved areas and improving the overall qual-



Commissioner Secretary Saurabh Bhagat.

ity of citizen services. The Commissioner Secretary reviewed the Aadhaar-related service delivery issues and directed the concerned stakeholders to ensure seamless access to Aadhaar-enabled services for citizens. He emphasized timely resolution of the operational issues, improved coordination among implementing agencies and strengthening mechanisms for efficient public service delivery.

He also assessed the preparations for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji

Yatra. He emphasized the importance of robust digital support systems, effective grievance redressal mechanisms and close coordination among the departments to ensure smooth conduct of the Yatra and hassle-free services for the pilgrims.

Emphasizing a citizen-centric and technology-driven approach, Saurabh Bhagat urged all the stakeholders to work in close coordination to strengthen the governance, improve service delivery and ensure that the benefits of government initiatives reach the people in an efficient, transparent and timely manner.

Senior officers from the Information Technology Department, district administrations, JaKeGA, NIC, telecom service providers, CSC e-Governance Services India Limited and other concerned departments participated in the meeting.

JKBOSE Rejects Reports of Syllabus Change for Classes 9-12

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) Friday refuted media reports claiming changes in the syllabus and courses of study for Classes 9 to 12, stating that no such revision has been made for the ongoing academic session.

In a clarification issued by the Director Academics, JKBOSE said that the curriculum and courses of study for the current academic year remain unchanged. It, however, clarified that limited updates have been made in select subjects in advance of the session. The Board stated that the syllabus of Punjabi, Physical Education and Functional English for Class 11 has been updated, with a notification issued in March 2026 prior to the commencement of the academic session.

It further added that revisions have also been made in Environmental Science and Education for Class 12, with the relevant notification issued in early March 2026 for the information of all concerned stakeholders.

JKBOSE emphasised that these updates were issued in a timely manner and do not amount to a broader change in the curriculum for Classes 9 to 12, as reported by some media outlets.

'Give J&K's Artists a Stage'

Waheed Jeelani appeals to CM Omar Abdullah

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: As Chief Minister Omar Abdullah meets with Union Ministers in New Delhi to discuss the development of Jammu & Kashmir, local artists are urging him not to leave the region's rich cultural heritage out of the conversation.

Waheed Jeelani, a well-known artist, cultural activist, and Chairman of The Kashmir Music Club Srinagar, has made a heartfelt appeal to the Chief Minister to champion the cause of J&K's struggling artist community during his high-level meetings in the capital.

While acknowledging the Chief Minister's focus on major infrastructure and public issues, Jeelani pointed out that the local art and culture sector is facing a quiet crisis of its own. He urged Abdullah to take up the community's grievances with three key ministries: Information & Broadcasting, Culture, and External Affairs.

"Our artists deserve a level playing field. We want to see the talent of Jammu & Kashmir represented fairly on national and international stages, in cultural exchange programs, and in official delegations, just like artists from any other part of India."

A major focus of Jeelani's appeal is the urgent need to breathe new life into the region's broadcast staples: Akashvani (All India Radio) and Doordarshan centers in J&K.

For decades, these stations weren't just media outlets; they were the finan-



cial and creative backbone for thousands of local singers, actors, writers, and technicians. In recent years, a lack of regular programming and engagement has left many traditional and contemporary artists without a steady livelihood.

Jeelani emphasized that reviving these vital institutions and pushing for more national exposure isn't just about entertainment—it's about survival. It is about saving J&K's unique cultural identity and giving artists who are currently struggling a dignified way to earn a living through their craft.

The artist community remains hopeful that Chief Minister Abdullah will use his time in New Delhi to be their voice, bringing home tangible support and opening doors that have remained closed for too long.

Karnataka Assembly Panel meets J&K Speaker to strengthen coordination

Speaker emphasizes on critical role of assembly committees in public grievances

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a significant move towards fostering legislative cooperation, the Committee on Petitions of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly held a high-level meeting with the Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly (JKLA), Abdul Rahim Rather and members of the J&K Assembly's Petitions Committee.

The joint session focused on sharing the institutional best practices, evaluating the operational dynamics of house committees and discussing bilateral developmental strategies.

During the extensive deliberations, the delegations from J&K and Karnataka held detailed discussion on the functional mechanisms of their respective Petitions Committees. They emphasized the critical role these committees play in addressing the genuine public grievances, ensuring administrative accountability and translating public petitions into actionable legislative oversight.

Beyond procedural workflows, the meeting served as an important platform to discuss the ongoing development works across both regions.



The leaders exchanged insights on executing high-impact public welfare projects and explored new avenues for strategic liaisoning. Both sides agreed that sustained dialogue and institutional partnerships between different states/UTs legislatures are vital for strengthening the democratic frameworks and accelerating governance reforms.

The Speaker JKLA said that the cross-learning initiatives between progressive states and UTs like Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir provide valuable perspectives on handling the regional development challenges and maximizing the efficacy of house committees.

The discussions focused on the pivotal role of the Committee on Petitions in ensuring executive accountability and

addressing the public grievances. Both sides exchanged best practices regarding the scrutiny of government policies, the handling of public petitions and implementation of the committee recommendations.

The delegates deliberated on streamlining the workflow of Assembly committees, emphasizing the importance of non-partisan scrutiny, strict adherence to meeting schedules and the efficient processing of agenda items.

The committees also discussed the mechanisms for monitoring development works, highlighting the necessity of rigorous field inspections and the role of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in providing technical support for oversight.

Recognizing the value

of shared learning, the leaders agreed to establish a formal channel for liaison. This initiative aims to facilitate the exchange of legislative knowledge and innovative governance practices between J&K and Karnataka.

The Speaker underscored that such interactions are vital for a healthy democracy. He said that robust legislative oversight is the most effective instrument for the public welfare and transparent governance.

The Karnataka delegation expressed their appreciation for the warm hospitality and the insightful exchange of ideas. They said that the unique challenges and success of the J&K Assembly provide valuable lessons for the legislative bodies across the country.

MLA Mian Mehar Ali praised for 'simple lifestyle, grassroots connect'

RAJA SYED RATHER

KANGAN: Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Kangan Mian Mehar Ali has been receiving widespread appreciation on social media after a video highlighting his simple lifestyle and humble nature went viral across Jammu and Kashmir.

The video, shared widely on various social media platforms, shows the legislator sitting in a modest setting and interacting freely with residents. Unlike the image often associated with politicians surrounded by security and official protocols, the clip portrays Mehar Ali as approachable and closely connected to the people.

As the video gained popularity, social media users praised the MLA for his simplicity and down-to-earth personality. Many described the footage as a reflection of humility in public life, saying it demonstrates the importance of leaders staying connected with the communities they represent.

Residents of Kangan and nearby areas, said the video reflects Mehar Ali's everyday conduct. Locals said the MLA is often seen meeting

people directly, listening to their concerns and discussing local issues without formal barriers.

The viral clip has also sparked discussions about leadership and public engagement. Observers believe that in an age of carefully managed public appearances, genuine and unscripted moments often resonate more strongly with people. Many viewed the video as an example of a public representative who remains rooted in his community.

Supporters of the MLA said the overwhelming response to the video reflects the public's preference for accessible and approachable leadership. According to them, such simple gestures help strengthen trust between elected representatives and the people.

The video continues to circulate widely on Facebook, Instagram, X and WhatsApp, attracting thousands of views and shares. Many users have described it as refreshing, saying it offers a contrast to the perception that politicians often become distant from ordinary citizens after assuming office.

Secy RDD reviews Dev Plans for Nangali Sahib, Shahpur under Vibrant Village Programme

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) & Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, Friday chaired a high-level review meeting to assess progress on the development plans of Nangali Sahib and Shahpur villages in Poonch district under the Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II).

The meeting reviewed the status of DPR preparation, baseline surveys, gap analysis and convergence planning aimed at transforming the two strategic border villages into vibrant, self-reliant and resilient communities.

Emphasising a convergence-driven and evidence-based approach, the Secretary directed all departments to comprehensively assess gaps in infrastructure, livelihoods, education, healthcare, financial inclusion and public service delivery while finalising the DPRs. He also called for the integration of digital infrastructure and technology-enabled solutions and stressed active field engagement by district officers through surveys, consultations and regular monitoring.

Highlighting the importance of sustainable livelihood generation, Asad directed the creation of a comprehensive data-



base of village youth capturing educational qualifications, skills and employment status to facilitate targeted skilling and employment interventions. He stressed convergence with schemes such as NRLM, Mission YUVA, Himayat, Tribal Affairs, Agriculture and Horticulture to expand livelihood opportunities for women and youth.

The Secretary advocated strengthening Self-Help Groups, dairy and livestock-based enterprises, plantation activities under MGNREGA and value-addition initiatives capable of generating sustainable rural incomes.

Expressing concern over limited banking access in Nangali Sahib, Aijaz Asad directed officials to explore the establishment of banking facilities in or

near the village and enhance financial inclusion through Bank Correspondents and Bank Sakhis. He also called for saturation of eligible beneficiaries under PMJJBY and PMSBY.

The Secretary directed departments to maximise convergence under existing Central and UT schemes. He underscored that the objective of VVP-II extends beyond asset creation to improving livelihoods, service delivery and quality of life in border areas.

During the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Ashok Kumar Sharma, presented findings of a district-wide gap analysis covering all 133 border villages. The analysis revealed that 121 villages are already connected under PMGSY, while the remaining 12 have been proposed for road connectivity. Telecom coverage has achieved full saturation across all border villages.

The meeting also reviewed village-specific development proposals. Nangali Sahib, located about three kilometres from the International Border and known for the historic Gurudwara Nangali Sahib, has a proposed development package of ₹4.35 crore covering education infrastructure, sports facilities, solar lighting, water supply systems, e-library facilities,

recreation infrastructure and horticulture interventions.

Shahpur, situated within 0-0.5 kilometres of the Line of Control, has a proposed development plan of ₹5.56 crore focusing on community bunkers, school infrastructure, smart classrooms, multipurpose halls, sports facilities, solar lighting, drinking water systems and plantation activities.

The Secretary reiterated that strategic border villages require focused, coordinated and sustainable interventions to strengthen livelihoods, improve living standards and enhance socio-economic resilience. He directed all departments to expedite finalisation of DPRs to ensure timely commencement of implementation.

The meeting was attended by the District Development Commissioner, Poonch; Heads of Departments of RDD; Directors of School Education, Social Welfare, Rural Development and Health Services, Jammu; Directors of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry; Chief Engineer, PW(R&B), Pir Panjal Division; Superintending Engineer, REW Jammu; Assistant Commissioners Development and Panchayats, Poonch; Executive Engineers and other concerned officers.

JKLA's Ethics Committee convenes meeting to review institutional framework

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Ethics Committee of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, under the chairmanship of MLA Nizam-ud-Din Bhat, convened a high-level meeting Friday to review the institutional framework and reinforce its mandate on legislative accountability.

Legislators Peerzada Feroze Ahamad, Satish Kumar Sharma and Arvind Gupta were present in the meeting.

During the session, the committee emphasized that its primary objective remains upholding the dignity of the House while ensuring that robust checks and balances are maintained within the democratic framework of Jammu and Kashmir.

As a vital permanent panel of the House, the Ethics Committee is explicitly designed to oversee the moral and ethical conduct of the state's lawmakers. It holds the mandate to oversee the Code of Conduct for Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and examine specific cases of ethical violations or potential misconduct referred to it by the Speaker or the House.

Crucially, the committee also acts as a vital bridge to the public by providing an official, structured mechanism to probe citizens' complaints against the legislature, thereby preserving the integrity, dignity and credibility of democratic traditions within the Assembly.

The Chairman stressed that the faith of the public is the bedrock of our democratic institutions. By rigorously monitoring ethics and addressing the grievances impartially, this committee ensures that the conduct of every lawmaker remains aligned with the highest standards of public trust, he added.

Good Morning **Kashmir**

The Fuel Panic Loop

The government's recent decision to temporarily cap how much petrol and diesel you can buy at the pump is a stark reminder of just how fragile our relationship with fuel really is. One day everything is fine, and the next, a sudden policy shift makes everyone wonder if they need to rush out and fill up their tanks. The logic behind the move makes sense on paper. Lately, there has been a bizarre spike in fuel buying. Because there is a widening gap between cheap retail prices at the pump and expensive bulk prices for businesses, commercial buyers started cutting the line, buying up fuel meant for everyday drivers to save a buck. To stop this arbitrage (profiteering off a price difference) and protect the public supply, the government stepped in to cap purchases. Preventing hoarding is absolutely the right call. But here is the catch: fixing a supply issue with restrictions is a double-edged sword. The moment people see caps on fuel, anxiety sets in. In a world where a viral rumor can trigger a run on grocery stores in two hours, restricting petrol can easily backfire. The mere fear of a shortage causes panic buying, which actually creates the exact shortage the government was trying to prevent in the first place. The Scarcity Trap: When authorities restrict a resource to protect it, the public often misinterprets the protection as a sign of scarcity, leading to the very panic that collapses the system. This is why how the government talks to us matters just as much as the rules they write. The Petroleum Ministry has explicitly stated that our oil reserves, petrol, diesel, and LPG supplies are completely stable. That is great, but that message needs to be shouted from the rooftops, clearly and constantly, to drown out the noise of internet rumors. There is also a bigger issue at play here. If the gap between retail and bulk prices is so wide that it is actively inviting people to cheat the system, temporary caps are just a band-aid. Policymakers need to look at the root cause and fix the pricing mismatch itself, rather than just policing the petrol pumps. For now, there is zero reason to panic. The refineries are running, the stations are open, and the fuel is flowing. The government is doing its job by keeping a watchful eye on hoarders. But as they navigate this, they must remember that managing public psychology is just as vital as managing public resources. The best way to keep the peace isn't just with a strict new rule—it's with radical transparency and clear communication.

BRICS And The New Geography Of Agri-Trade

DR. M.L. JAT / DR. SMITA SIROHI

India's BRICS Chairship in 2026 comes at a moment when agricultural trade is being reshaped beyond tariffs and market access. Climate shocks, food-price volatility, fertiliser disruptions, sustainability standards, digital traceability requirements and the need to keep markets open during crises are now central to the trade agenda.

Why agriculture is strategic
After the expansion of membership, the grouping now represents nearly half the world's population, around 40 per cent of global GDP and about a quarter of global trade. UNCTAD's recent assessment shows that intra-BRICS merchandise trade has expanded more than thirteen-fold since 2003, reaching US\$1.17 trillion in 2024. Agriculture may be only one part of this larger trade story, but it is among the most politically and socially sensitive.

When food prices rise, fertiliser supplies are disrupted or shipping routes become uncertain, the impact is felt directly by farmers, consumers and governments. This makes agriculture one of the most strategic frontiers of India's chairship.

The agricultural complementarities within the grouping are evident. Brazil is a major exporter of soyabean, meat and sugar. Russia is important in grains and fertilisers. India has strengths in rice, marine products, spices, buffalo meat and a wide range of smallholder-based commodities. China is a large food importer and processor. South Africa connects the grouping to important African agri-food markets. The newer members add further dimensions: the UAE and Saudi Arabia bring logistics, finance and food-security investment interests; Egypt and Ethiopia represent major food-system concerns in Africa; and Indonesia adds palm oil, fisheries and tropical agriculture.

From complementarity to mechanisms
Yet scale and complementarity do not automatically create resilient trade. The forthcoming BRICS Agriculture Ministers' meeting gives India an opportunity to steer cooperation towards practical mechanisms: trusted trade infrastructure, resilient input supply chains, market intelligence, and women- and youth-inclusive smallholder value chains.

Trusted trade infrastructure should be an early priority. The 2024 BRICS Principles on Trade Facilitation in Agriculture already recognise the building blocks of modern agri-trade:



They are about ensuring that agricultural trade works better for food security, farmers and consumers in a more uncertain world.

SPS and TBT cooperation, equivalence, lower trade costs and digital trade facilitation. India's leadership can add value by moving this agenda towards implementation through interoperable digital certificates, credible traceability systems, faster regulatory communication and capacity-building for producers and exporters. A second priority is resilient input supply chains. Food trade cannot be separated from fertiliser, energy, feed, seed, logistics and finance. For India, this is

not an abstract concern: more than half of its fertiliser and energy imports come from BRICS members, making input security central to agricultural resilience. Recent crises in West Asia have shown that production can be disrupted long before food reaches the market. Cooperation should therefore include early-warning systems for fertiliser and input markets, transparent information on stocks and prices, and mechanisms to reduce sudden disruptions in essential agricultural inputs.

A third priority is market intelligence. The BRICS Grain Exchange idea points to the need for better transparency, price discovery and food-security preparedness. India could build on this by proposing an agricultural market intelligence function within the BRICS Agricultural Research Platform, which is already being positioned as a "Knowledge-to-Action" hub. Such a function could track food stocks, crop prospects, SPS alerts and commodity outlooks, helping countries respond before disruptions become crises.

Making trade farmer-centred
A fourth priority is women- and youth-inclusive smallholder value chains. If agri-trade remains confined to large commodity flows, its developmental value will be limited. The Delhi Declaration emerging from the Global Conference on Women in Agri-Food Sys-

tems (GCWAS) 2026 provides a useful starting point by placing women's agency and leadership at the centre of agri-food transformation. India can carry this spirit into the agri-trade agenda by ensuring that smallholders, especially women farmers and rural youth, are supported not only to produce for markets, but to participate more effectively in value chains.

These priorities are not about creating a closed food bloc. They are about ensuring that agricultural trade works better for food security, farmers and consumers in a more uncertain world. India is well placed to shape this agenda because it brings together experience in food security management, smallholder agriculture, digital public infrastructure and agricultural research.

India's chairship offers a timely opportunity to give this agenda practical shape. Even modest but well-designed cooperation can make agri-trade more reliable during crises, more transparent in its rules and more accessible to farmers. That would mark an important step towards a more resilient, trusted and farmer-centred agri-trade order.(PIB)

(Dr. M.L. Jat works as Director General, ICAR and Secy. DARE and Dr. Smita Sirohi works at ICAR- National Professor, MS Swaminathan Chair and former Joint Sec (G20/BRICS) DAF&W)

The Fibre Economy: India's Next Big Global Opportunity

GIRIRAJ SINGH

India's relationship with fibre is civilisational, 5,000 years deep, woven into our villages, our traditions, and our collective identity. From the legendary muslins of Mohenjo-daro, celebrated as "woven air", to the craftsmanship that travelled across continents, fibre has always been the lifeblood of our rural economy. Today, at the cusp of a global sustainability revolution, that ancient knowledge is our greatest competitive advantage.

For decades, the banana pseudostem was discarded as waste. Today, that same biomass is premium fibre, feeding export markets, sustaining rural livelihoods, and turning agricultural residue into national revenue. From waste to wealth, from local abundance to global opportunity: this is the essence of India's New Age Fibre movement, paving the way for India's path to global leadership in green materials and future-ready textiles.

New Age Fibres are sustainable, plant-based materials that blend India's traditional knowledge with modern innovation. Fibres like Bamboo, Hemp, Banana, PALF, Flax, Ramie, Sisal, Milkweed, and Kapok have existed for centuries, but are now being rediscovered for high-value uses in textiles, defence, biodegradable composites, and premium products. They are expanding India's natural fibre basket for a greener future.

Rising incomes, global sustainability mandates, and traceable sourcing requirements are fundamentally rewiring global supply chains and driving a new fibre economy. Consumers are seeking comfort, breathability, and sustainability in everything



they wear. This structural shift is why India's fibre consumption is set to surge from 15 MMT today to 23 MMT by 2030. The world is increasingly seeking exactly what India can offer: ethical, sustainable, and high-performance natural fibres backed by centuries of expertise.

This vision is supported by a clear institutional and policy framework. Under the Mission for Cotton Productivity, with a total outlay of 5,664 crore for 2026-2031, a dedicated 300 crore New Age Fibres component has been kept. Complementing this effort, the National Fibre Mission announced in the Union Budget 2026-27 provides the broader strategic framework, resting on four pillars: KRISHI-SUTRA for cultivation and raw material development, INFINITY for research and innovation, GRAM-SETU for infrastructure and enterprise creation, and GMPS for branding and market development.

The strength of this policy framework lies in decades of scientific research already delivering results. Milkweed (Aak/Madar), traditionally offered to Lord Shiva, has emerged as a breakthrough after 18 years of research at the Northern India Textile

Research Association (NITRA), evolving into defence applications such as sleeping bags for soldiers operating at -20°C. These are 10% lighter than polyester alternatives, warmer than wool, and CLO/Cell certified. Grown on 55 million hectares of wasteland without fertiliser, it can generate 1.5-2 lakh per acre annually for farmers.

Banana fibre offers an estimated 1.8 million tonnes annual production potential and additional farmer income from agricultural residue, while Bamboo can yield up to 60 tonnes of biomass per hectare, creating major opportunities for the Northeast. Hemp is also emerging as a promising global market, with cultivation already permitted in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Along with Flax, Sisal, Ramie, PALF, Nettle, and Kapok, these fibres are steadily expanding India's sustainable fibre base.

Building on this scientific momentum, the National Seminar on New Age Fibres became a platform where science, policy, and enterprise could converge. It brought together researchers, scientists, entrepreneurs, farmer organisations, industry leaders, and policymakers under

For decades, the banana pseudostem was discarded as waste. Today, that same biomass is premium fibre, feeding export markets, sustaining rural livelihoods, and turning agricultural residue into national revenue.

one roof. Three Task Force reports covering all ten priority fibres were released, translating field science directly into scheme design and investment priorities.

The seminar also openly identified gaps in standards, processing infrastructure, and institutional financing, reflecting a mission focused on real execution. Key priorities emerged: scaling production from 10,000 MT to 10 lakh MT in five years, developing quality standards, promoting machinery indigenisation, reducing dependence on imported processing technology, and building cluster-based fibre ecosystems from cultivation to value addition. Together, these steps position New Age Fibres as a whole-of-government mission for rural prosperity and sus-

tainable growth. Perhaps the most transformative frontier is fibre blending. India's real strength lies not in a single fibre, but in combining them intelligently, such as milkweed for thermal lightness, wool for warmth, bamboo for breathability, and cotton for softness. A blended fabric is not a compromise; it is a performance upgrade creating fabrics that are stronger, smarter, and more sustainable, with better comfort, moisture management, durability, and versatility across fashion, lifestyle, and technical textiles.

The benefits cascade across the entire value chain. Consumers get better comfort and functionality, manufacturers gain premium and differentiated products, and farmers benefit from diversified demand and more resilient incomes. For India, blending is more than a technical innovation; it is the bridge from raw fibre supply to globally competitive, value-added brands rooted in Indian identity.

At its core, the New Age Fibre movement is about transforming lives, creating opportunities for farmers, strengthening rural livelihoods, empowering women, and enabling entrepreneurs to build global enterprises from local resources. Anchored in Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji's 5F Vision: Farm to Fibre to Fabric to Fashion to Foreign, India's Green Fibre Revolution is not a distant promise. The strategy is set. The institutions are engaged. The science is proven. The entrepreneurs are ready. What India is now doing, fibre by fibre, blend by blend, region by region, farm by farm, is writing the next great chapter of its textile story.(PIB)

(The author is the Union Minister of Textiles. The views expressed are personal)

Good Morning **Kashmir**

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Beyond The Verdict

Why Recognizing Unpaid Labor Isn't Enough Without Safety And Dignity

LALIT GARGG

For decades, Indian society has proclaimed its commitment to women's empowerment. Women are described as the "other half of society" and equal partners in the nation's development. Numerous policies and programs have been launched to enhance their participation in education, employment, politics, and leadership. Governments have repeatedly pledged to ensure greater representation of women, including reserving 33 percent of seats in legislative bodies. Society proudly celebrates women's achievements across diverse fields. Yet, beneath these encouraging narratives lies a troubling reality that compels us to re-examine the true state of women's empowerment in India.

Recently, the Supreme Court of India made a landmark observation by recognizing homemakers as "nation builders." The Court acknowledged that the unpaid labor performed by women in managing households and caring for families possesses immense economic and social value and can no longer be ignored. At the same time, data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) reveal a disturbing truth: one in four women in rural India and one in six women in urban India experience some form of violence. This stark contrast exposes a profound contradiction. The woman who is hailed as a nation builder is often the same woman who lives under the shadow of insecurity, discrimination, and violence within her own home and society.

The Supreme Court's recognition of homemakers marks a historic step toward acknowledging women's unpaid labor. For generations, household work has been viewed merely as an extension of duty, affection, or sacrifice. Cleaning the home, preparing meals, raising children, caring for the elderly, maintaining family health and values, managing household affairs, and nurturing social relationships have all been considered a woman's natural responsibility. As a result, this labor has rarely been measured in economic terms. In reality, if a family were to hire separate individuals to perform all the tasks undertaken by a homemaker, the financial burden would be substantial. Despite this, homemakers receive neither wages nor adequate social recognition. They work around the clock, every



day of the year, without holidays, promotions, or retirement benefits.

Therefore, the Supreme Court's assertion that homemakers contribute not only to their families but also to nation-building is far more than a legal observation—it is a transformative social message. In a motor accident compensation case, the Court suggested that the value of a homemaker's services should be assessed at a minimum of 30,000 per month. This is not merely a judicial determination; it is a challenge to the longstanding mindset that undervalues domestic work. Indeed, the invisible labor of women forms the foundation of the economy. If unpaid domestic work were formally measured and incorporated into the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), India's economic landscape would look remarkably different.

While the judiciary has acknowledged the immense contribution of homemakers, an equally important question remains unanswered: Are women receiving the dignity, security, and respect they deserve? Unfortunately, the answer remains far from satisfactory. According to NFHS data, violence against women continues to be a serious social challenge. Nearly 22 percent of married women between the ages of 18 and 49 have reported experiencing domestic violence during their married lives. This reality highlights a painful paradox. The woman whose labor sustains families and strengthens society often finds herself vulnerable to abuse within the very institutions she helps nurture. This situation persists despite the existence of numerous laws designed to protect women and widespread awareness campaigns promoting gender equality. A natural question arises: If legal protections exist, government schemes are in place, and women's

empowerment has become a national priority, why does violence against women continue unabated? Why do many women still struggle to feel completely safe—whether at home, in public spaces, or in the workplace?

The answer lies not merely in legislation but in social attitudes. A significant section of Indian society continues to be influenced by patriarchal thinking. Women are often celebrated as the backbone of the family, yet many are denied equal decision-making power and genuine autonomy. Families depend heavily on women's labor, but frequently fail to accord it the respect it deserves. This mindset often manifests itself in domestic violence, economic exploitation, and social discrimination.

The dowry system remains one of the most glaring examples of this contradiction. Despite educational progress and economic advancement, dowry demands and related crimes continue to surface across the country. Cases of dowry harassment and dowry deaths repeatedly make national headlines. It is deeply ironic that parents who invest years in raising and educating their daughters are often compelled to bear an additional financial burden at the time of marriage. Such practices are not merely social evils; they represent a direct assault on women's dignity and equality. Beyond dowry, women continue to face numerous other forms of violence and discrimination, including sexual assault, child marriage, human trafficking, witch-branding, and gender-based prejudice. These challenges are particularly acute in some rural and tribal regions, where superstition and social backwardness continue to fuel abuse. Such realities demonstrate that economic development alone cannot guarantee social

The Court acknowledged that the unpaid labor performed by women in managing households and caring for families possesses immense economic and social value and can no longer be ignored. At the same time, data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) reveal a disturbing truth: one in four women in rural India and one in six women in urban India experience some form of violence. This stark contrast exposes a profound contradiction.

progress. While India has advanced significantly in infrastructure, technology, and economic growth, the transformation of social consciousness has not kept pace.

Women's empowerment cannot be confined to political representation or economic participation alone. True empowerment means dignity, safety, equal opportunity, and the freedom to make independent decisions. A woman who earns an income but suffers violence at home

cannot be considered fully empowered. Likewise, political representation without social respect leaves empowerment incomplete. The time has come to adopt a multidimensional approach to women's empowerment. Recognizing the economic value of domestic labor is important, but ensuring women's safety and dignity is equally essential. Schools and families must cultivate values of gender equality from an early age. Men and boys must become active participants in this transformation. Lasting change cannot be achieved by educating women alone; society itself must change.

Particular attention must be given to rural areas by expanding educational opportunities, creating employment avenues, increasing legal awareness, and ensuring access to justice. Law enforcement agencies and administrative institutions must become more responsive and sensitive to women's concerns. Effective implementation of laws is crucial to creating deterrence against offenders and ensuring justice for victims. At the same time, unpaid domestic labor must become an integral part of national economic discourse. Household work should no longer be viewed merely as a private responsibility but as a vital social and economic contribution. Such recognition would not only strengthen women's self-esteem but also foster greater respect for their role within society.

The Supreme Court's recognition of homemakers carries a powerful message: nation-building is not limited to Parliament, industry, the military, or public administration. The nurturing of families and the preservation of social values are equally fundamental to the strength of a nation—and women remain the principal architects of this process. However, if the very women who build families and shape future generations continue to face violence, discrimination, and insecurity, the dream of genuine nation-building will remain incomplete. The challenge before India today is not merely to calculate the economic value of women's labor but to recognize the intrinsic value of women's lives. A society that truly honors its homemakers as nation builders must ensure that they live not in fear, but in dignity; not in silence, but with a voice; not as victims, but as equal partners in shaping the future of the nation.

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When Thinking Becomes Exhaustion

MOHAMMAD ARFAT WANI

There are days when the mind feels heavier than the body. Nothing dramatic happens outside, yet something inside keeps moving, replaying, rechecking, rewriting everything. A simple sentence said by someone hours ago returns again and again. A decision already made refuses to settle. Sleep comes late, not because life is difficult, but because thoughts refuse to leave quietly. This is how overthinking begins—not as a problem, but as a habit that slowly starts occupying the entire inner world.

It is strange how something as ordinary as thinking has turned into something exhausting. Thinking is supposed to help us understand life, but overthinking does something different. It keeps life under constant trial. Nothing is ever final in the mind of someone who overthinks. Every situation is still "under review," every memory still "under interpretation," every future still "under fear."

If one looks closely at the present generation, especially students and young professionals, this mental restlessness is almost everywhere. People are not just busy—they are mentally occupied even in their free time. A student sitting quietly is not always peaceful; often, they are arguing with their own thoughts. A young professional scrolling their phone is not always relaxed; sometimes they are mentally revisiting something they said in a meeting, wondering if it sounded wrong.

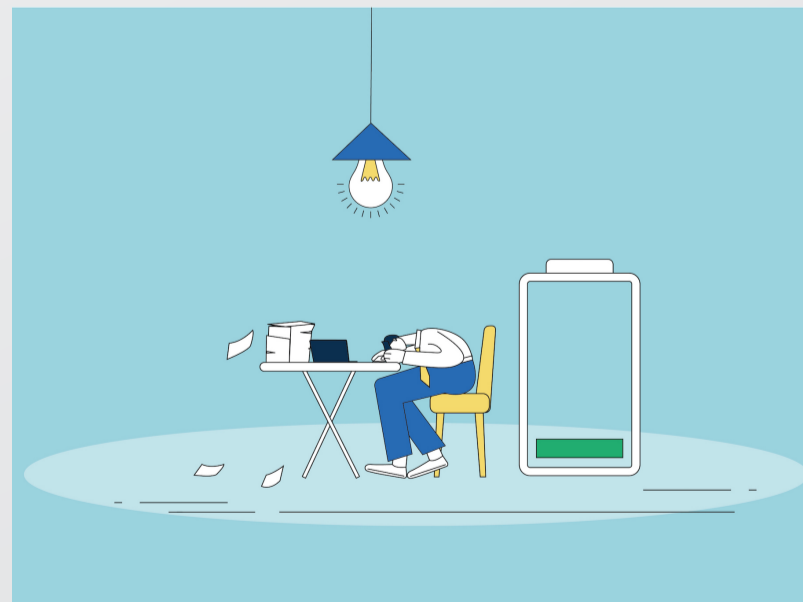
Earlier generations did not carry

this kind of invisible burden in the same way. Life had its struggles, of course, but there was less mental clutter. Once the day ended, it ended. Today, the day never really ends. Messages continue. Notifications continue. Social comparison continues. Even silence has become loud because the mind has learned to fill every gap with thought.

Social media has added a new layer to this condition. It is not just a communication tool anymore; it has become a comparison machine. People do not only see others' lives—they measure themselves against them. A simple post can quietly create unnecessary questions. Why is someone happier? Why are they progressing faster? Why did someone not respond? Why did something feel different? The mind, without permission, starts building stories around small fragments of information.

Among students, this becomes even more intense. There exists a sort of quiet pressure that is seldom discussed. It is not just about fearing exams, but it is more than that; it involves fearing everything that comes after: results, expectations, competition, and judgment. No matter how hard a student studies, he/she always feels under-prepared. Not because they did not learn enough, but because their mind refuses to accept certainty. "What if I forget?" "What if it is not enough?" These questions repeat even after preparation is complete.

What makes overthinking more difficult is that it often disguises itself as responsibility. People believe that if they think more, they are being care-



ful. If they worry more, they are being prepared. But slowly, this habit crosses a line where thinking stops being useful and starts becoming exhausting. Instead of solving problems, it begins multiplying them.

There is also an emotional side to it. People who feel deeply are often the ones who think deeply as well. They do not easily let go of words, expressions, or changes in tone. A small moment can stay in their mind longer than it stayed in reality. Not because they are weak, but because their mind does not know how to leave things unfinished. It keeps trying to complete emotional puzzles that may not even have answers.

Sometimes, its effects do not show

externally as well. Someone can continue smiling, attending classes, meeting his friends and feel drained mentally at the same time. Overthinking subtly influences someone's sleep, concentration, and overall emotional state. It complicates the simplest of decisions because everything seems more complicated when one overthinks it all. It instills doubt where confidence should be. And over time, overthinking steals something crucial from us—our presence in the here and now.

Perhaps the most unnoticed loss in all this is the present itself. Life does not exist in memory or imagination; it exists in what is happening right now. But an overthinking mind rarely stays

there. It keeps travelling backwards and forwards, leaving very little space for "now." Even peaceful surroundings begin to feel mentally noisy when thoughts do not stop moving.

Still, it would be unfair to treat overthinking only as a flaw. It is also a sign of awareness, sensitivity, and depth. People do not overthink because they are careless; they overthink because they care too much, about outcomes, about people, about themselves. The problem is not the ability to think—it is the inability to pause.

In today's time, where speed is valued more than stillness, learning to slow down the mind has almost become a skill in itself. Not every thought needs continuation. Not every question needs an immediate answer. Sometimes, things settle on their own when they are not disturbed constantly. The mind also needs that space, that gap where nothing is being analyzed.

Maybe the real change does not come from trying to stop thinking altogether, but from learning when to stop feeding certain thoughts. Life becomes easier not when the mind becomes silent, but when it stops turning every silence into a problem.

In conclusion, overthinking is not the real enemy. A restless mind is not broken—it is simply overloaded. What it needs is not more control, but more space. And perhaps, in a world that is always asking us to think, respond, and react, the rarest form of strength is simply this: to think when necessary, and to let go when enough is enough.

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CM Urges Civil

with the Defence Minister, the Chief Minister requested that the Indian Air Force examine the possibility of shortening or phasing the final stage of the runway works without compromising safety or operational requirements.

He further requested that, in the event a complete closure of Srinagar Airport becomes unavoidable, minimal civil flight operations, commensurate with the operational capacity of the Awantipora Air Base, may be permitted from the air base during the closure period to ensure essential air connectivity for the region.

Recalling his earlier tenure as Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah noted that during the runway resurfacing works in September 2010, civil flights had successfully operated from Awantipora under a coordinated arrangement involving the Ministries of Defence and Civil Aviation.

"We are working on possible alternatives to minimise the disruption & maintain a basic flight schedule as was done in the past when the airport closed for similar reasons in 1998 & 2010," the Chief Minister said.

During his meeting with the Union Civil Aviation Minister, the Chief Minister sought intervention to facilitate discussions with the Ministry of Defence on reviewing the timing of Phase III, including the possibility of shortening, phasing or shifting the closure to a leaner travel window without compromising safety requirements.

He also requested that contingency arrangements be explored in coordination with the Ministry of Defence and the Indian Air Force to ensure continued air connectivity to the Valley in the event the closure remains unavoidable.

The Chief Minister emphasized that any alternative operational arrangement would require extensive inter-agency coordination and advance planning, and therefore needed to be initiated well ahead of the scheduled closure period.

Hm Shah Directs

and enhance accountability, Shah directed that all individuals associated with the Yatra, including local service providers, be properly registered.

He also called for the issuance of QR code-based identity cards and the setting up of veterinary camps for health checks of animals used during the pilgrimage.

The meeting also stressed that the movement of pilgrim batches should be strictly regulated in accordance with weather forecasts to minimise risks along the route.

Apart from the Yatra routes, Shah asked officials to ensure enhanced security arrangements at their major tourist locations across Jammu and Kashmir so that visiting pilgrims can travel safely and without disruption.

The annual Amarnath Yatra, which draws thousands of devotees each year to the Himalayan shrine, is set to commence on July 3, with authorities working to ensure tight security and smooth management amid challenging terrain and weather conditions—(KNO)

LG Sinha Calls On

Bureau Director, senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs, security agencies and the Jammu and Kashmir administration—(KNO)

MeT Forecasts Rain,

highest maximum temperature in J&K at 41.8 degrees Celsius, which was 3 degrees Celsius above normal, while Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 31.5 degrees Celsius, 3.5 degrees Celsius above normal.

The department said weather conditions on June 12 would remain partly to generally cloudy with one or two spells of light to moderate rain and brief intense showers at many places.

Thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph, gusting up to 60 kmph, are also likely at a few places.

For the period from June 13 to June 17, the weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy with light rain, brief intense showers, thunderstorms and gusty winds at scattered places.

Similar conditions are likely to continue on June 18 and 19.

The MeT Centre advised people to remain cautious as there is a possibility of thunderstorms, lightning, hailstorms and strong winds during the day.

It also warned that brief intense showers at isolated locations in both Kashmir and Jammu divisions could trigger flash floods and mudslides. People have been advised to stay away from loose structures, electric poles, overhead wires and old trees.

The department also recommended suspension of boating and Shikara operations during periods of adverse weather.

Among other stations in Kashmir, Qazigund recorded 30.2 degrees Celsius, Kupwara 30.2 degrees Celsius, Kokernag 29 degrees Celsius, Pahalgam 25.9 degrees Celsius and Gulmarg 21.6 degrees Celsius.

In Jammu division, Kathua recorded 41.6 degrees Celsius, Katra 38.3 degrees Celsius, Batote 31.3 degrees Celsius, Banihal 29.2 degrees Celsius and Bhandarwah 27.2 degrees Celsius.

Rainfall during the previous 24 hours was reported from several places, including Batote (27.6 mm), Bhandarwah (28.2 mm), Doda (18 mm), Jammu (12 mm), Kishtwar (8 mm), and Sonamarg

(7 mm), according to the department.

The minimum temperature settled at 13.6 degrees Celsius in Srinagar and 24.1 degrees Celsius in Jammu, both below their respective seasonal normals—(KNO)

Syed Salahuddin, Head

erstwhile RPC, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and E&IMCO in FIR No. 05/1996 registered at CIK Srinagar. The prosecution informed the court that despite issuance of arrest warrants and sustained efforts by police agencies, the accused could not be traced and were evading arrest.

Court records state that the case was registered following information received by CIK Srinagar in April 1996 alleging that Pakistani intelligence agencies were motivating Kashmiri youth to join militant outfits and undergo training across the border. The prosecution alleged that Syed Salahuddin was at the forefront of delivering provocative speeches and motivating youth for the purpose.

After examining the material placed before it, the court, according to news agency Kashmir Dot Com, observed that warrants issued against the accused remained unexecuted and reports from police authorities, field staff and local officials indicated that the accused were absconding and concealing their whereabouts.

Holding that the statutory requirements for issuance of a proclamation under Section 84 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 had been met, the court ordered proclamation proceedings against all four accused and directed them to appear before the court on or before July 14, 2026.

The court further directed that the proclamation be published in accordance with law and served through the prescribed procedure. (KDC)

Govt Committed To

focused on ensuring better patient care and modern healthcare facilities so that the people, particularly the economically weaker sections, do not have to depend on private hospitals for quality treatment.

She highlighted that significant improvement has been witnessed in the health sector. She informed that around 400 new doctors are being deployed across Jammu and Kashmir to address the staff shortages and improve service delivery.

"We are identifying and addressing the existing gaps in the healthcare system. Our objective is to provide accessible, affordable and quality healthcare to every citizen," she said.

The Minister assured that the foundation stone for the new projects would be laid soon and that regular monitoring would be undertaken to ensure their timely completion and dedication to the public. She also appealed to the public to contribute towards maintaining cleanliness and sanitation in healthcare institutions, stressing that community participation is essential for better healthcare outcomes.

Speaking on the occasion, the local legislators expressed gratitude to the Minister for her proactive approach towards strengthening the healthcare services and infrastructure in their respective constituencies.

Later, the Minister visited Burzahama and directed the concerned authorities to identify suitable land for construction of a Primary Health Centre (PHC) to cater to the healthcare needs of the local population.

During her tour, several individual and public delegations met the Minister and apprised her of various issues and demands. She assured them that all their genuine concerns would be examined and addressed on priority.

Senior officers including MD KPDCL, VC LCMA, Director School Education Kashmir, Principal GMC Srinagar, Chief Engineer R&B, ADC Srinagar and other senior officers from concerned departments also accompanied the Minister during the tour.

Aharbal Closure

struggling to make ends meet.

Aharbal has remained closed to visitors even as tourism activities have resumed in several other parts of the Valley following the Pahalgam terror attack last year.

Local tourism operators, transporters, shopkeepers, and tea stall owners said the shutdown has resulted in a sharp decline in earnings during the peak tourist season.

"We sit with our cabs every day, but there are no tourists to take around. The season is slipping away, and with it our only chance to earn enough for the year," said a local driver.

A shopkeeper from the area said the closure has pushed many families into financial distress.

"Our business depended largely on visitors coming to Aharbal. Now, the shutters remain down most of the time. We are not asking for charity, we only want the destination to reopen so that we can earn our livelihood again," he said.

They said the issue is no longer confined to tourism promotion alone but has become a matter of survival for many households whose income is directly linked to tourist footfall.

Cabinet Minister Sakina Itoo has written to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, urging him to consider reopening Aharbal Waterfall at the earliest.

In her communication, a copy of which lies with KNO, Itoo writes, "I would like to draw your kind attention towards Aharbal Waterfall, situ-

ated in the south-western part of the Kashmir Valley in Sub-District Damhal Hanjipora, District Kulgam. The destination is widely known as the 'Niagara Waterfall of Kashmir' owing to its breathtaking natural beauty and immense tourism potential.

It is submitted that the tourist destination remained closed during the last year due to prevailing circumstances. However, the law-and-order situation in the area has considerably improved and remains peaceful at present. Consequently, a large number of tourists and visitors are desirous of visiting Aharbal during the ongoing tourist season. In view of the improved situation and considering the importance of tourism for the local economy and livelihood of the people associated with the tourism sector, I request your goodness to kindly consider reopening the Aharbal tourist destination for visitors at an early date. The reopening of the destination will greatly benefit local residents, tourism stakeholders, and tourists alike."

Authorities have stepped up surveillance measures at the Aharbal.

A PTZ 360-degree CCTV camera has been installed at Aharbal.

Chief Executive Officer Aharbal, Muhammad Rouf Rehman said that Aharbal is a sensitive area and continues to remain closed following the Pahalgam terror attack, due to which local residents are facing financial and economic hardships.

He said a high-resolution 360-degree camera has been installed to strengthen security and surveillance at the Aharbal.

"The camera will rotate on all axes of Aharbal and capture live footage," Rouf said. He said that the system will help deter elements attempting to disturb peace and ensure better monitoring of the area.

He said the Tourism Development Authority, Aharbal, is fully prepared and ready to receive tourists once the destination is declared open—(KNO)

Thaejkaad Gains

farmers are leaving no stone unturned to finish the work before June 21. Completing transplantation within this period is considered essential for obtaining a good harvest," he said.

Bhat said that in areas where irrigation facilities remain functional, many cultivators have hired experienced non-local labourers to accelerate the transplantation process.

"Every piece of cultivable land is valuable. We are trying to utilise every available patch before moisture levels decline further. Timely transplantation is critical for the success of the crop," he said.

Throughout south, central, and north Kashmir, the sight of people standing knee-deep in waterlogged fields has become common.

The rhythmic movement of workers planting saplings against the backdrop of Kashmir's picturesque countryside presents a timeless image of the Valley's agrarian life.

For farmers, however, Thaejkaad represents much more than an agricultural task.

Many describe it as a cherished cultural tradition passed down through generations.

"Agriculture is closely linked with our identity and heritage. Thaejkaad is not merely about planting rice, it is a season associated with blessings, prosperity, and a connection to our ancestors. It carries immense cultural and emotional significance for farming families," said Ghulam Nabi Bhat, a farmer from central Kashmir's Budgam district.

Farmers explained that paddy cultivation follows a carefully structured process. Initially, seeds are sown in dedicated nurseries known locally as Thaejwaan.

After around 40 days, the saplings reach an appropriate height and are ready for transplantation.

During this period, the main fields are ploughed, levelled, and enriched with organic manure.

Once preparations are complete, the painstaking task of transplanting each sapling into the main field begins.

However, this year's transplantation season has been overshadowed by growing concerns over water scarcity in certain areas.

Reduced water levels in streams, canals, and rivers have adversely affected irrigation systems, leaving several schemes either partially functional or completely defunct.

Residents of Shaar village in the Khrew area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district said they were unable to cultivate paddy due to the non-availability of irrigation water.

As an alternative, many farmers have shifted to crops such as maize, moong, and other pulses that require comparatively less water.

Agriculture experts and officials from the Department of Agriculture have also been encouraging farmers in water-stressed regions to diversify towards less water-intensive crops, including pulses and vegetables, to minimise losses and make better use of available resources.

Officials said that although adequate irrigation water remains available in most parts of Kashmir, a few pockets continue to face difficulties.

They assured that efforts are underway to address these issues and improve water supply wherever possible.

An official of the Agricultural Department, who wished not to be named, while expressing concern over the steady decline in paddy cultivation across the Valley emphasised the need to safeguard agricultural land from conversion into orchards, residential colonies, and commercial structures.

"Kashmir was once largely self-sufficient in rice production. However, shrinking paddy acreage due to land-use changes has significantly affected

local production," the official said.

He said that the Valley now relies heavily on rice imports from other states to meet domestic demand.

"Currently, more than 65 percent of the rice consumed in Kashmir is sourced from outside J&K. Unfortunately, this dependence has been increasing with each passing year," he said.

He said that the ongoing Thaejkaad season stands as a powerful reminder of Kashmir's enduring agricultural traditions, resilience in the face of adversity, and the urgent need to protect both its water resources and fertile paddy lands for future generations—(KNO)

NC Biggest Obstacle

in which the NC had left the region.

"They had kept Jammu and Kashmir isolated from the rest of the country and cut off from our brothers and sisters across India. It took immense efforts by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP workers to unite Jammu, Kashmir, and the rest of the nation," he said.

Siddiqui said that the distances and divides that once existed have disappeared and alleged that the NC could not tolerate the growing integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country.

"I believe the biggest stumbling block in the path of Jammu and Kashmir's development is the NC and the Abdullah family. The people should remove this obstacle as soon as possible. If this hurdle is removed, Jammu and Kashmir can truly progress and realise its potential as paradise on earth," he said.

The BJP leader congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for what he described as efforts to bring Jammu and Kashmir into the mainstream.

Referring to security and infrastructure developments, Siddiqui said incidents of stone-pelting and frequent shutdowns due to terrorism had declined significantly.

He said major improvements had been made in road, rail, and air connectivity across Jammu and Kashmir.

"With the construction of tunnels and bridges, road connectivity has improved considerably. Rail infrastructure has seen major development, and Vande Bharat trains are operating in the region. Air travel facilities have also improved, helping connect Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country," he said.

Commenting on the situation in PoK, where civilians have reportedly come under attack, Siddiqui condemned the targeting of innocent people.

"I condemn it. The Prime Minister has won the hearts of the people and effectively countered attempts to destabilise Jammu and Kashmir through terrorism. Those conspiracies are gradually failing," he said.

Appealing to the youth, Siddiqui urged them to embrace development, education, employment, and trade, saying these were the key to ensuring lasting peace and prosperity.

"I appeal to the people of Jammu and Kashmir to follow the path of peace and development. By doing so, they can contribute to the progress of their families, Jammu and Kashmir and the nation," he said—(KNO)

Govt In J&K Will

The BJP leader further alleged that there were backchannel attempts to engineer defections, while maintaining that his party had no involvement in such efforts.

"The government will fall on its own. The BJP will neither form it nor make it fall," Sharma said, adding that the present dispensation would not complete its full term, without specifying any timeline—(KNO)



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Hi-tech security grid, mock drills mark final push for Amarnath Yatra in Anantnag

UMAISAR GUL

ANANTNAG: Authorities have stepped up Amarnath Yatra preparations in south Kashmir's Anantnag district with advanced surveillance systems, mock drills, and a strengthened security grid ahead of the pilgrimage beginning July 3.

With over 400 CCTV cameras, facial recognition technology, elevated bunkers and specialised security units deployed along the route, officials say extensive measures are in place to ensure a safe and smooth yatra.

The annual Amarnath Yatra attracts thousands of pilgrims from across the country and remains one of Jammu and Kashmir's largest religious pilgrimages.

Authorities intensified preparations for the Amarnath Yatra with hi-tech surveillance systems being installed and mock drills conducted to ensure a safe and smooth pilgrimage.

As part of the arrangements, advanced surveillance infrastructure, including CCTV cameras and monitoring equipment, has been set up at key locations along the Yatra route and base camps.

Security agencies, police, and the civil administration are work-



ing in close coordination to strengthen security and emergency response mechanisms.

Officials said mock drills are being conducted at various locations to assess preparedness and improve coordination among different agencies in handling potential emergencies.

A mock drill was conducted on Friday at the Nunwan Base Camp in Pahalgam.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Anantnag, Amod Nagpure, said the Amarnath Yatra is scheduled to commence on July 3 and all necessary arrangements have been put in place to ensure its smooth conduct.

He said around 140 companies of CAPF have been deployed from Anantnag town up to the cave shrine.

Besides, specialised units of J&K Police, including Markhor, Snow Leopard teams, MRTs, SOG and QRTs, have been stationed at strategic locations.

"We have divided the entire district into 19 security zones, each supervised by senior police officers. Checking and frisking have been intensified, while preventive measures are also being taken against individuals with questionable backgrounds or suspected links to anti-national activities," he said.

The SSP said extensive area domination and

sanitisation operations are underway in hilly and forested areas in coordination with the Army and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs).

"All routes, tracks, ravines and streams are being thoroughly checked to eliminate any security loopholes and ensure a secure pilgrimage," he said.

Nagpure said more than 400 advanced CCTV cameras have been installed across Anantnag district and are being monitored from police control rooms.

"The facial recognition system introduced last year has been further strengthened. The database has been expanded and additional facial recog-

nition cameras have been installed at new locations," he said.

The SSP said police have also launched the 'Pehchan App' to verify all service providers associated with the Yatra.

"Each registered service provider has been issued a unique QR code. Pilgrims, tourists and security personnel can scan the code, even without internet connectivity, to verify their credentials," he said.

The SSP said that 28 elevated bunkers and watchtowers have been established along the entire Yatra route, compared to 14 last year.

"In addition, sniper deployments have been organised at various vulnerable locations to strengthen the security grid," he said.

Expressing confidence over the arrangements, Nagpure said the combined efforts of the police, district administration and local residents would ensure the safe and successful conduct of this year's pilgrimage.

"I appeal to all devotees to undertake the pilgrimage without fear. Anantnag Police and the people of the district are ready to welcome them," he said—(KNO)

GMC SGR ADVISORY

Excessive screen time harms physical, mental, emotional health

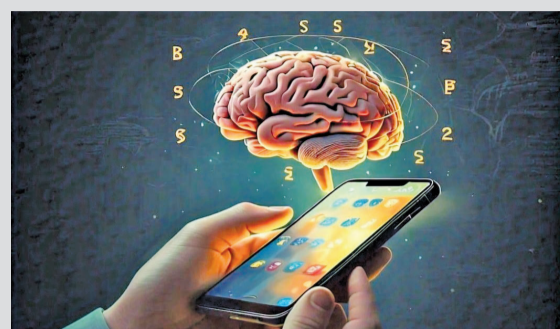
JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: The Department of Community Medicine at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar has issued a public awareness advisory cautioning people about the harmful effects of prolonged screen time on physical, mental, and emotional well-being. It warned that excessive use of smartphones, tablets, computers, and other digital devices is increasingly contributing to a range of health problems across all age groups, particularly among children, adolescents, and young adults.

According to the advisory, one of the most common consequences is Digital Eye Strain, which develops when individuals spend extended periods focusing on screens without adequate breaks.

Medical experts said that screen use reduces the natural blinking rate, sometimes by 50 to 60 per cent, leading to dry, irritated, and fatigued eyes, with symptoms including headaches, blurred vision, burning sensations, neck discomfort, and shoulder pain. The advisory also highlights the growing prevalence of "Tech Neck", a condition caused by poor posture while using digital devices.

Experts explained that the human head typically weighs around 5 kilograms, but when tilted forward at angles between 45 and 60 degrees while looking at a phone or laptop, the effective load on the neck can



increase to more than 20-25 kilograms. "This excessive strain on the cervical spine can lead to chronic neck pain, back pain, shoulder stiffness and, over time, early spinal degeneration," the advisory states.

Another major concern is the impact of screen exposure on sleep patterns. Screens emit blue light, which suppresses the production of melatonin - the hormone responsible for regulating sleep - leading to delayed sleep onset, reduced sleep quality, and disrupted circadian rhythm, with consequences including insomnia, daytime fatigue, poor concentration, and mood-related issues.

According to the advisory, excessive screen exposure during childhood may negatively affect brain development, interfering with critical cognitive, language, and social development. Children with high screen exposure may experience delayed language development, reduced attention spans, weaker executive functioning skills, and lower academic performance.

Health professionals expressed concern about the decline in physical activity, saying that sedentary screen time contributes to weight gain, reduced fitness levels, and increased risk of obesity, Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular diseases. The advisory additionally draws attention to psychological effects, linking high screen time to increased levels of anxiety, stress, depression, loneliness, and reduced self-esteem.

To minimise health risks, the department recommends following the 20-20-20 rule (every 20 minutes, look at an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds), taking movement breaks every 30 to 60 minutes, avoiding screen use one to two hours before bedtime, maintaining proper posture, and balancing digital activities with outdoor recreation and physical exercise.

"Your body was designed to move, not to scroll continuously," the advisory states, urging people to limit recreational screen time. "Use screens. Don't let screens use you," the advisory concludes—(KNO)

MD JKMSCL visits LoC Border Village Seemari

Reviews developmental initiatives under Vibrant Village Programme

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Managing Director, J&K Medical Supplies Corporation Ltd. (JKMSCL), Tariq Hussain Ganai Friday visited Seemari, one of the remotest border villages in Teetwal Block of Karnah Sub-Division, to review developmental activities being implemented under the Government of India's Vibrant Village Programme (VVP) Phase-II. Seemari holds unique significance as the first village situated along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Karnah sector and has been identified for focused development under the Vibrant Village Programme Phase-II aimed at improving infrastructure, public services and livelihood opportunities in border areas.

On his arrival, the Managing Director chaired a public outreach-cum-review meeting with officers and local residents. Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Karnah highlighted the transformative vision of the Vibrant Village Programme and apprised the gathering about its role in ensuring inclusive development, strengthening border communities and improving the quality of life in far-flung villages such as Seemari.

Block Development Offi-

cer, Teetwal presented a detailed profile of the village and briefed the gathering about the developmental works completed and those presently under execution under various government schemes.

During the interaction, local residents projected several issues and demands pertaining to road connectivity viz. Seemari to Kadhama Road, augmentation of drinking water facilities in Phagwan area, transportation facilities for students, healthcare services, mobile network connectivity and strengthening of public distribution infrastructure.

The Managing Director sought detailed feedback from all line departments regarding the status of ongoing works and future developmental interventions planned for the village. He directed the concerned officers to submit comprehensive action plans and progress reports for timely redressal of public issues.

Several grievances were addressed on the spot during the meeting. The officers also informed that homestay facilities would be promoted in the area to boost rural tourism and generate sustainable livelihood opportunities for local youth. Progress achieved under various beneficiary-oriented schemes, including

PMAY-G, social welfare initiatives, street lighting and other developmental programmes, was also reviewed.

Speaking on the occasion, the Managing Director reiterated the need to promote sports and youth engagement activities in the village and emphasized that sports infrastructure and related initiatives play a vital role in channelizing the energy of rural youth.

He further directed all line departments to ensure saturation of eligible beneficiaries under various welfare and development schemes so that the intended benefits reach every deserving household.

The Managing Director stressed upon close inter-departmental coordination for expeditious implementation of developmental projects and called for sustained efforts to transform seemari village into vibrant and self-reliant communities.

The event was attended by the SDM Karnah, Block Development Officer Teetwal, Executive Engineer SSD Tangdhar and other district and block-level officers.

Later, the Managing Director undertook an extensive field visit of the village and inspected various ongoing developmental works and public infrastructure projects.

Budgam intensifies Anti-Drug Campaign with Awareness Drives, Plantation Events

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: As part of the ongoing 100-Day Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), District Administration Budgam conducted a series of awareness, enforcement, and community engagement activities across the district to strengthen the fight against drug abuse and illicit cultivation.

The Excise Department Budgam, with the assistance of the Revenue Department, carried out a destruction drive at Village Mazhama, Tehsil Magam, and eradicated wild cannabis spread over 3 kanals and 4 marlas along roadsides, irrigation land, and riverbanks. The department also conducted a survey and awareness campaign in Village Bugam, Tehsil Chadoora, covering around 65 kanals, during which 2 kanals of wild bhung cultivation were identified. Awareness material was distributed and locals were sensitized about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

The Health Department, in collaboration with the

ICDS team, organized an NMBA awareness programme at Shogapora, while a drugs awareness programme was conducted at Khag with the participation of officials from various departments, social activists, chemists, and senior citizens.

Further strengthening the campaign, the Doodganga Range of Pir Panjal Forest Division organized awareness programmes at Lashkhalan Buzgoo and Nilnag, where participants pledged to lead a drug-free life and spread awareness about the adverse effects of substance abuse. A plantation drive under the theme "Ek Ped Nashe Ke Virudh" and a green rally in collaboration with Government High School Buzgoo Nilnag were also organized to promote a healthy and drug-free society.

The District Administration Budgam remains committed to creating awareness, mobilizing communities, and eliminating the menace of drug abuse through sustained outreach and enforcement initiatives under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

GDC B'pora organises Rally, Essay Competition under NMBA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Government Degree College Bandipora on Friday organised a series of activities under the ongoing Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) to raise awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse and to promote a drug-free society.

Under the guidance of the Principal, Prof. Suresh Kumar Dogra, the Red Ribbon Youth Club in collaboration with the NCORD Cell organised an awareness rally on substance abuse under the convensorship of Dr. Mehrajuddin Talie. Students and faculty members participated enthusiastically in the rally, carrying NMBA banners and raising anti-drug slogans to spread awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse.

The rally aimed to sensitise the public, particularly the youth, about the social, economic and health consequences of substance abuse and to encourage collective efforts towards building a drug-free society.

Meanwhile, the NSS Unit and Red Ribbon Youth Club of the college jointly organised a pledge ceremony under the leadership of the Principal as part of the NMBA campaign.

During the ceremony, students and faculty members pledged to stay away from drugs and actively spread awareness against substance abuse.

In another activity, the Department of Political Science, HKM Degree College Bandipora, organised an Essay Writing Competition on Drug De-addiction under the convensorship of Dr. Ajaz Ahmad. The competition witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, who highlighted through their essays the social, psychological and economic impact of drug addiction and emphasised the importance of preventive measures and awareness.

The programmes reflected the continued commitment of educational institutions towards strengthening awareness and preventive outreach under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

Director RDD reviews Developmental Progress in Baramulla

Emphasises quality infrastructure, effective Service Delivery

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: Director Rural Development Department (RDD) Kashmir, Riyaz Ahmad Wani, Friday chaired a comprehensive review meeting at Dak Bungalow Baramulla to assess the physical and financial progress of various developmental programmes and schemes being implemented across the district.

The meeting was attended by Superintending Engineer REW Kashmir, Shafat Husain; Joint Director Rural Development Department, Kashmir, Nassir Ahmad Khan; Assistant Commissioner Development, Baramulla, Mudasar Hussain Chaudhary; Chief Accounts Officer, Showkat Ali Khan;

Block Development Officers, Executive Engineers, Assistant Executive Engineers, Assistant Engineers and other concerned officials.

During the meeting, the Director conducted a detailed review of ongoing works under different Rural Development Department schemes and evaluated the status of fund utilisation, project execution and achievement of targets. He emphasised the need for timely completion of developmental projects, efficient utilisation of resources and strict adherence to prescribed guidelines to ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach the people effectively.

The Director also stressed the importance of

maintaining quality standards in all developmental works and called upon field functionaries to strengthen monitoring mechanisms for achieving tangible outcomes on the ground.

The officers present apprised the Director about the progress achieved under various schemes and highlighted district-specific developmental initiatives being undertaken to improve rural infrastructure and public service delivery.

The Director urged all stakeholders to work with dedication, coordination and commitment to ensure the successful implementation of developmental programmes and the achievement of intended objectives within stipulated timelines.

از دفتر اسٹینٹ ڈائریکٹر صاحب محکمہ فشریز کپوارہ
(اشتہار برآمد نیلامی)
برخاس عام کو بیڑیہ اشتہار مطلق کیا جاتا ہے کہ محکمہ فشریز میں پانچ ہزار روپے کے پورے علاقہ لوہاب میں پھیلیاں کی کٹائی اور کھس کاپ کی بولی کرنا مطلوب ہے اسلئے خواہشمند حضرات سے استدعا ہے کہ مندرجہ ذیل دئے گئے پروگرام کے مطابق ضرور وقت اور جگہ پر تشریف لاکر بولی ہزاروں شریک کرنا چاہئیں۔

نمبر شہار	تفصیل سربرا	کم از کم بولی شروع	مورثہ	وقت
۱	میرسر چنڈی گام	7000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۲	گنائی کسر سوگام	180000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۳	گنڈی ما پٹھرس	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۴	بڑا سر چنڈی گام	7000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۵	مرگی سر چنڈی واری سوگام	23000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۶	رونی سر چنڈی واری سوگام	27200	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۷	تھیرسر چنڈی گام	14300	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۸	راقرسر سوگام	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۹	خان چکسر سمان چک	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۰	حیات پورہ A	5500	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۱	زڈناگ A	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۲	رڈناگ B	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۳	گندسر وادی	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۴	عیدگام سوگام	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۵	شندسر وادی	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۶	سودر وادی پورہ	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۷	خان سرگی پورہ A	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۸	خان سرگی پورہ B	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۱۹	لوہاسر	5000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۲۰	بزرگھاس، بویٹی پورہ	35000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن
۲۱	بزرگھاس، دیور لوہاب	4000	ADF Office, Kup	17-06-2026 11:00 بجے دن

شرائط بولی مندرجہ ذیل ہے۔
۱۔ ہر بولی وحدتہ مبلغ پانچ ہزار روپے زرممانت رکھنا لازمی ہوگا۔
۲۔ کامیاب بولی وحدتہ کو قریب بولی نیکشت موقع پر ہی ادا کرنا ہوگا۔
۳۔ کامیاب بولی وحدتہ کو حد سے 31-03-2027 تک چھپائیاں چکرنے کی اجازت ہوگی۔
۴۔ پانچ سو گرام سے زائد بولیوں کو وائس زمرہ سرورڈ کرنا ہوگا۔
۵۔ بولی منظور کرنا یا نہ کرنا محکمہ فشریز کے آفسران بالا کے حواشی اختیار میں ہوگا۔
۶۔ بصورت نامازگار حالات بولی کے لئے نئی تاریخ مقرر کی جائے گی۔
۷۔ بولی وحدتہ کو اپنا ادھار کارڈ ساتھ رکھنا لازمی ہوگا۔
۸۔ بولی کے باقی شریک بولی شروع ہونے سے قبل سنائے جائیں گے۔

No.ADF/kup/2026/1267
Dated: 11/06/2026

I'd swap not scoring a goal for winning World Cup: Mbappe

IAN S

NEW YORK: France star Kylian Mbappe has underlined the importance of collective success over personal achievements, saying he would gladly go through an entire FIFA World Cup without scoring if it meant lifting the trophy with his country.

Speaking to French television channel M6, the 27-year-old reflected on his previous World Cup experiences, winning the title in Russia in 2018 and finishing runner-up after France's penalty shootout defeat to Argentina in the 2022 final.

"I know how difficult it is to win a World Cup. As the years pass, you have to maintain the same hunger, motivation and excitement. Those are essential qualities if you want to go deep into the tournament," Mbappe said as quoted by Xinhua.

The French captain has already scored 12 goals across two World Cup campaigns and is within reach of becoming the competition's all-time leading scorer. However, he insisted that personal milestones take a back seat to team success.

When asked whether he would accept winning the World Cup without finding the net, Mbappe replied: "I'd do it in a heartbeat. I'd sign up for that immediately. I'd be the first person celebrating on the Champs-Élysées."

While eager to continue adding to his remarkable legacy, Mbappe said his primary objective remains bringing football's biggest prize back to France.

"I've been fortunate enough to play in two World Cups, go far in both, and perform well. Of course, I want to keep making history, but above all I want to return to France with the World Cup trophy," he said.

Mbappe also highlighted the role he hopes to play within the squad, particularly in helping younger players cope with

the mental demands of the tournament.

"I'm happy to be here and to support the younger players, especially on the emotional side. Looking at the quality we have in the squad, I don't need to teach anyone how to play football," he added.

The forward stressed that talent alone is not enough to succeed on the biggest stage, pointing to the importance of handling pressure and maintaining composure.

"You have to know how to manage pressure. Everyone needs to arrive at the World Cup in the best possible condition, and building a successful team is never easy," he said.

Mbappe also warned of the unforgiving nature of knockout football, reminding his teammates that a single mis-



take a team's campaign.

"A World Cup isn't played over two legs. One bad game can send you home. We have to stay in control of our emotions.

That's a message I try to repeat every day because we haven't achieved anything yet," he said.

Football fever grips Sikkim as FIFA World Cup captures imagination of fans, says sports official

IAN S

GANGTOK: The ongoing FIFA World Cup has further strengthened football's popularity in Sikkim, where the sport has witnessed significant growth in recent years, according to Tseten Bhutia, Assistant Director of the Sikkim Sports Department.

Speaking about football culture in the Himalayan state, Bhutia noted that the game has become a vital part of life for people in Sikkim, thanks to the success of the Sikkim Premier League (SPL).

"Over the years, the football scene in Sikkim has expanded significant-

ly. People in Sikkim are now actively engaged in football, and one reason is the launch of the Sikkim Premier League (SPL) by our Chief Minister," Bhutia stated. He credited the league with providing pathways for local talent and helping players get chances at higher levels.

Canada is ready to become a soccer nation as it hosts World Cup opener against Bosnia-Herzegovina

AGENCIES

TORONTO: Luke Reece never played hockey growing up in the Toronto suburb of Mississauga. Instead, he played soccer, like many Canadians who are now adults.

The sport is so popular it has surpassed hockey and all other sports in youth participation, according to a recent report by Jumpstart, a Canadian charity that helps low-income youth play organized sports. It said half the nation's youth participate in organized soccer.

Reece was one of many locals sporting Canada soccer gear on Thursday ahead of their nation's World Cup opener Friday against Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"Wish I had tickets to the game tomorrow, but I don't," Reece said. "I'm going to a game in Vancouver. It was cheaper to get a ticket out there."

Is Canada about to have a soccer moment?

"It already has a good hold in this country in terms of participation. I think we all expect that to grow. These tournaments inspire so many next-generation people to find their heroes, play the game," said Christina Linz, president of the women's Northern Super League. "I think (it) will really draw those emotional connections."

Thursday in Toronto looked a bit like wear-your-favorite-soccer-jersey day as the tournament opened in Mexico. Canada's red tops, like the one worn by Reece,



were among the most popular.

Mexico (No. 13) and the United States (No. 17), the other co-hosts for the World Cup, each sit higher in FIFA's rankings than Canada, which is 30th, but that means there's more to gain for the Canadians. Especially when it comes to generating passion for the sport.

Canada coach Jesse Marsch said Thursday he has "felt a real momentum behind this team and behind this moment" as Canada Soccer, the sport's national governing body, looks to capitalize on hosting the World Cup for the first time.

"Canada has become more and more multicultural, and I think the

excitement for so many different nations to be here in North America and in Canada, and to be playing with all of the greatest players in the world and some of the greatest coaches, I think that there's real excitement behind what this will be," Marsch said.

Potentially stalling the potential of Marsch's squad is the absence of star defender Alphonso Davies, who was ruled out for Friday's match as he continues to nurse a hamstring injury sustained during Bayern Munich's Champions League semifinal against Paris Saint-Germain on May 6.

Marsch is hopeful that Davies will be able to return at some point in the group stage. He said Davies had an MRI on Wednesday.

"We're getting ready to ramp things up," Marsch said Thursday.

Davies is one of many Canada players fighting injuries. Defender Moise Bombito is recovering from a broken leg, but Marsch said Bombito is "ready to contribute."

Regardless of who's on the pitch for Canada, it's ready to make a statement, and players are eager to prove their country is a soccer nation.

"Every one of these boys is incredibly Canadian, and the pride they have in putting on the jersey, representing the country, hearing the national anthem," Marsch said. "These guys sing the national anthem, belt it out to the top of their lungs, because they want to show the country how proud they are to be here, to be Canadians, and to represent what Canada is."

1st ODI: India will play around No.3 slot in Virat Kohli's absence, says Morkel

IAN S

DHARAMSHALA: India's fast bowling coach Morne Morkel has indicated that the team will experiment with the number three batting position in Virat Kohli's absence during the three-match ODI series against Afghanistan, starting at the HPCA Stadium on Saturday.

Kohli was ruled out of the three ODIs against Afghanistan due to a hamstring injury picked up while hitting a match-winning 75 not out in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 final against the Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad. In his absence, Ishan Kishan, KL Rahul, and Yashasvi Jaiswal are in contention to bat at number three.

"I think that's something that in this series we'll play around with, (whether) it's Ishan (Kishan) or KL (Rahul) or Yashasvi (Jaiswal). We have got a couple of one-day games coming up, and we'll give guys an opportunity in different slots to give ourselves a better idea of how we can structure teams and have different options," Morkel said in the pre-match press conference.

Rahul has largely featured as a middle-order batter in the past five years, but in India's training session on Friday, Kishan was on keeping duties while Rahul was tasked with taking outfield catches, thus raising the prospect of the Karnataka lad being promoted up the order for Saturday's clash.



Morkel also spoke about the new pacers Prince Yadav and Gurnoor Brar, who are in line to get their international debuts in the series, with the next two games to be played in Lucknow and Chennai on June 17 and 20, respectively.

"First impressions, it is

almost like they've been part of the squad for five years. I saw no nervousness on their face. The way they've gone about training, the energy they've trained with, was good to see," he said.

Morkel signed off by saying that Rohit Sharma was all fine after being spot-

ted training with a different thigh pad, initially thought as protection for his hamstring, which he injured during IPL 2026.

"I didn't even notice that. It just shows that I don't think there's any issue. He's passed all his fitness tests. He's cleared and ready to go. Obviously, the balls are coming at high speeds, and you want to protect yourself, even if there's a slight niggle. But I can assure you there's nothing wrong."

"Rohit is moving well and training well. So excited to see him go. Always nice to have his experience back as well. Just the calmness that he brings to the dressing room is always a positive to have. He's training well, he's moving well. So I know that he's also excited to go."



Mohammad Younis

We, the officers of the J&K Administrative Service, express our deepest sorrow on the sudden and untimely demise of our fellow officer, Mohammad Younis, today in Srinagar.

In losing him, the service has lost a bright, capable, and compassionate administrator who exemplified the highest ideals of public service. To his colleagues, he was an exceptional peer—always dependable, gracious, and deeply committed to his duties.

The entire JKAS fraternity stands in solidarity with his family during this profound tragedy.

We offer our sincerest condolences to his loved ones and pray they find the courage to navigate this immense grief. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

SHOW Timings

— SATURDAY, 13TH JUNE —

HAI JAWANI TOH ISHQ HONA HAI
(HINDI ATMOS) (UA16+)
12:55 PM

DISCLOSURE DAY
(ENGLISH) (U/A13+)
01:40 PM, 07:50 PM

OBSESSION
(ENGLISH) (A)
10:30 AM, 02:50 PM

GOVERNOR
(HINDI) (U/A13+)
07:35 PM

BHARAT BHHAGYA VIDHAATA
(HINDI) (U/A16+)
11:00 AM

BACKROOMS
(ENGLISH) (A)
05:10 PM

MAIN VAAPAS AAUNGA
(HINDI ATMOS) (U/A16+)
11:00 AM, 04:35 PM, 07:00 PM

HAUNTED ECHOES OF THE PAST
(3D HINDI) (A)
04:10 PM

INOX

SRINAGAR

Call: 95416 13868
For assistance with tickets