

# Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

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Manoj Sinha @manojsinha  
 Har Har Mahadev! Amidst rituals and Vedic chants, the Amarnath Yatra has commenced auspiciously with the first worship. I welcome all devotees arriving from across the country and abroad.

## CM Omar Urges Punjab Cm To End Unauthorised Livestock Transport Levy



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has written to Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, seeking his intervention to address the issue of alleged unauthorised fee collection from livestock transport vehicles transiting through Punjab and ensure the unhindered movement of livestock consignments destined for Jammu & Kashmir.

In his letter, the Chief Minister highlighted the concerns raised by the All Kashmir Wholesale Mutton Dealers Union regarding the difficulties being faced by livestock traders and transporters while transporting livestock through Punjab.

The Chief Minister informed his Punjab counterpart that livestock-laden vehicles bound for Jammu & Kashmir are reportedly being stopped by certain contractor groups operating in connection with cattle fairs and subjected to unauthorised fee collection despite carrying all valid permits and statutory documentation.

He pointed out that such interruptions are causing

avoidable delays, financial losses and hardship to transporters, while also adversely affecting animal welfare.

Referring to the findings of an internal committee constituted by the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Government of Jammu & Kashmir, Omar Abdullah said the committee had found that transporters were reportedly being compelled to make substantial payments per vehicle during transit without any apparent legal sanction.

The Chief Minister further noted that livestock movement is exempt from GST and observed that the continued imposition of such charges is placing an additional burden on the livestock trade, with consequential implications for meat prices and consumers across Jammu & Kashmir.

Emphasizing the longstanding ties between the two neighbouring states, Omar Abdullah said Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir share enduring bonds of friendship, cooperation and economic interdependence. He observed that any

## 'Pratham Puja' By LG Sinha Marks Ceremonial Start Of Amarnath Yatra

Extends Invitation To Devotees Of Baba Barfani, Encouraging Them To Join Pilgrimage In Great Numbers

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday performed the 'Pratham Puja' at the Holy Cave of Shri Amarnath Ji, marking the ceremonial start of the annual pilgrimage. The Lieutenant Governor sought the divine blessings of Baba Barfani and prayed for the peace, prosperity, health and well-being of all.

The Lieutenant Governor extended a heartfelt invitation to all devotees of Baba Barfani, encouraging them to join the holy pilgrimage in great numbers and experience the spiritual journey.

"As the Yatra commences on July 3rd, Administration, Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, Army, Police, Security Forces, Local Community, Service Providers, Volunteers are working in complete synergy. Every stakeholder is devoted to ensuring a safe, hassle-free and a memorable pilgrimage for all pilgrims.



With significantly upgraded infrastructure, enhanced facilities, and invaluable support of people of Jammu Kashmir, we are fully prepared to welcome devotees for a spiritually fulfilling journey," the Lieutenant Governor said.

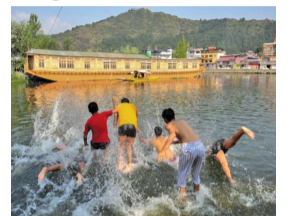
Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board (SASB) organizes the Pratham Puja annually at the Holy Cave on Jyeshtha Purnima. This year's 57-day pilgrimage will formally commence on July 3rd, 2026, simultaneously

via both traditional routes- the Pahalgam axis in Anantnag district and the Baltal in Ganderbal district. The Yatra will culminate on August 28th, 2026, on Raksha Bandhan.

Nalin Prabhat, DGP J&K; S.J.M.Gillani, Special

According to the details available, the first batches of pilgrims have started arriving

## Srinagar Records Season's Hottest Day At 35.3°C



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Kashmir witnessed one of its hottest days of the summer on Sunday, with Srinagar recording a maximum temperature of 35.3 degrees Celsius, the highest of the season so far and 5.3 degrees above normal.

An official of the Meteorological Centre Srinagar said that the heatwave conditions are expected to persist till Tuesday, while relief is likely from Wednesday onwards as an approaching Western Disturbance is expected to bring rain across Jammu and Kashmir.

Besides Srinagar, several other places in Kashmir also recorded temperatures well above normal. Qazigund registered 33.8°C, around 5°C above normal, while Kokernag recorded 32.9°C, around 5°C above normal. Kupwara settled at 32.7°C, Pahalgam at 29°C, and Gulmarg, usually known for its cool weather, recorded 26.2°C, more than 5°C above normal.

In contrast, temperatures in the Jammu division remained

## Amarnath Yatra Multi-Layer Security Grid In Place From Punjab To J&K

SAJID RAINA

**SRINAGAR:** Ahead of the annual Amarnath Yatra begin-

ning July 3, security agencies have intensified preparations across the pilgrimage route from Punjab to Kashmir, conducting

mock drills, activating surveillance systems and strengthening inter-agency coordination to ensure the safe movement of

thousands of pilgrims. According to the details available, the first batches of pilgrims have started arriving

## J&K Exports Grow By 35% In Fy-2025-26: FIEO

REHAN QAYOUM

**SRINAGAR:** Director General of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), Ajay Sahai on Monday said that Jammu & Kashmir's exports have grown by 35 per cent, increasing from USD 227 million to USD 307 million in the financial year 2025-26.

Speaking at the J&K International Buyer-Seller Meet at SKICC, Srinagar, Sahai, said Jammu & Kashmir has also improved its ranking in the export Preparedness Index and is now second among the hilly states, expressing confidence that the Union Territory will soon reach the top position.

Sahai said exports from Jammu & Kashmir are steadily increasing in pharmaceuticals, embroidered garments, shawls, stoles, mufflers, chemicals, handi-

crafts, carpets, walnuts, saffron and hand tools.

He said pharmaceuticals, apparel and textiles and chemicals account for nearly 70 per cent of the Union Territory's exports, making it important to develop new export sectors.

He said Jammu & Kashmir has strong potential in medical and diagnostic equipment, medicinal and aromatic plants, horticulture, agro and processed food, handicrafts, handloom and GI-tagged products and urged entrepreneurs to explore these areas.

Sahai also said the Union Territory should focus on exporting services in addition to tourism. He said wellness, healthcare, fishing tourism, craft tourism, filmmaking, IT, IT-enabled services and data centres can become important

## Sarla Bhat Murder Case SIA Files 737-Page Chargesheet Against Yasin Malik, 4 Others

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** The State Investigation Agency (SIA), Kashmir on Monday filed a comprehensive 737-page chargesheet before a Special Court in Srinagar in connection with the 1990 abduction and killing of SKIMS staff nurse Sarla Bhat, who was employed as a nurse at Sheri-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura, and was killed on April 18, 1990.

The chargesheet, as per the officials has been submitted before the Court of the Additional Sessions Judge, TADA/POTA and Special Judge designated under the NIA Act, Srinagar. The



investigation was transferred to the SIA by the Director General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, on March 18, 2024, following which the agency carried out a detailed probe.

Officials said the chargesheet is based on oral testimonies,

documentary records, forensic and ballistic reports, medical evidence, electronic material and extensive field investigations collected and analysed during the course of the investigation.

The SIA stated that filing the chargesheet nearly

## Amarnath Yatra SOG, NSG Hold Joint Anti-Terror Drill At Raghunath Mandir

YOGESH

**JAMMU:** In a run upto Amarnath Yatra, slated to commence on July 3, the Special Operations Group (SOG) of Jammu and Kashmir Police and the National Security Guard (NSG) on Monday conducted a joint counter-terror mock drill at the historic Raghunath Mandir here.

The exercise, simulated a high-risk terrorist attack scenario, testing the response capabilities of security agencies through rapid intervention, area domination, hostage rescue, casualty evacuation and coordinated operations.

Officials said the drill was aimed at validating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), enhancing inter-agency coordination and ensuring a swift and effective response to any security contingency during the annual pilgrimage.



The mock exercise was part of a series of preparedness drills planned at key installations and other vulnerable locations across the Jammu region to assess operational readiness and reinforce the security framework ahead of the Yatra.

The exercise witnessed seamless coordination among SOG Jammu, NSG and other security agencies, reflecting a high level of professionalism, interoperability and preparedness to tackle potential threats—(KNO)

## The Great Vegetable Market Swindle: When Every Kilogram Becomes A Gamble

JAVED SHAH

**SRINAGAR:** The bustling vegetable markets of Kashmir are increasingly becoming places where honesty is sold cheaper than vegetables. What should be a simple transaction between a buyer and a seller has, in many cases, turned into a calculated exercise in deception. Consumers no longer enter the market wondering what to buy; they enter wondering how much they will be cheated.

A recent experience at Maharaja Bazaar exposes this disturbing reality. A vegetable vendor who had earlier received immense public appreciation through a video interaction that touched nearly five lakh viewers was greeted not as a trader but as a fellow human being. There was warmth, affection and respect. He was embraced because his struggle resonated with people.



The very next day, that goodwill was repaid with deception. Half a kilogram of lemons was sold for 80, while another vendor just across the road charged only 50 for the same quantity and quality.

This is not a difference in business strategy. It is an abuse of trust.

Unfortunately, arbitrary pricing has become a common complaint. Prices appear to depend not on wholesale rates but on the customer's appear-

ance, urgency, or ignorance. One buyer pays one price, another pays something entirely different. There is no transparency, no accountability and often no shame.

Yet, inflated prices are only one part of the racket. The bigger and far more dangerous fraud is the silent manipulation of weights. This is the invisible theft that escapes the notice of most consumers. A customer pays for one kilogram but unknowingly receives less.

Every few grams stolen from one customer become kilograms of illegal profit by the end of the day. It is theft disguised as trade.

This is not a minor irregularity. It is cheating. It is a direct assault on consumer rights. When a vendor know-

**YET, INFLATED prices are only one part of the racket. The bigger and far more dangerous fraud is the silent manipulation of weights.**

ingly delivers less than what has been paid for, he is not making a profit—he is stealing.

What makes this practice particularly disgraceful is that it targets ordinary families. The daily wage labourer, the pensioner, the widow, the salaried employee, the homemaker

managing a tight household budget—everyone becomes a victim. Every extra rupee extracted through false pricing and every gram stolen through dishonest weighing comes directly from the kitchen tables of families already struggling with inflation.

The silence of enforcement agencies has only emboldened such practices. Market inspections are either too infrequent or too ineffective to deter offenders. The absence of visible enforcement has created the impression that some traders can manipulate prices and weights with impunity.

This cannot continue. The Legal Metrology Department must conduct surprise inspections on a daily basis. Consumer Affairs authorities should enforce compulsory display of price lists at every vegetable stall. Weighing scales must be rigorously checked, calibrated and seized wherever

## 'Diversion Of 197 Ha Of J&K Forest Land Approved For 820-MW Power Plant'

RIYAZ BHAT

**SRINAGAR:** The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change advisory committee has granted 'in-principle' approval for the diversion of over 197 hectares of forest land in Jammu & Kashmir to facilitate the construction of the 820 Megawatt (MW) Kirthai-II Hydro Electric Project on the Chenab river in Kishtwar.

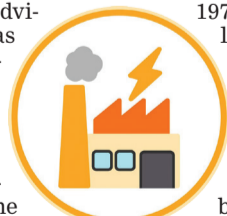
The official documents said that the advisory committee recommended the proposal for grant of 'in-principle' approval for diversion of 197.27 hectare of Forest land for construction of Kirthai-II Hydro Electric Project.

"The advisory committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh and Nodal Officer from J&K after going through the facts of the

proposal, the Committee recommended the proposal for grant of 'in-principle' approval for diversion of 197.27 ha. of Forest land ( Reserved Forest: 191.95 Ha and Others: 5.32 Ha) for construction of Kirthai-II Hydro Electric Project (820 MW) by Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited (CVPPL) on Chenab river within the jurisdiction of Kishtwar Forest Division, District-Kishtwar in Jammu & Kashmir," it reads.

The clearance however has been subjected to general, standard and specific conditions wherein the 'State Government' has informed that applications for 02 clay quarries and 04 rock quarries are under process with the Department of Geology & Mining, UT of J&K.

"However, approval for quarrying and the Mining Plans have not



# Comm SMC reviews major capacity augmentation project at WTP Nishat

Directs timely completion to strengthen Srinagar's portable water supply

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, Monday conducted a comprehensive inspection of the ongoing Development of Allied Infrastructure for the 3 MGD Rapid Sand Filtration Plant (RSFP) at the Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Nishat, and reviewed the progress of the project aimed at enhancing the city's potable water supply infrastructure.

During the inspection, the Commissioner was briefed by officers of the Water Works Division on the scope and progress of the project, which is being executed at an approved cost of ₹406.00 lakh under the Sustainable Infrastructure Fund (SMC CapEx).

The Water Treatment Plant, Nishat, commissioned in 1895, is Srinagar's most vital water supply facility, presently serving nearly 6.38 lakh population across major residential, commercial, institutional, administrative and tourism areas. The plant currently has an installed treatment capacity of 19 Million Gal-



lons per Day (MGD) through five Rapid Sand Filtration Plants commissioned between 1935 and 2000.

Given the rapid urban expansion and increasing water demand across the city, the Commissioner observed that augmentation of the plant's treatment capacity has become essential to bridge the existing supply gap and ensure reliable drinking water services for the growing population.

The project includes the commissioning of a 3 MGD Rapid Sand Filtration Plant, laying and restructuring of supply and trunk mains, strengthening of treated water conveyance systems, upgradation of electro-mechanical equipment, and construction

of allied infrastructure, including protection walls and sluice chambers. Upon completion, the project will enhance the treatment capacity of WTP Nishat from 19 MGD to 22 MGD, marking the first major capacity augmentation of the facility in 26 years.

The upgraded infrastructure will significantly improve potable water supply to the existing command areas of Nishat, Brein, Boulevard, Gupkar, Sonwar, Shivpora, Lal Chowk, Karan Nagar, Babarshah, Munawarabad, Khayam, Khanyar, Rainawari, Saidakadal, Dal Habitations, Mir Behri, Dal Bund and other adjoining localities. Besides augmenting water supply to the existing 6.38 lakh pop-

ulation, the project will bring nearly one lakh additional population under the ambit of safe and reliable potable water supply with improved service levels.

The Commissioner emphasized that the project will substantially strengthen Srinagar's water supply network by improving both the reliability and efficiency of drinking water services. He directed the executing agency to maintain the highest standards of quality and workmanship while ensuring timely completion of all components of the project within the stipulated timeframe.

The Commissioner reiterated that strengthening essential urban infrastructure remains a key priority of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation. He stated that the Corporation is committed to developing resilient and sustainable public utility systems capable of meeting the city's growing needs and ensuring uninterrupted access to safe drinking water for residents, institutions, tourist destinations, government establishments, security installations, and other critical service areas.

# JJB Shopian conducts inspection of Juvenile Observation Home Harwan

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** In a significant step toward reinforcing the protective framework for children in conflict with the law, the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) Shopian led by Principal Magistrate, Bazila Bashir, conducted a comprehensive, unannounced inspection of the Juvenile Observation Home (JOH) at Harwan, Srinagar Monday.

The inspection delegation comprised a multi-disciplinary team of legal and welfare professionals, including Rafie Ahmad Ganie, Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel, Shopian; Amir Ayoub, Assistant Legal Aid Defence Counsel; Farooq Ahmad, Special Juvenile Police Officer, and Sumaira Imtiyaz, Legals-Cum-Probation Officer.

The visit was meticulously organized in strict compliance with the provisions and mandates of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, along with the model rules. The primary objective was to conduct a rigorous, ground-level assessment of the living conditions, rehabilitative measures, and procedural adherence at the observation home, thereby ensuring that the rights and well-being of every juvenile resident remain inviolable.

Upon arrival, the Super-



intendent of the Observation Home facilitated an exhaustive, room-by-room tour of the facility. The inspection team methodically evaluated all critical infrastructure components, including residential dormitories, educational and vocational training classrooms, indoor and outdoor recreational spaces, and the in-house medical unit.

Special attention was devoted to assessing the standards of hygiene and sanitation, nutritional quality of the kitchen and meal preparation areas, structural integrity of the buildings, and robustness of existing safety and emergency response protocols, including fire safety equipment and child-proofing measures.

In a particularly poignant segment of the visit, the Principal Magistrate and her team engaged

in extended, empathetic, one-on-one conversations with the juvenile residents. These confidential interactions were designed to elicit unfiltered feedback on their daily treatment, the progress of their individual rehabilitation and reintegration plans, and their actual access to essential support systems. The team probed into the availability of legal counsel, the continuity of educational instruction, the regularity of psychological counseling sessions, and the quality of healthcare services extended to each child.

Concurrently, the visiting team undertook a painstaking, desk-by-desk verification of all legal and administrative records pertaining to every juvenile currently housed in the facility. This exhaustive audit was aimed at cross-verifying strict adherence to statutory procedures,

including the timely production of juveniles before the JJB, prompt disbursement of legal aid through the Legal Services Authority, proper maintenance of individual case histories, and timely disposal of pending proceedings as mandated by law.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal Magistrate, JJB Shopian, Bazila Bashir, stated, "This surprise inspection is a reflection of the Board's unwavering zero-tolerance stance towards any form of negligence, indifference, or procedural lapse in the care of juveniles. We are not merely inspectors; we are the custodians of their future. Every child residing in this observation home is entitled to dignity, compassionate protection, and meaningful rehabilitative support—precisely as enshrined in the Juvenile Justice Act."

# Over 4.49 lakh Stakeholders participate in 4th Round of mass PTMs across Kashmir

Strong community participation reinforces School-Parent Partnership across Valley



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Directorate of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) Monday organized the fourth round of Valley-wide Mass PTMs, witnessing a significant participation of 4,49,141 stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers and community members.

Expressing sincere gratitude to parents and the wider community for their active and enthusiastic participation, Director School Education Kashmir, Naseer Ahmad Wani, lauded the successful conduct of the fourth round

of Mass Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTMs) held across all schools in the Kashmir Division.

Held as per the academic calendar for the session 2026, a total of 5,333 PTM events were conducted simultaneously across the Valley.

According to official figures, participation included 3,10,890 students, 1,05,673 parents and community members and 32,578 teachers and school heads, reflecting a strong and growing commitment towards collaborative educational development.

The impressive turnout

across districts highlights the strengthening bond between schools and communities and underscores the increasing trust in the education system. The PTMs served as an effective platform for meaningful interaction between parents and teachers, focusing on students' academic progress, behavioural aspects and overall well-being.

Senior officials, including Chief Education Officers (CEOs), actively monitored and participated in the meetings, engaging directly with parents, addressing their concerns and ensuring timely redressal of issues.

Reiterating his appreciation, Director School Education Kashmir, thanked all stakeholders for their continued support and cooperation in building a responsive, inclusive and progressive education system. He further directed all officers and teaching staff to act promptly on the feedback and suggestions received during the PTMs, ensuring accountability and sustained improvement.

# DC Budgam chairs 48th NCORD meeting

Reviews 100-Day Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan in District



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM:** 48th District-Level NCORD (Narco Coordination) Committee meeting was convened Monday at the DC Office Budgam under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Athar Aamir Khan, alongside SSP Budgam Hariprasad KK.

The meeting reviewed the ongoing anti-drug measures, rehabilitation initiatives, and awareness activities being undertaken across District Budgam.

At the outset, the committee reviewed the action taken on the decisions made during the previous NCORD meeting. The DC stressed that drug abuse is not merely a law enforcement issue but a grave social challenge affecting families and communities. He underscored that District administration is firm and uncompromising against drug peddlers, traffickers, and cultivators, while extending full support for

the treatment, rehabilitation, and reintegration of victims of drug addiction.

The DC laid emphasis on the rehabilitation of drug victims, directing the Health Department and all concerned agencies to ensure timely counselling, treatment, and sustained rehabilitation support to help affected individuals return to a normal and productive life. He also highlighted the need for stronger enforcement, sustained awareness, and accessible rehabilitation.

The DC stressed that sustained Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, youth outreach programmes, and community participation are essential to prevent drug abuse and encourage early intervention.

The DC further directed all line departments to intensify efforts against narcotics cultivation and drug peddling, ensuring that roadsides, embankments, and other vulnerable areas remain free

from cannabis and poppy cultivation through coordinated action.

The DC reiterated that 100% CCTV coverage and Computerised Billing Systems (CBS) must be ensured in all chemist shops, with regular inspections and strict action against violations. The Drug Inspector was directed to ensure the availability of CCTV footage and billing records, while the Excise Department was asked to work in close coordination with the Police, Revenue, and Agriculture Departments for the identification and destruction of illicit crops.

On the healthcare front, the DC directed that the Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at District Hospital Budgam remain fully functional round the clock and that the Drug De-Addiction Centre be further strengthened for effective patient intake, counselling, treatment, rehabilitation, and follow-up care.

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) was directed to maintain strict vigil against drug peddlers operating in and around railway stations.

Reviewing the progress of the 100-day Intensive Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan, the DC stressed the need to scale up its impact at the grassroots level.

# DC B'la, MD Mission Yuva jointly review implementation of Mission YUVA



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA:** Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, S.F Hamid and Director Employment/ Mission Director (MD), Mission YUVA, Harvinder Singh, jointly chaired a review meeting at the DC Office Baramulla to assess the implementation and progress of the Mission YUVA flagship initiative in district Baramulla.

The meeting focused on the implementation and current status of the programme, progress achieved, challenges faced in execution, and measures to ensure effective outreach and timely delivery of benefits to aspiring entrepreneurs and youth.

Speaking during the meeting, the DC directed the concerned officers to lay special emphasis on creating employment opportunities through the apple industry under the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative.

The DC directed the concerned officers to intensify awareness campaigns at the grassroots level to ensure that maximum eligible

youth are informed about the opportunities available under Mission YUVA and are encouraged to avail the benefits of the scheme.

Meanwhile, the MD directed the concerned officers to closely monitor not only the applications that have been sanctioned and disbursed but also those that have been rejected, emphasizing the need to identify the reasons for rejection, provide necessary guidance and handholding support to the applicants and facilitate the resubmission of eligible applications.

Furthermore, the MD instructed the concerned officers to conduct large-scale awareness and outreach campaigns under Udayam Jagriti 5.0 by involving Mission YUVA Motivators and Yuva Doots across the district.

He emphasized that the campaign should focus on identifying, motivating, and guiding aspiring entrepreneurs, including students and Self-Help Group (SHG) Lakhpati Didis, towards sustainable self-employment and livelihood opportunities.

# SKUAST-K, IFPRI launch Advanced Economic Modeling Program to boost Policy Research

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), on Monday launched a one-week advanced capacity-building program on Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Modeling for Economic Policy Analysis at its Shalimar campus.

Organized by the Institute of Business and Policy Research (IBPR), SKUAST-K, the program will run from June 29 to July 4, bringing together researchers, academicians, policymakers, and development professionals from across the country for intensive training in advanced economic model-



ing and policy analysis.

The program aims to strengthen participants' capacity to apply CGE models for evidence-based research, policy simulation, and informed decision-making across sectors such as agriculture, trade, rural development, and public policy.

The inaugural session was presided over by Vice Chancellor SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir A. Ganai, while Senior Research Fellow at IFPRI, Prof. Anjani Kumar,

attended as Guest of Honor. Registrar, SKUAST-K, Prof. Azmat Alam Khan, and Director, Extension and Dean, Faculty of Horticulture, Prof. Raihana H. Kanth were also present.

Underscoring the institutional significance of the initiative, the Vice Chancellor said, "Advanced economic modeling is central to designing sustainable and inclusive policy solutions. This program reflects SKUAST-K's commitment to research

excellence and policy relevance."

Welcoming participants, Course Director Prof. Farhet A. Shaheen highlighted the program's practical focus and its relevance to strengthening analytical capacity among researchers and policy professionals. Highlighting the broader policy relevance of such analytical tools, Prof. Anjani Kumar said, "CGE modeling has become indispensable for understanding economic complexity and strengthening policy decisions through data-driven insights."

Expanding on the technical significance of the framework, Dr Barun Deb Pal, Lead Resource Person from IFPRI, noted, "CGE models provide a powerful framework to assess economic linkages and policy impacts across sectors."

# DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH SERVICES KASHMIR BEMINA BYEPASS SRINAGAR

Subject: -2nd Tentative Seniority List of Sr. Assistants Division Cadre Kashmir

CIRCULAR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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DT: 29/06/2026

Sd/-  
Director Health Services  
Kashmir

# CM Omar inaugurates J&K Buyer-Seller Meet

Calls for export push through artisans, women, entrepreneurs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday inaugurated the two-day Jammu and Kashmir International Buyer-Seller Meet-2026 at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC). He reaffirmed that the government is committed to transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a globally competitive export hub by expanding market access for local artisans, women Self-Help Groups (SHGs), handicraft producers and agro-based enterprises.

The international trade event is being organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (J&K TPO) in association with the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO). More than 30 international and national buyers from over 14 countries are participating in the meet, which also features over 20 live demonstrations under the 'Know Your Artisan' initiative and showcases more than 100 handicrafts, handloom and agro-food products from across Jammu and Kashmir. The event featured dedicated pavilions established for women Self-Help Groups and the specially curated 'Know Your Artisan' initiative, aimed at creating direct engagement between buyers and the craftsmen behind the region's world-renowned products.

Earlier, after inaugurating the event, the Chief Minister inspected exhibition stalls put up by participants from different districts



of Jammu and Kashmir, including women SHGs, artisans and entrepreneurs displaying traditional handicrafts, handloom products, food items, crafts and other locally manufactured products. He also visited the stalls established by foreign buyer delegations and appreciated their participation in strengthening international trade linkages with Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a gathering of international buyers, exporters, artisans, women SHGs and entrepreneurs, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah welcomed the delegates from across the world and described the buyer-seller meet as an important platform for strengthening Jammu and Kashmir's export ecosystem.

Reflecting on the region's rich trading legacy, the Chief Minister said Jammu and Kashmir had historically been a place for export of its products, though not through conventional export channels. He observed that buyers from India and abroad have traditionally travelled to Kashmir as tourists, purchased local products and, in the process, have become ambassadors of Kashmiri craftsmanship

in global markets. Many of these interactions, he noted, evolved into enduring business relationships spanning decades.

The Chief Minister, however, said changing circumstances and a prolonged decline in tourism had disrupted this traditional model, compelling artisans and handicraft producers to actively seek markets beyond the region. He said craftsmen who once relied on buyers visiting them had to travel across the country and abroad to rebuild commercial linkages and sustain their livelihoods.

Highlighting the government's efforts to facilitate this transition, Omar Abdullah recalled that the process of organising structured buyer-seller meets in Jammu and Srinagar was initiated during his tenure in the Union Commerce and Industry Ministry to reconnect local producers with national and international markets.

He said the present edition of the buyer-seller meet marks a significant evolution by extending participation beyond traditional exporters to include women Self-Help Groups, rural entrepreneurs and artisans

from remote areas who had previously remained outside such trade platforms.

Referring to the concentration of exports in only a handful of districts, the Chief Minister noted that nearly 98 per cent of Jammu and Kashmir's exports currently originate from four districts, leaving enormous untapped potential across the rest of the region. He stressed that achieving the ambitious export targets set for the coming years would require not only supporting existing exporters but also creating a new generation of exporters from rural and underserved regions.

He said buyer-seller meet such as this provides an effective mechanism for connecting emerging producers with international markets and exposing them to export opportunities that were previously beyond their reach. The Chief Minister expressed confidence that the recommendations and interactions emerging from the event would help increase export volumes while also diversifying Jammu and Kashmir's export basket by introducing products that have so far remained outside global markets.

Underscoring the significance of the international participation, Omar Abdullah said the presence of buyers from more than 14 countries offers an invaluable opportunity for local producers to better understand evolving consumer preferences and global market requirements. Such interactions, he observed, would enable manufacturers and artisans to adapt and tailor their products in accordance with international demand, thereby enhancing their competitiveness. The Chief Minister described the introduction of the 'Know Your Artisan' initiative as one of the defining features of this year's event.

He said the initiative goes beyond showcasing finished products by enabling buyers to meet the artisans whose skill, dedication and craftsmanship bring these creations to life.

He remarked that while a handcrafted shawl or carpet tells one story, meeting the artisan behind it adds another dimension by creating a personal connection that enhances the product's value and strengthens its appeal in international markets.

Observing that this edition of the buyer-seller meet is distinguished both by the diversity of its participants and its inclusive approach, Omar Abdullah expressed optimism that the two-day event would prove mutually beneficial for buyers and sellers alike by fostering lasting commercial partnerships and opening new avenues of trade.

# India leads major democracies in electoral transparency: CEC

Lauds dedication of BLOs towards strengthening electoral process

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Monday said India was leading the world's major democracies with a transparent electoral process in which every stage of the exercise is audited by the political parties and candidates.

"We discussed the components of the world's most transparent electoral process, preparation of the voter list, polling and counting. These are concurrently audited by all political parties and candidates," Kumar, who is on a three-day visit to Kashmir, told reporters here.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), visited District Budgam and interacted with Booth Level Officers (BLOs), EROs, AEROs and other field functionaries of Election Department at National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), appreciating their dedication and commitment towards strengthening the electoral process at the grassroots level.

The interaction was held as a part of the CEC's three-day official visit to Jammu and Kashmir, aimed at reviewing electoral process, engaging with field functionaries and stakeholders across the UT.

The CEC was accompanied by Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, Sanjeev Verma and District Election Officer (Deputy Commissioner), Budgam, Athar Amir. Senior officers of the District administration and Election Department were



also present during the interaction.

During the interaction, Shri Gyanesh Kumar described BLOs as the backbone of India's electoral democracy and acknowledged their crucial role in ensuring accurate electoral rolls, voter facilitation and inclusive participation.

"BLOs truly are the backbone of our electoral process," remarked the CEC, while highlighting that the credibility of elections begins with a robust, accurate and transparent electoral roll.

The CEC appreciated the role of BLOs as the first point of contact between the Election Commission and electors, stating that their field-level engagement plays a vital role in ensuring that every eligible citizen is enrolled and every voter is facilitated.

The CEC emphasized the importance of maintaining the purity and accuracy of electoral rolls through continuous updation and verification. He also highlighted the significance of technology-enabled initiatives such as ERO Net, which have

strengthened electoral roll management by improving efficiency, transparency and accessibility.

Interacting with the BLOs, Shri Gyanesh Kumar urged them to continue discharging their duties with dedication, impartiality and a service-oriented approach.

He further advised the BLOs to remain focused on facts, official processes and their responsibilities towards electors, and not get influenced by misinformation or narratives that may create confusion among citizens. He underlined the importance of voter awareness, informed participation and public trust in the democratic process.

Speaking about India's electoral framework, the CEC stated that India leads the world's major democracies in ensuring a transparent electoral process. He highlighted that every stage of the election process — from preparation of electoral rolls to polling and counting — is subjected to regular scrutiny and audit by political parties and candidates, reinforcing transparency and credibility.

# Sakeena Ito convenes public outreach camp at Laisoo

Assesses public grievances, development needs



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Ito, Monday visited Laisoo village in Kulgam district and held an extensive public outreach camp to directly engage with the people and listen to their grievances and developmental concerns.

During the interaction, people from the area projected several developmental demands besides raising their grievances.

The Minister assured the public that all genuine demands would be addressed in a phased and time-bound manner. She said that the administration is well abreast with the area specific development needs and public issues. Every effort is being initiated to satiate the public aspirations through a well knit strategy, she asserted.

On the occasion, the Minister laid the foundation stone for a Flood Protection Bund aimed at safeguarding the area from flooding threats and mitigating damage to agricultural land and public infrastructure.

She also inaugurated a Water Supply Scheme (WSS), which is expected to provide improved access to safe drinking water for the local population and significantly enhance the quality of life of the residents.

Addressing the gathering, Sakeena Ito emphasized that the public outreach programmes and direct interactions with the people remain central to the government's approach in ensuring responsive and accountable governance. She appealed the people to ensure maximum participation in such outreach camps so that their issues and concerns are resolved at the earliest.

# Directorate of Economics & Statistics observes 20th National Statistics Day

Robust data key to effective governance, says Comm Secy R Alice Vaz

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Jammu and Kashmir, celebrated the 20th National Statistics Day at its Bemina office Monday as part of the nationwide programme held by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

The day marks the birth anniversary of Professor P. C. Mahalanobis, father of Indian statistics.

Commissioner Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department, R. Alice Vaz, inaugurated the programme.

In her address, she highlighted the role of statistics in planning, governance and sustainable development. She stressed the critical importance of robust statistical systems for evidence-based policy-making, improving service delivery and enabling targeted development interventions.

The Commissioner Secretary called upon the officers and field staff to ensure timely, accurate



and reliable data collection, stressing that quality statistics form the backbone of effective monitoring and evaluation. She said the department is committed to adopt modern tools and technology to strengthen the statistical framework across Jammu and Kashmir and make data accessible for the planners, researchers and the citizens.

On the occasion, Director General, Economics & Statistics, J&K, Riyaz Ahmad Romshoo, emphasized the vital role of young statisticians and new entrants to the service in strengthening the department.

During the celebration, messages from the Lieutenant Governor, Chief Minister and Chief Secre-

tary were also read out to the gathering, underscoring the importance of statistics in evidence-based governance and inclusive development.

Regional Director, Evaluation & Statistics, Jammu, Ashu Gupta; Regional Director, Evaluation & Statistics, Kashmir, Sheikh Shavaz Ahmad and former Director General, Economics & Statistics, J&K, G A Qureshi also addressed the event.

The technical sessions of the programme featured insightful presentations by the departmental officers, trainees from the School of Applied Economics & Statistics (SAES) and post-graduate research scholars. These deliberations focused on "Unlocking the Potential of Administrative Data" and highlighted the evolving role of official statistics in strengthening the evidence based policy-making and governance.

The discussions particularly highlighted the need to strengthen the administrative data systems for greater reliability and integration. Enhance statistical literacy among youth and practitioners to build a culture of informed decision making and leverage official statistics as a foundation for inclusive and sustainable growth.

# Satish Sharma flags off pilgrimage to Somnath Ji from Jammu



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology, ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, Monday flagged off the Somnath Ji Pilgrimage from Jammu Railway Station, marking commencement of the sacred journey for the devotees travelling to the revered Somnath Temple in Gujarat.

The event was organised by the Department of Culture as part of the ongoing initiatives to promote India's rich cultural and spiritual heritage while strengthening the bonds of national unity through pilgrim and cultural exchanges.

Speaking on the occasion, Satish Sharma said that pilgrimage holds immense spiritual significance and also serves as a powerful medium for pro-

moting national integration, cultural awareness and mutual respect among the people from different regions of the country. He expressed hope that the devotees would undertake the sacred journey with devotion and return with blessings, enriching their spiritual experience.

The Minister extended his best wishes to all pilgrims for a safe, comfortable and fulfilling yatra. He also appreciated the efforts of the Department of Culture and all associated agencies for making necessary arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of the pilgrimage.

"Somnath is not merely a place of worship but a timeless symbol of India's faith, resilience and glorious civilizational heritage. Such initiatives help strengthen our cultural roots and inspire future generations to remain connected with our rich traditions," the Minister said.

# Javed Rana inaugurates ICICI bank branch with ATM facility in Mendhar

Reiterates Govt's commitment to financial inclusion irrespective of location

GMK NEWS NETWORK

MENDHAR: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Monday inaugurated an ICICI Bank branch along with a 24x7 ATM facility at Mendhar, marking a significant step towards extending the modern banking services to the remote and border areas of Pir Panjal region.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister underscored the government's unwaver-

ing commitment to ensure the financial inclusion for every citizen, regardless of their geographic location. He said that the residents of far-flung and border areas deserve the same access to banking facilities as those living in urban centres.

"The government is ensuring that no citizen is left behind merely because of where they live. Whether it is a remote village or a border belt, banking services must reach every doorstep," asserted the Minister.

Rana said that the opening of the branch would directly address the long-standing hardship faced by the people of Mendhar and adjoining areas who were earlier compelled to travel to distant towns for even basic banking needs. He said the new branch, equipped with a full suite of banking services and round-the-clock ATM access, would save precious time and resources for local traders, farmers, pensioners, students and the general public alike.

"This branch is not just a banking outlet, it is a gateway to economic empowerment for the people of this region. I urge every resident, trader, farmer and youth to walk in and explore the full range of services now available at their doorstep," he added.

The Minister thanked the officers and management of ICICI Bank for their initiative in extending banking services to remote and border belts like Mendhar.

# J&K H&UD Dept bars stray dog relocation, notifies guidelines on feeding spots

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Housing and Urban Development Department, Jammu and Kashmir, Monday said that it is committed to implement the Supreme Court's directions in Suo Motu Writ Petition (Civil) number 5 of 2025 concerning the welfare, protection and management of the stray animals.

Clarifying the rules for citizens, RWAs and animal welfare groups, the Department said feeding of community dogs is not prohib-

ited but must be done only at designated feeding spots. It added that the additional feeding spots are being identified and notified across urban areas of J&K based on the population of community dogs in each ward.

The department has urged the residents to cooperate with their Municipal Corporation, Council or Committee in creating these designated spots, preferably away from the children's parks or market areas in open and clean spaces so that hungry animals do not attack the chil-

dren or passersby.

According to an official communication issued here in this regard, the department stressed that the relocation or removal of stray dogs by the individuals, groups or Residents' Welfare Associations is strictly prohibited and constitutes an offence under applicable laws and the directions of the Supreme Court. It added that areas for relocation are being identified in every municipality. Until then, RWAs, citizen associations and NGOs should help feed the stray animals

at designated spots and assist with sterilization and vaccination at nearby veterinary facilities.

The Department said that "little support coming from each citizen group will go a long way in addressing this menace in a humane and compassionate manner."

"Harassing, assaulting, injuring or inflicting cruelty upon stray animals is illegal and will attract appropriate legal action under the relevant provisions of law", maintained the department.

Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

## Kashmir's Mutton Supply Shouldn't Be Held Hostage

**T**he ongoing bottleneck in transporting livestock through Punjab has quietly escalated from a dry trade dispute into a genuine crisis for Jammu and Kashmir. When live-stock trucks are stopped, delayed, or slapped with unfair levies, the pain isn't just felt by the traders. It trickles down to every kitchen and dinner table across the Valley, hitting everyday consumers through skyrocketing prices and empty market stalls.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah hit the nail on the head when he brought this up with Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. The reality is simple: J&K's traders are just using Punjab as a highway. They aren't buying local Punjab livestock, which makes taxing or blocking them completely unjustifiable. Abdullah's commitment to push this issue up to the North Zone State Council, and to New Delhi if needed, shows just how high the stakes have become.

The Bottom Line: J&K relies heavily on outside supplies to meet its demand for mutton. When you choke that supply chain, you aren't just disrupting a business—you are threatening the livelihoods of thousands of truck drivers, butchers, and small business owners, while draining the pockets of ordinary citizens.

India's federal system is supposed to be built on teamwork, not roadblocks. Interstate transit routes exist to connect businesses and people, not to serve as financial traps. When administrative hurdles strangle the free flow of goods, it harms local economies and goes against the very spirit of cooperative federalism.

The Punjab Government needs to step up and resolve this quickly. If the deadlock drags on, the Central Government cannot remain a bystander; it must step in to protect legitimate trade and keep essential supplies moving.

Kashmir's mutton supply shouldn't be collateral damage in an avoidable bureaucratic standoff. We need a swift, fair, and permanent fix—for the sake of the traders, the consumers, and the basic principle of hassle-free trade across state lines.

## The Fragile Balance

# Development, Disasters And The Future Of Humanity

LALIT GARGG

**T**he recent devastating earthquake in Venezuela has shaken not merely one nation but the conscience of humanity as a whole. While the number of deaths and missing persons may continue to change with time, the enormity of the tragedy remains unquestionable. Thousands of families are enduring the unbearable pain of losing their loved ones. On every such occasion, the world expresses sympathy, sends relief materials, and launches assistance campaigns. Yet, one question repeatedly confronts us: Do we truly learn any lasting lessons from every major disaster, or do we simply mourn for a few days, engage in brief discussions, and then return to the same reckless path of unbridled development and blatant disregard for nature?

Natural disasters do not arrive according to a calendar. They neither choose countries, nor seasons, nor convenient moments. When the earth trembles, rivers overflow, mountains crumble, or oceans unleash their fury, grand claims of development, towering skyscrapers, and the arrogance of technological advancement collapse within moments. In such times, a nation's true strength lies not in its economic prosperity but in its preparedness, sensitive governance, and the awareness of its citizens. The Venezuelan tragedy has also highlighted a positive aspect. Modern technology provided early warnings in some regions a few seconds before the tremors were felt. Though this may seem insignificant, in the midst of a disaster, these precious seconds can determine the difference between life and death. Science is making continuous progress in this direction. What is needed is to make such early warning systems more accurate, faster, and more widespread so that a greater number of lives can be saved.

For India, this issue is not merely an international news story. Our country itself has repeatedly suffered from earthquakes, floods, landslides, cloud-bursts, cyclones, and tsunamis. The 1993 Latur earthquake, the 2001 Bhuj earthquake, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2013 Kedarnath disaster, the land subsidence crisis in Jorhat in 2023, and the recurring floods and landslides in the Himalayan region remain etched in our collective memory. All these events convey a single message: nature can never be taken lightly. Scientists may still be unable to predict with certainty the exact date, time, and location of an earthquake. However, they have consistently warned that nearly sixty per cent of India's landmass falls within varying levels of seismic risk zones. The Himalayan region, Delhi-NCR, the North-East, Gujarat, and several other areas are considered particularly vulnerable. This clearly means that even if precise prediction is impossible, com-



prehensive preparedness is entirely achievable. Unfortunately, we continue to focus more on relief and rehabilitation after disasters rather than on preparedness before they occur.

Today, concrete jungles are rising rapidly in almost every Indian city. Multi-storeyed residential complexes, commercial buildings, skyscrapers, and smart cities have become symbols of modern development. Cities such as Mumbai, Gurugram, Noida, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and now Jaipur have joined the race for vertical expansion. However, the most crucial question remains: Are these buildings designed merely for normal conditions, or are they capable of withstanding major natural disasters as well? The real test of any building comes when the earth shakes, when flash floods strike, when fierce winds blow, or when nature reveals its destructive power. A structure deserves to be called a symbol of true development only if it can protect human lives during such crises. Height, glamour, and modern amenities alone do not guarantee safety.

India already has standards and regulations for earthquake-resistant construction. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has laid down clear guidelines. The problem lies not in the absence of regulations, but in their implementation. Are all multistoried buildings genuinely being constructed in accordance with these standards? Is the quality of construction material independently and objectively verified? Are structural safety audits conducted after completion? If the answers to these questions are not fully satisfactory, concern is inevitable. Growing irregularities and corruption in the construction sector have further aggravated the situation. In many instances, land mafias, builder lobbies, and profit-driven interests have violated environmental norms by constructing green

belts, water bodies, riverbanks, and ecologically fragile zones. These very constructions often become the cause of future tragedies. The demolition of the illegally constructed Super tech Twin Towers in Noida, ordered by the Supreme Court, symbolized the extent to which regulations had been ignored. The larger question is: if a structure was illegal, who allowed it to be built in the first place? Why did the administration remain silent until its completion? Can the lives of millions be put at risk merely for the economic gains of a few? This is not merely a legal question; it is also a profound moral issue.

Urban development authorities, municipal corporations, development trusts, and agencies responsible for approving construction cannot limit their role to merely signing building plans. Every construction project must undergo rigorous technical, environmental, and structural scrutiny. Compliance with safety standards is not a bureaucratic formality; it is a solemn responsibility to protect human life. Another serious concern is climate change and humanity's increasing interference with nature. Cutting mountains to build roads, obstructing the natural flow of rivers, indiscriminate deforestation, encroachment, mining, and unplanned urbanisation have severely disturbed ecological balance. Consequently, incidents of landslides, flash floods, urban flooding, and forest fires are increasing. Recurrent disasters in the Himalayan region are warning us that the model of development must not be anti-nature; it must be in harmony with nature.

It is equally dangerous to assume that regions which have never experienced a major earthquake in the past will remain safe forever. Humanity still does not fully understand the dynamics operating beneath the Earth's surface. Therefore, considering any region

entirely safe solely on the basis of historical experience may prove disastrous. Today, urban planning cannot focus solely on earthquakes. Excessive rainfall, urban flooding, strong winds, rising temperatures, and other natural challenges must also be integrated into city planning. The cities of the future must be developed on the principle of multi-layered resilience and safety.

Investing in preventive safety measures is far more prudent and humane than spending billions on relief and rehabilitation after disasters strike. Governments alone cannot shoulder this responsibility. Citizens, too, must become aware of disaster management. Regular mock drills should be conducted in schools, offices, and residential complexes. Modern warning systems must reach even the remotest villages. Natural disasters cannot be prevented, but the devastation they cause can certainly be minimised. This requires a coordinated effort involving scientific research, advanced technology, robust construction standards, strict monitoring, transparent governance, and informed citizens.

Nature never asks how expensive a building is, who constructed it, or in which city it stands. It tests only the strength of the structure and the foresight of humanity. The Venezuelan earthquake is a warning—a call to redefine development. A truly developed nation is not one that possesses the tallest buildings but one that has the safest structures, the most responsible urban planning, the most sensitive governance, and the most vigilant citizens. For providing relief after a disaster is merely a compulsion of governance, whereas preparing in advance for disasters is the hallmark of a visionary nation and a responsible state.

The author can be mailed at [lalitgarg11@gmail.com](mailto:lalitgarg11@gmail.com)

## Rain, Train, Knife And The Door

RAQIF MAKHDoomi

**W**hen we hear about "Rain" the first thing that comes to our mind is the music that the rain produces. Many connect "Rain" with a romantic atmosphere. But have you ever heard about the Rain that isn't romantic or doesn't produce music which pleases your ears? A 21 years old Mayank lahor was stabbed to death over a fight for a door. He was stabbed to death by Roshan suvarna just for asking to close the door as it was raining heavily. The rain shall now no more be a sign of relief for Mayank's family. It shall bring back the horror that their son left behind. Mayank, a young man who was living his youthful era, never knew that this was going to be his last train journey, and after this he shall never travel by any means. According to the reports, both Mayank (deceased) and Roshan (murder accused) boarded at Andheri station. The incident took place First class compartment of a Churchgate-Nallasopora fast local.

The arguments started over whether Or not the door shall remain open, as it was raining heavily. Roshan, who was carrying a knife, felt humiliated, took out his knife and stabbed him to death. The video visuals that are viral on the internet are really



shocking. Mayank was lying down in the pool of blood with no one approaching near him. Everyone was so shocked, seeing a young man getting killed in front of them, that they lost their senses. Anyone who sees the visuals can easily see how terrified everyone was. In the video Roshan could be seen flexing what he did with no guilt of killing Mayank. A simple argument over closing a door made Mayank lose his life. Mayank didn't ask Roshan to do something which could have cast a shadow on his image. But instead of accepting the request, he chose to stab Mayank to death. Investigators said that when the train was travelling between Goregaon and Malad, Suvarna pulled out a knife and stabbed Lohar multiple times in the chest and abdomen. Lohar collapsed, while the accused allegedly got off the train near Borivali and fled. Police suspect Suvarna felt

humiliated after being manhandled and blamed Lohar for it. He was tracked down and arrested within hours from the Panvel/Kurla area while allegedly attempting to leave Mumbai. Authorities have registered a murder case and are continuing their investigation.

Investigators relied on CCTV footage and passenger accounts to reconstruct the sequence of events. Reports say police reviewed footage from hundreds of cameras to trace the accused's movements after the crime. A video circulating online allegedly shows the accused leaving the train while carrying a knife. The victim's family has demanded strict punishment for the accused. Speaking to the media, Lohar's father said the brutality of the attack had devastated the family and called for the harshest possible punishment. The incident has once

again raised concerns about passenger safety on Mumbai's lifeline, the local train network.

Prior to the present case, a college teacher was stabbed in January, and a commuter standing near the door of a local was kicked by a cotraveller after an argument, causing him to fall on the tracks between Borivli and Kandivli stations in Nov 2023. The Tuesday incident led to demands for mandatory metal detectors and baggage screening at all railway stations, similar to the system in place for Metro stations. Roshan was drunk when he stabbed Mayank to death. The question here isn't that he was drunk, but that is the thing that we must think about. He was carrying a weapon with him. Does it mean that anyone can carry a knife and use it whenever the person wants? Roshan continued to travel in the same train till he reached his place. This incident must lead to proper and strict security arrangements at every railway station. We have seen many videos on the internet from delhi Metro where people could be seen fighting. But those fights never turned into murder. But the Mumbai incident has sent shock waves.

Roshan Ramesh Suvarna's family has claimed that he was under the influence of alcohol during the incident. According to his brother, Roshan returned home in tears, confessed what had happened, and later left for Panvel. The family said Roshan,

an HSC dropout from Mira Road East, lived with his parents and sister; worked as a freelance barcode operator, and was unmarried. His father runs a Xerox shop. They also claimed that due to heavy rain, Roshan couldn't book a cab and, instead of his usual AC local train, boarded a first-class fast local. Police are continuing their investigation, and the family's claims have not been independently verified. Roshan's guilt shall never bring back Mayank. Mayank's family needs justice, not any apology from Roshan or his family.

Since I have watched the video, I am unable to take those visuals from my mind. I am unable to forget how that guy was waving that knife after he killed Mayank. He could have stopped, but he stabbed Mayank multiple times, which shocked Mayank dead in the pool of blood. What happened with Mayank shouldn't have happened, and this shouldn't happen with anyone. There need to be strict laws in force to prevent such heartbreaking incidents from taking place in the future. I hope Mayank's family finds enough courage to deal with the irreplaceable loss, and I hope no family has to deal with what Mayank's family is dealing with.

Author is a law student. He can be mailed at [raqifmakhdoomi18@gmail.com](mailto:raqifmakhdoomi18@gmail.com)

■ Beyond Titles And Positions

# Story Of Leadership, Vision And Women Empowerment

RAVINDER KAUR

**W**hen we speak of women empowerment, we often celebrate achievements, designations and milestones. Yet true empowerment is not merely about reaching heights; it is about carrying others along on the journey upward. It is about creating opportunities, nurturing dreams, transforming lives and building futures. A proven educator, a proven leader, a proven manager.

A personality whose influence extends beyond institutions and reaches the hearts of students, parents, educators, employees and society itself. Such personalities are rare, and Kashmir is fortunate to have one among us.

That name is Baseema Anayat. Across North Kashmir and the Valley at large, she has emerged not merely as an educational leader but as a symbol of vision, commitment, compassion and responsibility. Her journey stands as a testimony to what purposeful leadership can achieve when it is guided by values and driven by service. Education, in its truest sense, has never been confined to classrooms and textbooks alone. Education is values, character, discipline, confidence, creativity, empathy and responsibility. It is the art of preparing children not merely for examinations but for life itself. The finest educators understand that every child deserves not only academic excellence but also opportunities, exposure, encouragement, security and an environment where individuality is respected and potential is nurtured.

This philosophy is reflected in the vision and work of Baseema Anayat. Her approach towards education has always gone beyond academics. It embraces the holistic development of children where intellectual growth walks hand in hand with moral values, emotional well-being, creativity, leadership and character building. One of the most remarkable expressions of her vision, mission and educational philosophy is SRM Welkin Senior Secondary School, Sopore. Today, the institution stands not merely as a school but as a symbol of educational

**H**er journey stands as a testimony to what purposeful leadership can achieve when it is guided by values and driven by service. Education, in its truest sense, has never been confined to classrooms and textbooks alone.

excellence, progressive thinking and holistic development in North Kashmir. The infrastructure, opportunities, facilities, exposure and educational environment that have been made available to students through SRM Welkin Senior Secondary School, Sopore, have set a benchmark for quality education in the region. It is an institution where no compromise has been made in providing children with the opportunities and experiences they rightfully deserve.

Wherever the name of Baseema Anayat is mentioned, the story of SRM Welkin Senior Secondary School, Sopore, naturally becomes part of that conversation, for the institution reflects her vision, values and unwavering commitment towards education and society. Her contribution, however, extends far beyond students alone. A true leader understands that institutions flourish when educators are respected, employees are valued, parents are heard and



children are placed at the centre of every decision. Perhaps this is one of the defining qualities of her leadership. Respect for students, respect for employees; Respect for parents, and Respect for every individual regardless of designation or position. Leadership rooted in respect creates trust. Leadership rooted in empathy creates belonging. Leadership rooted in vision creates legacies.

Undoubtedly, every journey carries within it moments of struggle, sacrifice and hardship. No meaningful achievement arrives without challenges, and no path towards excellence is ever free from obstacles. Yet there are moments when the story is not about the struggles endured but about the heights reached despite them. The true measure of leadership lies not in the difficulties one has faced but in the lives one has touched. Baseema Anayat represents this very philosophy. She did not limit empowerment to herself alone. In the name of women empowerment, she uplifted an entire community. She encouraged professional growth. She contributed towards meaningful employment.

Most importantly, she inspired others to believe that leadership belongs not to a particular gender but to those who possess vision, commitment and the courage to serve. In a region where leadership often demands extraordinary resilience and determination, her work stands as a powerful reminder

that women are not merely participants in the progress of society; they are architects of that progress.

Yet perhaps what distinguishes Baseema Anayat most is not simply the institution she has helped shape but the manner in which she leads. True leaders do not always stand under the spotlight. Often, they stand quietly behind the scenes. They observe carefully. They plan thoughtfully. They notice details that others overlook. They guide without seeking recognition and build without seeking applause. This is the essence of servant leadership. Leadership that seeks responsibility rather than attention. Leadership that values outcomes more than visibility.

Even after earning recognition and establishing a respected name, she continues to pay attention to the smallest details, understanding that excellence is often hidden within things that others consider insignificant. It is perhaps in these moments that leadership reveals its truest form. She is, in every sense, a lady with a golden heart. Among the many responsibilities that accompany leading an educational organisation, her concern for children remains unwavering.

The innocence of childhood, the aspirations of young learners and the possibilities that lie within every student continue to occupy a special place in her vision. Even amidst the pressures, responsibilities and challenges that come with leading a large organisation, there remain in her eyes

an unmistakable spark and an enduring smile, a reflection of her faith in values, humanity and the transformative power of education. That smile carries reassurance. That confidence carries purpose. That vision carries hope. She knows the worth of values.

Perhaps this is why her influence extends beyond classrooms and institutions and reaches society itself. She has not merely elevated herself. She has contributed towards uplifting an entire community. She has inspired educators. She has encouraged professionals. She has supported families. And she has helped shape an environment where young minds can dream without limitations. Across Kashmir, and particularly in North Kashmir, her work continues to stand as a testimony to what vision combined with commitment can achieve. She is not merely an example. She is a role model. A woman who trusts her vision. A woman who believes in her plans. A woman who moves forward with confidence, clarity and conviction.

Her strength lies not only in making decisions but also in noticing what others fail to notice, understanding what others overlook and embracing every detail that contributes to the growth of students, institutions and society. Some people inherit responsibilities. Some fulfil responsibilities. And then there are those rare individuals who transform responsibilities into legacies. Baseema Anayat belongs to the latter.

At a time when society continues to search for authentic examples of women empowerment, visionary leadership and meaningful service, her journey stands as a powerful reminder that true success is never measured by titles, positions or recognition alone. It is measured by lives touched. Dreams nurtured. Opportunities created. Communities uplifted. And futures shaped. Perhaps that, more than anything else, is the true definition of leadership.

"Mazele asan nahi hoti, bas honse buland rakhne padte ha... Jo unchaiyo ko chuu le, kismat nahi hoti, bas 'Raumi' rohani barose or lagan ki rastein tay karne padtey ha."

Author is a Educator, poet, and writer. She can be mailed at rommykaur099@gmail.com

## Illusions That Bleed: The Unseen War On Dreams



NAZRANA MUSHTAQ

**“**Drugs take you to a world of illusion, but steal away the reality of life.”

“Nasha insaan ko khwaabon ki duniya dikhata hai, magar zindagi ki haqeeqat cheen leta hai.”

We live in an age of speed, screens, and silence. In the noise of ambition and the quiet of loneliness, a different epidemic grows, one without masks or vaccines. It doesn't knock on doors. It slips into bedrooms, classrooms, and alleys. It speaks the language of escape. Its name is addiction. Drug addiction is no longer whispered about in dark corners. It has become a public health emergency, a social wound, and a human tragedy unfolding across continents. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that over 296 million people used drugs in 2021, a 23% increase over the last decade. Behind every number is a name, a family, a dream interrupted.

What Addiction Really Is “Sehatmand jism aur pur-sukoon zehen insaan ki sab se badi daulat hain; nasha dono ko barbaad kar deta hai.”

Addiction is not a moral failure. It is a chronic, relapsing brain disease. Substances like heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, cannabis, and misused prescription opioids hijack the brain's reward circuit. Dopamine floods the system, teaching the brain that survival depends on the drug. What starts as “just trying it once” rewires neural pathways. Choice becomes compulsion. The person doesn't use drugs to feel good anymore — they use them to not feel sick. The path is painfully predictable yet deeply personal. For some, it's peer pressure in school corridors. For others, it's an injury that led to painkillers, then dependency.



In conflict zones and regions under stress, it's self-medication for trauma that no one sees.

The body pays first. Liver cirrhosis, heart infections, collapsed veins, lung damage, kidney failure. Mental health crumbles next — depression, paranoia, psychosis, suicidal ideation. The World Health Organization links drug use to over half a million deaths annually, most from overdose. Fentanyl, 50 times stronger than heroin, has turned a single mistake into a death sentence. But the damage doesn't end with the individual. Addiction bankrupts families. Parents sell land, jewelry, and dignity to fund a child's next dose. Trust evaporates. Mothers lie awake listening for footsteps that never come home. Siblings grow up too fast, becoming caregivers instead of children.

“Why does a moment of pleasure outweigh a lifetime of dreams?” Society pays too. Productivity plummets. Students drop out — UNICEF reports that substance abuse is a leading cause of school non-completion in South Asia. Crime rises. Petty theft to fund habits escalates to trafficking, violence, and gang networks. Healthcare systems buckle under the weight of overdoses, HIV, and Hepatitis C spread through shared needles.

In our own paradise, the chinars leaves are falling too soon. J&K has

seen a sharp rise in heroin and pharmaceutical drug abuse among youth aged 15-25. Data from the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Srinagar, shows that over 70% of patients admitted for addiction are heroin users. Unemployment, prolonged stress, political uncertainty, and easy cross-border smuggling routes have created a perfect storm.

A generation raised under curfews and internet shutdowns found solace in substances that promised quiet. Villages that once echoed with folk songs now whisper about “brown sugar” and “codeine.” The stigma is so heavy that families hide the problem until it's too late — until an overdose or an arrest forces it into the open.

“Nasha pilaa ke girana to sab ko aata hai, maza to tab hai ke girton ko thaam le saaqi.” — Nazrana Mushtaq. The real test of a society is not how it punishes those who fall, but how it catches them.

The reasons are human. Curiosity. Boredom. Pain. The need to belong. The ache to forget. Social media sells filtered lives; drugs sell filtered feelings. Both are lies.

But the bigger question is: why don't we get back up? Stigma. A recovering addict is still called a “nashai” years after sobriety. Job applications get rejected. Marriage proposals

**“**Nasha se jeetne ka behtareen tareeqa ye hai ke usay shuru hone se pehle roka jaye.” *Prevention is cheaper than cure, and kinder. It starts in homes before it starts in clinics.*

vanish. The label sticks longer than the drug. So many relapse not because treatment failed, but because hope did. Add to that the lack of infrastructure. India has less than one psychiatrist per lakh population. Rehabilitation centers are few, expensive, and often unregulated. Many are glorified prisons with no counseling, no skill training, no dignity.

“Nasha se jeetne ka behtareen tareeqa ye hai ke usay shuru hone se pehle roka jaye.” Prevention is cheaper than cure, and kinder. It starts in homes before it starts in clinics.

Education with honesty: Don't just say “drugs are bad.” Teach biology. Show how a 16-year-old brain on cannabis loses IQ points it never regains. Bring recovered addicts to schools — not to scare, but to tell the truth.

Mental health as mainstream: Anxiety and depression are not “dramebaazi.” Every school needs counselors. Every mohalla needs safe spaces to talk. A child who feels heard at home rarely looks for escape elsewhere.

Family as first rehab: “Ghar ek dawa-khana hai, agar usme mohabbat ho.” Love, boundaries, and supervi-

sion. Know your child's friends. Check their eyes, not just their marks. Be the safe place, not the police station.

Community vigilance: Chemists must stop over-the-counter sale of codeine syrups and sedatives. Landlords must report suspicious activity. Mosques, temples, and gurdwaras can become centers for awareness khutbas and kirtans.

Rehabilitation with dignity: Treatment isn't just detox. It's therapy, skill building, family counseling, and job placement. Portugal decriminalized personal drug use and invested in health services — overdoses dropped by 80%. That's policy with compassion.

You don't need to be a doctor to save a life. You need to be human. If you see a friend withdrawing, sleeping too much, lying, stealing — don't call them weak. Call for help. The J&K Drug De-Addiction Helpline 14416 exists. Use it. If you're a teacher, watch the backbenchers. The quiet ones. The angry ones. Addiction hides in plain sight. If you're an employer, give recovered addicts a second chance. One job can end a cycle of crime. If you're a parent, replace interrogation with conversation. “Beta, kya pareshaani hai?” can do what a thousand lectures cannot.

Addiction sells you a shortcut to heaven and leaves you in hell. But the human spirit was not built to stay caged. History is full of people who fell and rose — famous musicians, writers, athletes, and ordinary sons and daughters who chose life again. This is not a war on drugs. This is a war for people. For the boy in Anantnag who wants to be a cricketer. For the girl in Jammu who writes poetry in secret. For the father in Baramulla who sold his taxi to pay for rehab.

“Say no to drugs, because every life is precious and every dream deserves a chance.”

“Nasha ko na kaho, kyunki har zindagi qeemti hai aur har khwaab ko ek mauqa milna chahiye.”

The choice is not between pleasure and pain. The choice is between a moment and a lifetime. Choose the dream. Choose to stay.

Author is a teacher by profession. She can be mailed at nazranamushtaq430@gmail.com

## CM Omar Urges Punjab

such practices, if found to be occurring, are inconsistent with the spirit of mutual cooperation that has traditionally characterized relations between the two governments and have understandably caused concern among the trading community.

The Chief Minister also drew attention to reports that the tendering process relating to cattle fairs in Punjab is likely to commence shortly.

He conveyed the apprehensions expressed by stakeholders that, unless appropriate safeguards are put in place, the alleged practices may continue during the forthcoming contract period, leading to recurring financial hardship for livestock traders.

Seeking Punjab's intervention, Omar Abdullah requested Bhagwant Mann to have the matter examined and ensure the smooth, secure and unhindered movement of livestock transport vehicles through Punjab. He also urged that no unauthorized interference or collection of charges be permitted from transporters carrying valid documentation and complying with all statutory requirements.

Expressing confidence in the spirit of cooperation between the two governments, the Chief Minister conveyed his gratitude in advance for Punjab's support in resolving the issue in the interest of traders, consumers and the seamless movement of essential livestock supplies between the two regions.

## 'Pratham Puja' By LG

DG Coordination PHQ; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor and CEO Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board; Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Shri Rahul Yadav, Managing Director JKPDCL and Nodal Officer for Baltal Axis; Shri VK Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Shri Rajiv Omprakashn, DIG CKR; Jatin Kishore, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal; Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag; Shreya Singhal, Director Information; and other senior officials were also present.

## Multi-Layer Security

in Jammu and Kashmir, while security forces remain on high alert with elaborate arrangements in place along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, transit camps and the twin routes leading to the holy cave shrine, nestled in Himalayas.

On the occasion of the Pratham Puja, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Inspector General Dr Akun Sabharwal inaugurated Medical Aid Posts at the Holy Cave and Brarimarg. He also led a plantation drive, reaffirming the force's commitment to pilgrims' welfare and environmental conservation.

In Jammu, authorities have fully activated the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC), equipped with more than 600 high-definition CCTV cameras, including long-range Pan-Tilt-Zoom (PTZ) cameras, to monitor movement across the city. Officials said the Jammu and Kashmir Police's "Third Eye" surveillance system has also been activated to detect potential threats and facilitate immediate response.

"The integrated command centre will provide real-time monitoring of Yatra routes, base camps and other strategic locations to ensure effective coordination and swift response during the pilgrimage," an official said.

Security agencies also carried out a series of mock drills across Jammu and Kashmir to assess operational preparedness. A joint exercise by the Special Operations Group (SOG) and the National Security Guard (NSG) was conducted at the Raghunath Temple in Jammu to strengthen counter-terror response and inter-agency coordination.

In Budgam district, multiple agencies participated in a comprehensive security and emergency response drill aimed at testing preparedness for various contingencies during the Yatra.

On the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, security agencies conducted a large-scale convoy rehearsal involving 640 vehicles to evaluate convoy protection, traffic management and emergency response mechanisms. Officials said the exercise focused on coordination among security agencies and ensuring uninterrupted movement of pilgrims.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) also conducted a successful trial run through the newly built 3.5-km Digdool-Panthal tunnel, with a dry-run convoy passing through one of its tubes.

In neighbouring Punjab, police have put in place a multi-layered security

plan as thousands of pilgrims are expected to pass through Pathankot, the key transit district connecting Punjab with Jammu and Kashmir, between July 3 and August 28.

Punjab Special Director General of Police (Law and Order) Arpit Shukla chaired a high-level inter-state coordination meeting to review security arrangements with officials from various agencies.

According to Punjab Police, the security grid covers the 65-km Yatra route in the state through five security sectors and includes a dedicated Command and Control Centre at Madhopur, round-the-clock monitoring, strengthened checkpoints, route domination, CCTV surveillance, drone monitoring and emergency response vehicle patrols.

The security plan also provides for joint operations involving the Indian Army, Border Security Force (BSF), Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), Himachal Pradesh Police and Jammu and Kashmir Police, besides the deployment of police quick reaction teams, Army QRTs, Special Operations Group personnel and bomb disposal squads.

Officials said anti-sabotage checks and enhanced second-line border security have also been incorporated into the security architecture.

"Over 800 police personnel and multiple response teams have been deployed to ensure a safe, secure and peaceful pilgrimage. Pilgrims are requested to stay vigilant, follow the designated routes and cooperate with security personnel," Punjab Police said.

Officials said the extensive security arrangements, surveillance systems and coordinated deployment of forces reflect the preparedness of agencies across states to ensure the smooth and peaceful conduct of this year's Amarnath Yatra—(KNO)

## Srinagar Records

close to normal due to prevailing monsoon-like conditions. Jammu city recorded 36.9°C, almost normal for this time of the year, while Banihal, Batote, Bhaderwah and Katra recorded temperatures ranging between 29.3°C and 35.6°C.

The Meteorological Department said daytime temperatures across Kashmir are likely to remain 4°C to 8°C above normal through Monday, resulting in heatwave conditions in many areas.

"Generally hot and dry weather is expected during the forenoon and afternoon on Monday, with the possibility of light rain or brief thundershowers accompanied by gusty winds at scattered places later in the day," an official said.

From July 1 to July 5, fresh spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers are expected across many places in Jammu and Kashmir, with the possibility of heavy rainfall and intense showers at isolated locations, particularly on July 2 and 3.

The weather office has warned that heavy rainfall in parts of the Jammu division may trigger flash floods, landslides, mudslides and temporary waterlogging in low-lying areas. People have been advised to stay away from streams, nallahs and landslide-prone areas during the period.

The unusually high temperatures disrupted normal life in Srinagar, where roads, markets and public spaces wore a deserted look during the afternoon as people preferred to stay indoors.

"It felt impossible to walk outside after noon. Even inside the house, the heat was unbearable because most homes here are not designed for such temperatures," locals said from Srinagar.

Officials said temperatures are expected to gradually decline from Wednesday, with further relief likely from Thursday as rain-bearing systems become active over the region—(KNO)

## J&K Exports Grow

sources of exports and employment. Highlighting the uneven distribution of exports, Sahai said Kathua, Srinagar, Jammu and Samba together contribute nearly 98 per cent of J&K's exports, while the remaining 16 districts account for less than two per cent.

"This is where the real opportunity lies," he said, adding that FIEO plans to organise awareness programmes in Anantnag and Shopian to encourage more entrepreneurs to enter the export business.

Calling e-commerce a major opportunity, Sahai said all 18 GI-tagged products of Jammu & Kashmir can find larger international markets through online platforms.

He said the Central Government's Export Promotion Mission offers credit support of up to Rs 15 lakh for e-com-

merce exporters, 2.75 per cent interest subvention and financial assistance of up to 30 per cent, with a maximum limit of Rs 10 crore, for e-commerce export infrastructure.

Sahai said logistics continues to be one of the biggest challenges for exporters in Jammu & Kashmir.

He also called for setting up more Inland Container Depots (ICDs) and Container Freight Stations (CFSs) and upgrading air cargo facilities so that exporters can send goods directly from Jammu & Kashmir instead of routing them through Delhi or Mumbai.

He also asked exporters to make use of the Centre's LEADS Scheme, under which exporters from hilly states can receive 30 per cent support on air freight costs, up to Rs 20 lakh per Import Export Code (IEC) holder.

Talking about international markets, Sahai said Bangladesh, Myanmar, the Philippines, the UAE and Saudi Arabia account for nearly 45 to 50 per cent of J&K's exports.

He said India's existing and upcoming Free Trade Agreements, including the proposed India-EU Free Trade Agreement, will create fresh opportunities for exporters from Jammu & Kashmir.

He said buyers from Canada, Australia, Europe, GCC countries and ASEAN nations are participating in the Buyer-Seller Meet and urged local businesses to use the platform to build international trade partnerships.

Sahai said Jammu & Kashmir has the potential to become a major export hub if more entrepreneurs come forward, new sectors are developed, logistics improve and businesses fully utilise the opportunities available in global markets—(KNO)

## SIA Files 737-Page

35 years after the incident marks an important step in pursuing justice in one of the Valley's long-pending terror cases. The agency said the investigation demonstrates that serious terror-related offences continue to be investigated irrespective of the passage of time.

According to the investigation, Sarla Bhat was allegedly abducted near SKIMS on April 18, 1990, subjected to torture and later shot dead in the Omer Colony area of Malbagh, Srinagar. The agency said the case remained unresolved for decades due to the prevailing security situation and an atmosphere of fear that discouraged witnesses from coming forward.

Following the reopening of the case, investigators reconstructed the sequence of events with the help of protected witnesses, eyewitness accounts, forensic analysis, medical records and documentary evidence, the SIA said.

The chargesheet names former JKLF chief Mohammad Yasin Malik along with Khurshid Ahmad Chalkoo, Abdul Hamid Sheikh, Mohammad Yousuf Sofi alias Idrees and Ghulam Mohammad Taploo as accused in the case. According to the agency, three of the accused—Abdul Hamid Sheikh, Mohammad Yousuf Sofi alias Idrees and Ghulam Mohammad Taploo—have since died, while Mohammad Yasin Malik is currently in judicial custody in another case.

The SIA further stated that proclamation proceedings have been initiated against Khurshid Ahmad Chalkoo, who is alleged to have fled to Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the chargesheet, offences have been invoked under Sections 364, 341, 302 read with 34, 201 and 120-B of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC), relevant provisions of the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA), 1987, and Sections 7 and 27 of the Indian Arms Act, 1959.

The investigation also states that allegations portraying Sarla Bhat as an informer were found to be baseless and were allegedly used as a pretext for her targeted killing. The agency has alleged that the murder formed part of a broader campaign intended to spread fear and facilitate the displacement of members of the Kashmiri Pandit community during the early years of militancy.

The SIA said the filing of the chargesheet reflects its continued commitment to investigating unresolved terror cases and bringing those allegedly involved before the judicial process. The agency maintained that no terror-related offence is beyond investigation and reaffirmed its resolve to pursue such cases in accordance with law.

## The Great Vegetable

tampering is detected. Repeat offenders should face heavy penalties, suspension of licences and criminal prosecution wherever the law permits.

At the same time, honest traders must realise that remaining silent only strengthens those who are damaging the reputation of the entire market. A few dishonest vendors are casting suspicion on an entire community of hardworking sellers who earn their livelihood honestly.

Consumers also have a responsibility. Ask for the weight to be checked. Compare prices before purchasing. Demand receipts where possible. Report blatant overcharging and under-weighting. Silence only encourages exploitation.

A market survives on trust, not tricks. Compassion shown by the public should never be mistaken for weakness. Those who exploit goodwill, manipulate prices and steal through false weights are not merely overcharging customers—they are eroding the moral foundation of commerce itself.

The people deserve markets where every kilogram is truly a kilogram, every price is fair, and every transaction is honest. Until that happens, the biggest item being sold in some vegetable markets will not be vegetables—it will be deception.

## 'Diversion Of 197 Ha Of

yet been obtained. As per Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan Rules, 2023, the approved Mining Plan is required to be submitted along with the compliance report of Stage-1 approval," reads the documents.

The advisor panel has further informed that all the muck dumping sites are located near the banks of the River Chenab, the State Government will take appropriate engineering and biological measures to prevent erosion, siltation, and any adverse environmental impacts on the river ecology.

"The project site is located within a high mountainous gorge along the river Chenab characterized by moderate to steep slopes. The User Agency (UA) needs to exercise special caution during project implementation, as activities such as rock cutting and earthwork may lead to soil erosion. To mitigate these impacts, the User Agency is required to take appropriate measures to prevent soil erosion," it reads.

The documents further said that the trees proposed to be felled in the project area would affect the ecosystem in general, especially in terms of increased run-off and soil erosion that may lead to landslides. "Therefore, the State Government should take necessary mitigation measures and put in place necessary safety and monitoring measures."

It also said that the 'State Government' shall ensure implementation of the Site-Specific Wildlife and Biodiversity Management Plan, duly approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW), at the cost of the User Agency.

"The State Government shall ensure implementation of the duly approved CAT Plan at the cost of the User Agency. The requisite funds shall be deposited by the User Agency in the account of National CAMPA," reads the document—(KNO)



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# CM Omar Abdullah meets legislators, public delegations at Raabita

Developmental issues, public welfare, healthcare concerns, among key matters discussed

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday met several legislators, public delegations, the healthcare sector among other delegations at Raabita here, during which a wide range of public welfare, developmental and issues were discussed.

A public delegation led by MLA Beerwah Shafi Ahmad Wani, comprising senior citizens, youth representatives, members of the Shia community from Magam and representatives of the Beerwah Traders Federation. The delegation projected various developmental requirements, public welfare concerns and constituency-specific issues. The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the issues raised and assured that all genuine concerns would be addressed in a phased and time-bound manner.

The Chief Minister also met MLA Pahalgam Altaf Ahmad Wani and MLA Shangus-Anantnag East Reyaz Ahmad Khan, who represented several delegations to flag their issues before the Chief Minister.

A delegation from Seer Hamdan, representatives



of the Jammu and Kashmir Nomadic Cooperative (JKNC), members of the Migrant Kashmiri Pandit community, the Taxi Stand Association, and a delegation from Ashmuqam-Tulhad. The delegations apprised the Chief Minister of various developmental requirements, infrastructure needs and public issues concerning their respective areas.

Earlier, MLA Rajpora Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Mir called on the Chief Minister and discussed developmental priorities and public welfare issues pertaining to his constituency.

MLA Sonawari Hilal Akbar Lone also met the Chief Minister and raised

several constituency-related matters requiring government intervention. The Chief Minister assured all the visiting deputations that the government remains committed to addressing the aspirations of the people through sustained developmental initiatives.

During the day, the Chief Minister also interacted with a delegation from Warner Bros. Discovery led by Creative Director Pia Somiah Alva, along with senior company officials. The Chief Minister appreciated the interest shown by the organisation and said the government welcomes meaningful partnerships that can promote

Jammu and Kashmir's creative potential and generate new opportunities.

A delegation of senior doctors from Government Medical College Srinagar, comprising Dr. Altaf Kawoosa, Dr. Iqbal Saleem, Dr. Naveed Nazir Shah, Dr. Manzoor Latoo and Dr. Syed Imran, also called on the Chief Minister.

The delegation discussed various issues concerning the healthcare sector and the functioning of the institution. The Chief Minister assured them that the government remains committed to strengthening healthcare infrastructure and improving medical services across Jammu and Kashmir.

# Pakistani strikes kill at least 28 civilians in Afghanistan, UN says

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KABUL:** At least 28 civilians were killed after Pakistan launched air strikes and sent ground troops into Afghan provinces along its border on Sunday.

On Sunday evening, at around 11.30pm local time, in Paktya province, Chamkani district, an airstrike killed at least 22 civilians and injured at least 47 others. At around the same time, in Paktika province, Gyan district, a further airstrike killed six civilians; a third airstrike, in Kunar province, Marawara district, injured two children, the United Nations Afghan mission has said.

A further 49 were



injured and women and children were among the victims, according to Unama.

Afghanistan's Taliban government said civilian homes were hit and

described the attack as a "cowardly act" and an "atrocious".

Those killed in one of the strikes included "children, elderly people and women" sleeping in a

house, it said. Afghanistan's Taliban government put the civilian death toll at 36 and said more than 160 had been injured.

The attacks come a day after three members of the Sindh Rangers, a Pakistani paramilitary force, were killed at their headquarters in Karachi, according to Pakistan's military.

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a splinter faction of the TTP, claimed responsibility for Saturday's attack.

Both the TTP, also known as the Pakistan Taliban, and Jamaat-ul-Ahrar are banned in Pakistan, and by the UN, because of their involvement in past attacks.

# Speaker Rather reviews comprehensive development plan for Yousmarg Tourism Circuit

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, Monday chaired a detailed meeting with senior officers of the Tourism Department to review and discuss a comprehensive development plan aimed at transforming Yousmarg into one of the premier tourist destinations of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, extensive deliberations were held on strengthening tourism infrastructure, enhancing visitor amenities, and fully harnessing the immense tourism potential of Yousmarg, Drugtolen, Bargah, and Hajian.

The Speaker stressed the need for a planned and sustainable approach to ensure that these picturesque destinations are developed while preserving their natural beauty and ecological balance.

Emphasizing the importance of improved public amenities, the Speaker called for the provision of reliable mobile connectivity and the installation of an ATM facility at Yousmarg to facilitate tourists and local residents alike.

He also advocated for the

installation of a ski drag lift to support ski trainees and promote winter sports activities, thereby enhancing Yousmarg's appeal as a year-round tourism destination.

The meeting also reviewed the development of the scenic Nilnag Lake. The Speaker directed that the lake and its surrounding areas be developed into an attractive tourist destination with appropriate infrastructure while maintaining its pristine environment. He stressed that de-weeding of the lake should be undertaken on priority to preserve its cleanliness and natural charm.

Highlighting the need for better connectivity, the Speaker emphasized for the early completion of the sanctioned bridge over the Doodh Ganga River connecting Hajian with Yousmarg. He observed that the project would significantly improve accessibility, boost tourist inflow, and provide substantial socio-economic benefits to the local population.

The Speaker further underscored the importance of developing cable car projects linking Yousmarg-Nilnag, Yousmarg-Drugtolen, Yousmarg-Hajian, and Yousmarg-

Bargah. He noted that, Yousmarg being nearest tourist destination to Srinagar has immense potential to emerge as a major tourism hub.

He observed that these projects would not only strengthen adventure and leisure tourism but also promote a unique pilgrimage tourism circuit, as the route passes through the revered shrine of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA) at Charar-i-Sharif and the shrine of Hazrat Syed Ali Aalie Balki (RA) at Pakherpora.

The Speaker also stressed the need for the early completion of the remaining portion of the road to Hajian, stating that improved road connectivity is essential for unlocking the tourism potential of the area and ensuring ease of access for visitors and local communities.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from the Tourism Department to examine the proposals in a time-bound manner and take necessary steps for the phased development of the Yousmarg tourism circuit, with the objective of strengthening tourism, generating employment, and promoting sustainable economic growth in the region.

# DC B'pora reviews Road Safety Measures

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, Monday chaired a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) at the Mini Secretariat here, pressing departments for stricter accountability and time-bound action on pending road safety directives.

Reviewing the status of Action Taken Reports (ATRs) from concerned departments, the DC underscored the need for closer inter-departmental coordination and directed all line departments to ensure prompt implementation of road safety measures to reduce accidents and protect commuters.

She sought comprehensive details of road safety works executed during 2025-26 and called upon departments to furnish projections for works proposed in the current financial year 2026-27, enabling the district to review and monitor its road safety action plan more effectively.

The DC directed the Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Bandipora (Member Secretary DRSC), to consolidate ATRs from all line departments within one week. The SE was also instructed to circulate an online reporting link to facilitate timely submission and monitoring.

## RASHTRIYA GRAMIN VIKAS SAMMELAN

### Javid Dar seeks enhanced Central support for rural development in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Monday participated in the Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Sammelan 2026, organised by the Union Ministry for Rural Development.

During the event, the Rural Development Ministers from States and Union Territories deliberated on strengthening the rural infrastructure, housing, livelihoods and inclusive development under various flagship programmes.

The two day national conclave, chaired by Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, provided a platform for reviewing the progress of flagship rural development schemes and strengthening the Centre-State cooperation for achieving the vision of a developed rural India.

During the deliberations, Javid Ahmad Dar projected the key concerns and developmental priorities of Jammu and Kashmir. He sought enhanced support from the Government of India for effective implementation of rural development programmes across the Union Territory.

The Minister called for early clearance of pending MGNREGA liabilities to ensure uninterrupted execution of development works and timely payment of wages.

He also sought enhanced support under PMGSY, particularly for maintenance of completed road assets and improved connectivity to eligible habitations located in difficult and remote terrain.

Highlighting the unique geographical, climatic and topographical conditions of Jammu and Kashmir, the Minister stressed the need for greater flexibility in implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes to enable better outcomes on the ground. He also urged the Government of India to continue extending support for strengthening the rural livelihoods, promoting self-employment through Self Help Groups and rural enterprises besides expanding the rural housing and basic infrastructure in remote and border areas.

Javid Dar reiterated that the Jammu and Kashmir government remains committed to transparent, accountable and result-oriented implementation of all rural development programmes. He said the focus of the government is to create sustainable rural infrastructure, generate livelihood opportunities and ensure that the benefits of welfare schemes reach every eligible household.

The Minister also emphasised the need for greater convergence among the flagship programmes and stronger grassroot institutions to maximise developmental outcomes and accelerate inclusive growth in rural areas.

### Mandeep Kaur reviews Vibrant Villages Programme-II in border villages of RS Pura

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**RS PURA:** Commissioner Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Mandeep Kaur, Monday conducted a comprehensive field visit to the border villages of Abdullian and Badyal Brahmana in block RS Pura to review implementation of the Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II).

Among those present were Member Legislative Assembly Suchetgarh Prof Gharu Ram Bhagat besides other sectoral officers.

The review focussed on assessing the development plans prepared under the Vibrant Villages Programme-II and ensuring their timely and effective implementation through coordinated efforts of all stakeholder departments.

During the visit, a detailed sector-wise review of the proposed development plans was under-

taken. It was informed that development works amounting approximately ₹6 crore have been proposed for Village Badyal Brahmana while projects worth around ₹2.50 crore have been planned for Village Abdullian under the programme.

The Commissioner Secretary reviewed the proposals in detail and directed all the concerned departments to ensure timely execution of the approved works with regular monitoring and effective inter-departmental coordination.

Interactive Gram Sabhas were also held at Amisha Palace, Badyal Brahmana and the Community Hall, Abdullian, where Mandeep Kaur interacted with the public representatives, former Sarpanches and local residents. She encouraged the people to participate actively in the planning process.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information to the general public that I Waheed Ahmad Reshi have lost my provisional certificate of class 12th bearing roll no. 339007217 issued by Principal GBHS Khimber. Now I intend to apply for its duplicate in this regard if anybody have anykind of objection he/she may file the same with Principal GBHS Khimber within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained afterwards.

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION QAZIGUND

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

FRESH NIT NO.11 OF R&B Qazigund /2026-27 /1525-40 E-TENDERING/ Dated:29-06-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K Expression of Interest (EOI) are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Bidders as per Instruction to Bidder(ITB) and Terms of Reference. The Bidder (Firm/Consultant/Agency/Company) should have the eligibility as per Annexure-II under Eligibility Criteria for each of the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rs)	Earnest Money in Rs	M.H. of Account (Respective Heads)	Type of Consultancy
1.	"Consultancy Services for Preparation of Architectural, Structural, Sanitary, Electrical, Mechanical, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Designs/Drawings, Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), Estimates and Allied Consultancy Services for Buildings, Religious/Heritage Structures and Other Public Infrastructure Works including soil testing and vetting from an Institute of National Repute under the jurisdiction of PWD (R&B) Division Qazigund (Stage Contract) for the Financial Years 2026-27."	1000/=	10000/=	(Respective Heads)	Architectural/Structural Consultancy

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

S. No.	Particulars	Dated	
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	29-06-2026	
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From	01-07-2026 11.00 AM
3	Bid submission Start Date	From	01-07-2026 11.00 AM
4	Bid Submission End Date	To	07-07-2026 04.00PM
6	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	08-07-2026 11.00AM	

2. Bidders shall deposit the prescribed Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Fee through online mode into the designated Centralized Pooling Account No. 047001020000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG (M/S Centralized Pool Account PW R&B), strictly in accordance with Finance Department Circular No. FD-Code/290/2026 dated 22.05.2026 and Office Order No. CE/R&B/SK/WS/2095-2111 dated 05.06.2026 issued by the Chief Engineer, PW(R&B) Department, South Kashmir. Submission of EMD in the form of CDR/FDR/TDR/Bank Guarantee or any other instrument shall not be permissible. Documentary proof/receipt evidencing successful remittance of the EMD and Tender Fee shall be uploaded along with the bid, failing which the bid shall be liable for rejection as non-responsive.

3. The 1<sup>st</sup> lowest Bidder has to produce Performance Security (5%) within 07 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after successful completion of work. Notwithstanding the above, the Bid Security deposited by the successful bidder(s) shall stand retained and shall be credited to the account of the concerned Division as Performance Security and adjusted under the applicable Performance Security Deposit Head.

4. MSME: Only those MSME's shall be considered responsive who shall have the domain of civil engineering consultancy services in their certificate of incorporation/registration under UDYAM. These MSME's have a special exemption to the submission of Tender Document Fees and Earnest Money Deposit in accordance with the rules outlined in the MSME Act, GFR- 2017(Rule 170-1, 173-i), and Indian Gazette (SO-581-E Rule 1 to 7).

5. The date and time of opening of Bid shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Qazigund.

6. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of Opening of Technical bids. The Firm/Consultant shall be required to visit site as & when required, however nothing extra shall be paid for site visits.

No. 1525-40  
Date:29-06-2026  
DIPK-2646-26  
DT: 29/06/2026  
Executive Engineer,  
PWD (R&B) Division Qazigund

## GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT. GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR

BAGHI-ALI-MARDAN, NOWSHARA SRINAGAR.  
E-mail:- hakeemmushtaq.75316@jk.gov.in | Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

#### EXTENSION NOTICE 1<sup>ST</sup>

**Subject:** Construction of Gravel Packed Production Tube Well at Water Supply Scheme Arakhashi Pora District Anantnag.  
**Reference:** This office e-NIT No. 20/JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2026-27, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/2294-07, dated: 09-06-2026. Bearing Tender ID No. 2026\_PHE\_311967\_1.

Due to "NO Response" for the above mentioned works advertised vide e-NIT No. and Tender ID No under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 29-06-2026 Up-to 02:00 PM are extended as per the details given below:-

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Last date & Time of submission of bids	09-07-2026 Up-to 02:00 PM
2.	Date & Time of opening of tenders	10-07-2026 Up-to 02:00 PM

**NOTE:**  
All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endst: nos.  
No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp./3377-90  
Dated: 29-06-2026.  
DIPK-2665-26  
DT: 29/06/2026

Sd/  
Executive Engineer  
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.  
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

# New Zealand crush England by 160 runs to clinch Test series in Ben Stokes' farewell

IAN S

**NOTTINGHAM:** New Zealand sealed a memorable Test series triumph over England with a commanding 160-run victory in the third and deciding Test at Trent Bridge on Monday, spoiling Ben Stokes' final appearance in international cricket and condemning the hosts to their first home defeat in a Test series of three matches or more since 2012.

Chasing a tough target of 373, England got bowled out well short after starting the final day at 103/4. They had already wasted much of their chance with a careless batting collapse late on day four. New Zealand had scored 438 in their first innings and then bowled out England for 354. Enjoying a lead of 85 runs, the Black Caps declared at 288/9 in their second innings, leaving England to chase a massive target.

This loss marked England's seventh defeat in their last nine Tests. It will likely increase the criticism of the bold 'Bazball' style that has characterised the team over the past four years.

Fans expected to see



Stokes deliver one last classic performance after announcing his retirement on the fourth afternoon. Instead, the sparse crowd at Trent Bridge, which received free tickets, only saw Jamie Smith's determined half-century as England's innings ended weakly.

England's struggles began the night before when Stokes was out after scoring a quick 30 off 20 balls. Jacob Bethell went out for a duck, Harry Brook made 21 off just nine balls, and Ben Duckett added 36 off 42. This left the hosts with a steep task overnight.

New Zealand's players could hardly believe Eng-

land's approach. Stump microphones picked up the visitors asking, "What are they doing?" after Brook lost his wicket with an ill-advised shot to deep fine leg.

England's slim hopes rested on Joe Root, but they quickly faded on the final morning. Nathan Smith, who ended the series as the top wicket-taker with 16 wickets, first dismissed Emilio Gay for 10 after finding the outside edge.

Just four balls later, Root's fight ended when Henry Nicholls made a brilliant direct-hit run out while losing his balance, sending the former England captain back for 18.

Jamie Smith and Gus Atkinson briefly delayed the inevitable with a stubborn 75-run partnership for the seventh wicket. Smith played aggressively, hitting a great straight six off Mitchell Santner during his innings of 60 from 90 balls. Atkinson batted for 70 balls to score 19.

Their partnership temporarily lowered the target below 200 before Santner trapped Atkinson lbw just before lunch.

New Zealand faced a brief challenge when pacesman Will O'Rourke hurt his hamstring midway through the morning session, adding to an already weakened

pace attack, but the visitors stayed in control.

After lunch, England's lower order collapsed quickly. Jofra Archer edged behind, and Josh Tongue was brilliantly run out by Santner shortly after Smith reached his fifty from 87 balls with three consecutive boundaries. The wicketkeeper-batter eventually holed out in the deep off Santner, ending the match and the series.

The victory capped an impressive overall performance from New Zealand. Their disciplined bowling, sharp fielding, and steady batting proved too much for England throughout the three-Test series.

For England, the loss not only marked a disappointing end to Stokes' brilliant international career but also raised new questions about the team's approach following a dramatic decline, losing seven of their last nine Test matches.

**Brief Scores:**  
New Zealand 438 & 288/9 decl. beat England 354 & 212 (Jamie Smith 60; Zakary Foulkes 3-52, Mitchell Santner 2-54, Nathan Smith 2-64) by 160 runs.

# Wimbledon: Sinner survives scary fall, Kecmanovic in dramatic five-setter

IAN S

**LONDON:** World No.1 and 2025 winner Jannik Sinner overcame a scary fall and a resilient opponent to launch his Wimbledon title defence with a hard-fought victory, getting past his opponent in five sets in the opening round of men's singles at the All-England Club in London on Monday.

Playing his first match since his shock second-round exit at the Roland Garros, Sinner returned to winning ways by battling past Miomir Kecmanovic 4-6, 6-3, 6-7(6), 6-2, 6-3, despite spraying 52 unforced errors and briefly raising hopes of a huge upset. The Italian, however, dug deep to outlast the resilient Kecmanovic in three hours, 30 minutes, starting the proceedings at the Centre Court on the opening day.

"It's such a huge honour to start the tournament," Sinner said in his on-court interview. "I was a little tight in the beginning. I didn't play my very best, but I tried to get into it. It was my first official match on grass. I'm happy that I turned it around. The third set was a very tough one to swallow."

Kecmanovic produced



an inspired display in the third set that featured an early contender for point of the tournament. Trailing 5/6 in the tie-break, the Serbian stretched Sinner from corner to corner before charging the net, forcing the Italian to dive to the turf and bringing the Centre Court crowd to its feet.

It was the second time in the set that Sinner had ended up on the grass. At 2-2, the 24-year-old suffered a worrying slip, landing awkwardly with his knees bent inwards. The fall drew gasps from the packed stands, but Sinner avoided the need for a medical timeout and quickly resumed play.

Having cut down on his unforced errors to force a deciding set, Sinner seized control of the match and raced to victory, bringing a convincing finish to a contest that had been anything but straightforward through

the opening three sets. After surviving a stern opening test, with David Beckham among those watching from the Royal Box, Sinner booked a second-round meeting with Portugal's Nuno Borges.

The No. 1 player in the PIF ATP Rankings, Sinner has now won 94 matches at major tournaments, equaling Nicola Pietrangeli's record for the most among Italians.

Sinner was avoiding becoming just the third defending men's champion to lose in the first round at Wimbledon, but he fought back with a business-like performance that drew parallels with Carlos Alcaraz's opening match last year. The Spaniard overcame Fabio Fognini in a nervy five-set clash to get his title defence underway before surging to the final, where he was stopped by Sinner.

# Women's T20 WC: The women's game is a standalone thing and is growing, says Ian Bishop

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Former West Indies fast bowler Ian Bishop firmly believes that women's cricket has now established itself as a standalone product capable of drawing massive crowds despite competing with major global sporting events.

Bishop's observations come at a historic juncture for the tournament which has been competing for attention alongside the FIFA World Cup, men's Test series against New Zealand, and Wimbledon. The group stage attendance record at an ICC Women's T20 World Cup group stage match was broken for the second time in 24 hours, as a total of 27,163 fans were in attendance at Lord's for India-Australia Group A game.

That tally went past the total of 21,018 recorded in the match between England and New Zealand at The Oval. The attendance on the final day of the group stage comes on the back of the tournament crossing the 125,000 mark in on-ground attendance, making it the highest-selling ICC Women's T20 World Cup in history.

"The women's game is a standalone thing. I think we've talked about that for a couple of years now. Even just as the pandemic started, it has grown where my little girl, just as an example close to me, now loves the game. She wants to play cricket every day. She's a teenager. She never used to play. She wasn't interested."

"Now at school, she wants to play every cricket game every day of the week



and I'm sure that is reflected across other nations. I have been to a lot more age group games in Trinidad in the last couple of years because of my daughter, and I have seen the love and passion for the game.

"So the gospel has been spreading more and more, and that is reflected also in the attendance. I still think that there's a lot going on - football World Cup, Test series with the men, Wimbledon starting, and that the numbers could have been better otherwise. So I think the women's game is growing," Bishop, an ICC Women's T20 World Cup expert, told IANS on JioStar's Media Day on Monday.

Questioned about the tournament being heavily batting-friendly with five 200-plus scores recorded and batting records broken, Bishop credited the evolution of the game and the pitches maintained by ground staff members, despite a heatwave coming in the later phase of the competition.

"I think batting form is proven. What's the example that I can use?

Obviously, England have been, with Australia, the two of the highest scoring teams in the tournament. It's no surprise that they are two out of four in the semi-finals, as it stands. If I may take the team from the region where I emanate the West Indies, and some of their struggles from a batting perspective have been critical to their faltering in the last couple of matches that they've played.

"The dominant forces have been Australia and England, who have scored runs, but who also have bowling lineups that are able to hold their own against most other competitors. Maybe in a semi-final clash or final clash, it could come down to that, because they both bat deep, England and Australia.

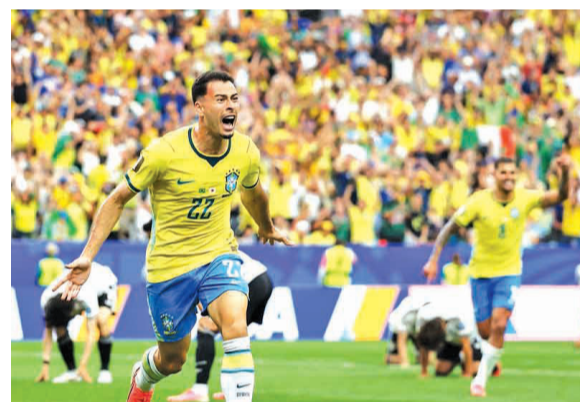
"South Africa, when they have been good? We saw Marizanne Kapp with that match-winning innings. But in addition to that, they've got good variety in their bowling. So the top teams in the world now, as in any facet of T20 cricket, you more or less have to have a dynamic batting team," he explained.

# 2026 FIFA WC: Martinelli's late winner helps Brazil advance with 2-1 win over Japan

IAN S

**HOUSTON:** Gabriel Martinelli scored the winner in the final minute of the stoppage time as five-time champions Brazil overcame a fighting Japan for a last-gasp 2-1 win and advance to the pre-quarterfinals with a thrilling comeback in the 2026 FIFA World Cup at the Houston Stadium in Houston on Monday.

The Round of 32 clash looked set for extra time as both teams were tied 1-1 at the end of regulation time and the start of six minutes of added time. But Martinelli had other ideas as he came up with a superb conversion in the final minute of the match, and Brazil, the most successful team in the tournament, sailed through to the next round. In their first knock-



out match in this edition of the World Cup, Carlo Ancelotti's Brazil fought back from a goal deficit to emerge victorious with a last-ditch goal and will now travel to New York for their next opponent.

Kaishu Sano put Japan ahead in the 29th minute, before Casemiro pulled Brazil level in the 56th

minute. Martinelli then wove his magic, sealing victory and triggering wild celebrations among the fans of the team ranked sixth in the latest FIFA Rankings.

Brazil had 55 per cent possession and unleashed 19 shots on goal, compared to five by Japan. They had seven shots on target as compared to only two by their opponent. They put up a superb defence against a side that went all out and held the upper hand in the first half.

It took a fantastic second-half fightback for Ancelotti's team to overcome an excellent Japan side who deservedly led at half-time.

The introduction of substitute Endrick helped to spark the five-time world champions Brazil, who scored through Casemiro's header, followed by Martinelli's clinical strike as the Samurai Blue finally wilted under the pressure in Houston.

After Rayan won the ball back for the Seleção in a dangerous position, his pass allowed Bruno Guimarães to thread the ball into Martinelli, who broke Japanese hearts with an

unerring low right-footed finish into Suzuki's goal via the keeper's fingers and left-hand post.

Japan were dreaming at half-time thanks to an excellent strike from Kaishu Sano, who pounced on an under-hit pass, surged into the space left by the Brazilian defence and fired home a right-footed finish for his first Japan goal.

A Houston Stadium, mostly awash in yellow, pleaded for an answer. After two close calls, a third thumping header pulled Brazil level, with Casemiro doing the honours off inch-perfect service from Gabriel Magalhaes.

If not for the fingertips of Zion Suzuki, Vinicius Junior would have given Brazil a lead just minutes later instead of lamenting a ball off the post.

# Anand to step aside as FIDE Deputy President; Prez Dvorkovich seeks third term

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Five-time World Champion Vishwanathan Anand will no longer serve as the Deputy President of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) if incumbent chief Arkady Dvorkovich secures a third term in office, with Kazakhstan Chess Federation President Timur Turlov named as the candidate for the deputy's role. However, Anand will continue to play a key role in Dvorkovich's team and support the campaign ahead of the presidential elections later this year.

Dvorkovich, who has headed FIDE since 2018, announced on

Monday that he will seek a third successive term as President at the federation's General Assembly during the 46th Chess Olympiad in Uzbekistan in September. The incumbent becomes the third candidate to enter the race after Vadim Rosenstein and Jan Buetner had already announced their bids for the presidency. Dvorkovich reflected on his eight years in office before outlining his vision for another term.

"Eight years ago, I committed to building a stronger, fairer, global FIDE. Serving as the president of FIDE for the past eight years has been an exceptional honour. Together,

we have strengthened FIDE, significantly expanded and improved global events, and invested more in children's chess, women's competitions, senior chess, education, and social programmes. But this is not the endpoint. It is the foundation. That is why today I am announcing that I will seek another term as President of the International Chess Federation. Every federation deserves opportunities to grow, with support tailored to its needs and circumstances. Every player and chess enthusiast deserves a place in our global chess family. Every move counts. Every matters," Dvorkovich wrote on X.

## Movies Watchlist

Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> June

- CARRY ON JATTA 4 (PUNJABI)** (U/A 13+) 08:15 PM
- MAIN VAAPAS AAUNGA** (HINDI) (U/A 16+) 11:35 AM, 02:55 PM, 06:15 PM
- COCKTAIL 2** (HINDI) (A) 11:00 AM, 04:30 PM
- SUPERGIRL** (ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES) (U/A 16+) 02:00 PM
- WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE** (U/A 16+) HINDI ATMOS - 10:30 AM, 01:45 PM, 05:00 PM HINDI - 07:30 PM

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