

IIS Officer Trainees call on LG Sinha



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A group of 16 Indian Information Service (IIS) Officer Trainees, Group 'B' of the 2023 Batch called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, at Lok Bhavan Saturday. They were accompanied by Shri Qazi Salman, Director, Press Information Bureau

(PIB), Srinagar.

The Lieutenant Governor extended his best wishes to the Officer Trainees for their future endeavors. He exhorted them to work with the utmost sensitivity, integrity, and dedication, while serving in different departments.

The Lieutenant Governor also discussed the

evolving landscape of public communication and the vital need for credible and timely information dissemination in the digital era.

The Officer Trainees shared the experiences from their visit to Jammu Kashmir, as a part of the Bharat Darshan tour programme.

Questions NC's Protest Call

Bali Congratulates Gundipora Residents on Long-Pending Road Project

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Vivek Bali, State President , Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP), on Saturday visited Gundipora in south Kashmir's Kulgam district along with the party's Political Advisor, Dilawar Singh. During the visit, they interacted with local residents and reviewed the progress of a long-pending road project.

Addressing the gathering, Vivek Bali congratulated the people of Gundipora on the resolution of the long-pending road issue, stating that the project had remained neglected for many years despite successive governments. He recalled that during his previous visit to the area, he had assured the residents that he would take up the matter with the concerned authorities.

Speaking to reporters, Bali said the project gained momentum during the tenure of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. He expressed gratitude to the LG Administration for supporting the development of the region and also appreciated the efforts of the then Deputy Com-



missioner of Kulgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, for facilitating the project.

He informed that the remaining macadamization work is expected to commence shortly and expressed confidence that the road would soon be completed, providing much-needed relief and improved connectivity to the people of Gundipora.

Bali also thanked the residents for their patience, trust, and continued support, stating that their cooperation played an important role in bringing attention to the long-pending public issue.

Responding to a question from journalists regarding the National Conference's proposed protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, Bali ques-

tioned whether the party's Member of Parliament, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, would participate in the demonstration. He further alleged that the National Conference-led government had failed to address public issues effectively on the ground and asserted that the SBSP was steadily strengthening its organizational presence across Jammu and Kashmir.

SBSP Political Advisor Dilawar Singh also appreciated the efforts of the administration in advancing the road project. He reaffirmed the party's commitment to highlighting public grievances and working for the welfare, development, and overall progress of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

DDC Kulgam review functioning of Education Deptt in district



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: A review meeting of the Education Department was held under the Chairmanship of the District Development Commissioner (DDC), Kulgam, Shahzad Alam to assess the progress of key educational programmes and infrastructure projects across the district.

The Chief Education Officer presented the status of PM POSHAN, Samagra Shiksha, APAAR, UDISE+, civil works, school infrastructure, KGBVs, Girls' Hostels, and other important initiatives.

After reviewing the progress, the Chair directed that all pending civil works be completed on priority by resolving land and other issues in coordination with the concerned departments. Regular inspections of schools, KGBVs, and Girls' Hostels were emphasized to improve infrastructure, academic standards, and implementation of PM POSHAN. Strict adherence to food quality, hygiene, timely lifting of food grains, and proper record maintenance was also stressed.

The Chair further directed that 100% APAAR ID generation, UDISE+ data updation, and regis-

tration of all eligible Class 5 students for JNVST 2027-28 be completed within the prescribed timelines. It was impressed that the vacancies of Cook-cum-Helpers shall be filled as per norms, and their training on hygiene and food safety shall be ensured. Convergence with the Health Department, establishment of School Nutrition Gardens, effective implementation of vocational education, solarisation of schools, construction of boundary walls, and provision of safe drinking water facilities were also emphasized.

To improve the overall learning environment, one Pilot Model School shall be developed in each educational zone with upgraded infrastructure and basic amenities. The Chief Education Officer was directed to closely monitor the implementation of all decisions, while Zonal Education Officers were directed to conduct regular field visits and submit progress reports. The Chair stressed that timely execution, accountability, and effective coordination at all levels are essential to achieve the desired outcomes and improve the quality of education across District Kulgam.

DLSA organises Legal Awareness Programme on World Population Day

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: In observance of World Population Day, 2026, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal, under the guidance of Abdul Nasir, Chairman, DLSA,



(Principal District & Sessions Judge), Ganderbal and under the supervision of Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal, organised a Legal Awareness Programme at District Hospital (DH), Ganderbal.

The programme was conducted with the objective of creating awareness regarding population issues, reproductive health, family welfare, and the legal rights and entitlements available to citizens.

On the occasion, Assistant Legal Aid Defence Counsels acted as Resource Persons and sensitised the participants on the importance of population stabilisation, maternal and reproductive health, responsible parenthood, gender equality, and the role of legal awareness in

promoting the well-being of families.

The Resource Persons also highlighted the provisions of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, informing the participants about their right to free legal aid, the legal assis-

tance available through Legal Services Institutions, and the importance of seeking legal remedies for the protection of their rights.

The programme witnessed active participation from the hospital officials and staff, who appreciated the initiative undertaken by DLSA Ganderbal to spread awareness on issues of public importance.

The programme concluded on an interactive note, with participants seeking clarification on various legal and social issues relating to population and reproductive health. The Resource Persons responded to the queries in detail and emphasized the importance of legal awareness in empowering citizens to safeguard their rights and avail free legal aid.

CEO SSCL conducts extensive inspection of historic Water Channels across Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a significant initiative aimed at undertaking a comprehensive assessment of Srinagar's historic water network, the Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Faz Lul Haseeb, Saturday conducted an extensive inspection of several historic water channels and rivulets across the city, including Kutte Kul, Sonar Kul, Rainawari Kul, and other interconnected waterways.

The inspection was undertaken to obtain a first-hand assessment of the present condition of these water channels, examine their hydraulic connectivity, and evaluate various factors influencing their overall status.

During the visit, the CEO extensively inspected different stretches of the waterways, assessing issues such as silt accumulation, vegetation growth, obstructions, encroachments, discharge points, and other location-specific conditions requiring detailed technical evaluation.

Interacting with officers and engineers on-site, Haseeb underscored the historical, ecological, and urban significance of Srinagar's traditional water channels, observing that these waterways form an



integral part of the city's unique landscape. He directed the concerned officers to undertake detailed documentation and technical assessments of the inspected stretches, along with comprehensive field observations, to establish an accurate baseline of their existing condition.

The CEO emphasized that the conservation and restoration of Srinagar's traditional water channels are essential for mitigating waterlogging, enhancing environmental sustainability, and preserving the city's centuries-old water heritage.

He further stressed the need for close coordination among all stakeholder departments to ensure the long-term conservation

and rejuvenation of these vital water bodies. He emphasized that scientific assessments, coordinated planning, and institutional collaboration are essential for safeguarding these important urban assets.

Interacting with local residents during the inspection, Haseeb emphasized the importance of public participation in protecting the traditional waterways and appealed to citizens to refrain from dumping waste into the channels and to cooperate with the administration in maintaining their cleanliness and ecological health.

The CEO was accompanied by senior officers and engineers of Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL) during the inspection.

Dir Extension SKUAST-K visits KVK B'pora-I; reviews Research, Extension activities

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Director Extension, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), Dr. Raihana Habib Kanth, Saturday visited KVK Bandipora-1 to review its ongoing research, demonstration, and extension activities.

On the occasion, Senior Scientist and Head, KVK Bandipora-1, Dr. Tariq Sultan, briefed the Director about the Centre's major research, frontline demonstrations, extension programmes, and innovative initiatives undertaken for the benefit of the farming community.

During the visit, the



Director inspected the Lotus Demonstration Plots, Makhana Demonstration Plots, Water Chestnut Units, Paddy Research Fields, High-tech Greenhouses, and other research and demonstration units established at KVK Bandipora-1. She reviewed the technologies being promoted by the Centre and appreciated their potential in enhancing crop diversi-

fication, improving farm productivity, and generating sustainable livelihood opportunities for farmers.

Interacting with the scientists, Dr. Raihana Habib Kanth emphasized the importance of strengthening the linkage between research and extension to ensure the effective dissemination of scientific technologies among farming communities. She high-

DC G'bal visits Yatra Transit Camp Manigam, takes stock of facilities for devotees

Directs highest standards of facilities for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatris

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, Saturday visited the Yatra Transit Camp at Manigam to review the arrangements and facilities put in place for the smooth stay and welfare of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatris.

During the visit, the DC undertook a comprehensive inspection of the camp and reviewed the functioning of various facilities, including medical services. He interacted

ensure a clean, healthy and comfortable environment for the pilgrims.

As part of the visit, the DC interacted with officers deployed at the camp, inspected various langars and met with the Yatris to receive firsthand feedback about the facilities and services being provided. He reiterated that the comfort, safety and well-being of every pilgrim must remain the top priority of all departments.

Emphasizing a pilgrim-centric approach, the DC directed all officers and



with patients and healthcare staff to assess the quality of services and directed the medical teams to remain fully prepared to provide prompt and efficient healthcare to every pilgrim.

The DC also inspected sanitation and cleanliness arrangements across the transit camp and instructed the concerned departments to maintain the highest standards of hygiene to

frontline staff to extend every possible assistance to the Yatris with courtesy, compassion and promptness, ensuring that no pilgrim faces any inconvenience during their stay at the transit camp.

The DC also stressed close coordination among all line departments to ensure seamless delivery of essential services and immediate redressal of any issues arising at the camp.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA.

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT No: 54/EEA/R&B of 2026-27/3010-20 Dated: 11-07-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways sand other State/ Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Upgradation and improvement (Construction of chain link Fencing and Iron Gate) at Gulshanpora Tral District Pulwama.	6.90	300/-	2% of Adv cost	45 days	UT CAPEX Budget 2026-27 (Social Forestry)	CEE, DEE	Department of Social Forestry Kashmir

Position of AAA: Accorded vide No. 22-DSF of 2026 Dated: 18.06.2026.

Position of funds: Committed.

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	11-07-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	11-07-2026
3	Bid submission Start Date	12-07-2026
4	Bid Submission End Date	23-07-2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	24-07-2026 12:00 PM

1.

Every participating contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. (As per circular No. 01(ADM) FD of 2025 Dated 08-07-2025 of J&K Finance Department)

(The participating contractor may disclose his Bank Account as per the format, devised as Annexure- A of the NIT and submit/ upload the same accordingly at the time of submission of the bid).

2.

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document/Tender Fee to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG)

3.

All the bidders must deposit Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG)

4.

The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG), which shall be released after successful completion of DLP /maintenance period.

5.

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an 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 R&B Division Awantipora (tender receiving authority).

6.

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids

Sd/-
Draftsman

Sd/-
Technical Officer

DIPK-3139-26
DT: 11/07/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Awantipora

CMYK

J&K's high-altitude areas warmed by nearly 1°C in two decades: Study

IIT Kharagpur research finds Pahalgam, Gulmarg warming faster

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: High-altitude regions of Jammu and Kashmir, including the tourist destinations of Pahalgam and Gulmarg, have witnessed a temperature rise of nearly 1°C over the last two decades, highlighting the growing impact of climate change on the fragile Himalayan ecosystem, according to a new scientific study.

The study, titled "Warming of the High-Mountainous Climate Sensitive Jammu and Kashmir During the Period 1980-2024", was conducted by researchers G.S. Gopikrishnan, Jayanarayanan Kuttipurath and V.M. Pranav Chandran from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur.

The researchers analysed temperature records from 1980 to 2024 using observations from ten India Meteorological Department (IMD) stations across Jammu and Kashmir, including Jammu, Srinagar, Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Kupwara, Kokernag, Qazigund, Banihal, Batote and Bhaderwah.

The study found that warming is not uniform across the region. Mid-



and high-altitude areas have experienced a stronger rise in temperatures than lower-altitude locations, a phenomenon known as Elevation-Dependent Warming (EDW). The strongest warming was recorded during winter, particularly in daytime temperatures at higher elevations. According to the findings, Pahalgam and Gulmarg have warmed by nearly 1°C over the past two decades, while several mid-elevation stations also showed significant increases in average temperatures. Bhaderwah recorded one of the highest annual warming trends of around 0.3°C per decade.

The study also found that night-time temperatures are increasing faster

than daytime temperatures across many mountain stations. Minimum temperatures rose by 0.1°C to 0.5°C per decade in several mid- and high-altitude locations, indicating reduced night-time cooling.

Researchers attribute the winter warming at higher elevations mainly to surface albedo changes, where shrinking snow cover exposes darker ground that absorbs more solar radiation. Rising atmospheric moisture and increased longwave radiation were identified as key contributors to the rapid increase in night-time temperatures.

The authors cautioned that continued warming in Jammu and Kashmir's mountain regions could have serious implications

for glaciers, snow cover, river flows, biodiversity and water security, affecting millions of people dependent on Himalayan water resources.

While the study confirms significant warming trends across the region, the researchers noted that observations above 3,000 metres remain limited and called for a denser network of high-altitude weather stations to improve future climate assessments.

The findings add to growing evidence that the Western Himalaya is becoming increasingly vulnerable to climate change, underlining the need for stronger adaptation strategies to safeguard the region's fragile mountain ecosystems and water resources—(KNO)

Javed Rana reviews PHE, I&FC functioning in Jammu Division

Stresses uninterrupted water supply, robust flood preparedness

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology, Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Civil Secretariat here to assess the functioning of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) and Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC) departments across Jammu Division.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Engineer PHE Jammu, Chief Engineer I&FC Jammu, besides Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers of Flood Control Divisions.

During the meeting, Javed Rana enquired about the physical and financial progress of schemes under PMKSY-HKPK, UT CAPEX, NABARD, SASCI, DA-JGUA and other programmes. He emphasised the need for proactive planning to ensure uninterrupted water supply and robust flood management across the division. He directed that all schemes be completed within the stipulated timeframe so that they can be put to public use at the earliest.

Maintaining that ensuring adequate water supply is a prerogative of the



government, the Minister directed the officers to ensure all water supply schemes remain functional at full capacity, with preventive maintenance completed at regular intervals. He made it clear that no lapse in drinking water availability would be tolerated and responsibility would be fixed for any lapses.

He also directed the officers for expediting work on JJM schemes nearing completion to ensure timely commissioning so that benefits reach people without delay while also emphasising the inspections of critical water supply infrastructure.

Regarding the functioning of water tankers in Jammu city and other parts of the division, Rana directed for their efficient deployment at appropriate locations, with filling stations identified for efficient loading. He further directed

for daily monitoring of water source discharge rates and groundwater levels across all districts, along with weekly review and coordination meetings to maintain operational oversight and address emerging challenges proactively.

During the meeting, the Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti (I&FC), Jammu, gave a presentation on works completed so far, future plans and the department's contingency arrangements.

The Minister was informed that dewatering pumps have been deployed across districts as per past practice to meet any eventuality. He directed that standby pumps and generators be positioned at strategic locations, with adequate stocks of spare parts.

On flood preparedness, Javed Rana reviewed mitigation measures across vulnerable areas and directed the officers to

adopt both structural and non-structural measures, with effective coordination for timely response. He underscored the importance of technology-driven early warning systems and robust inter-agency coordination in view of the heightened vulnerability to floods and other weather-related calamities.

He also directed the officers to expedite projects under the SASCI Disaster Programme in mission mode, particularly at locations previously affected by floods, to strengthen flood protection and irrigation infrastructure. He called for close monitoring to ensure the programme's benefits are realised on the ground without delay.

The Chief Engineer was directed to submit details of all completed and ongoing projects in the flood and irrigation sectors.

The Minister directed the officers to ensure that Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for all new schemes are prepared comprehensively, covering all the technical, financial and operational aspects in detail so that projects are implemented smoothly without the need for subsequent revisions or cost escalations.

Government places 539 Masters as Incharge Headmasters

Sakeena Itoo says landmark decision will improve educational outcomes across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a significant step aimed at strengthening the administrative and academic framework of government schools, the Jammu and Kashmir Government has placed 539 Masters of School Education department as in-charge Headmasters and posted them in various schools across length and breadth of Jammu and Kashmir.

The decision marks a major initiative towards ensuring effective school leadership, addressing administrative requirements and enhancing the overall quality of education in government schools.

Speaking on this landmark development, Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo said that this significant decision reflects the Government's unwavering commitment to improving educational standards and ensuring better academic outcomes for students across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister said that strong institutional leadership plays a pivotal role in improving teaching-learning processes, enhancing



accountability and creating a conducive environment for quality education. She expressed confidence that the placement of 539 Masters as Incharge Headmasters will significantly strengthen school administration and contribute to improved educational performance at the grassroots level.

Sakeena Itoo reiterated that the present Government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, remains committed to upgrading educational institutions by ensuring adequate human resources, improving infrastructure and implementing progressive reforms across the education sector.

She further said that the Government is taking a series of measures to modernise the school education system, bridge existing gaps and provide students with access to quality education in a vibrant academic environment.

The Minister also said

MP Khatana inspects Dev works in Bathindi; Reviews development, civic works

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Member Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana Saturday conducted an extensive inspection of Ward No. 74 (Bathindi-Sunjan) and its adjoining localities to review the progress of ongoing development works and assess the status of essential civic infrastructure. He was accompanied by Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) Dr. Devansh Yadav.



During the visit, the Member Parliament interacted with locals and patiently listened to their grievances and suggestions. The residents highlighted various civic issues, including damaged roads, inadequate drainage, desilting and cleaning of drains, construction of new drains at vulnerable locations, sanitation, beautification of public spaces, drinking water supply and other essential civic amenities. He conducted on-the-spot inspections of the affected locations and issued necessary directions to the concerned officers for the prompt execution of the

required works. Special emphasis was laid on strengthening the drainage network to ensure efficient stormwater disposal and prevent waterlogging during the ongoing monsoon season. The Member Parliament reviewed the progress of drain-cleaning operations, identified critical locations requiring additional drainage infrastructure and directed the concerned officials to prepare and implement comprehensive measures for improving civic

facilities across the area. Addressing the residents, the Member Parliament reiterated his commitment to the holistic development of Bathindi-Sunjan and adjoining areas. He stated that all developmental works falling within the jurisdiction of the Jammu Municipal Corporation would be expedited in close coordination with the concerned departments. He assured the public that every genuine issue would receive due attention and that sustained efforts would be made to provide improved civic amenities and robust public infrastructure.

Police Attach Rs 1.20 Crore House Under NDPS Act in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Police in central Kashmir's Srinagar district on Saturday attached a double-storey residential house worth more than Rs 1.20 crore under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, as part of the ongoing crackdown on drug trafficking.

According to a police statement, the property, constructed on eight marlas of land, was attached by Police Station Lal Bazar during the investigation of FIR No. 16/2026, registered under Sections 8/20 and 29 of the NDPS Act.

Police identified the owner of the attached property as Zamin Makhdoomi, son of Fayaz Ahmed Makhdoomi, a resident of Sikh Bagh, Lal Bazar.

During the investigation, police said it was established that the prop-

erty was liable for attachment under Section 68-F of the NDPS Act, following which the competent legal process was initiated.

The attachment proceedings were carried out in the presence of the Executive Magistrate, Eidgah, and in accordance with the due process of law, police said.

Srinagar Police said the action forms part of its strategy to not only prosecute those involved in narcotics offences but also dismantle the financial infrastructure of the illegal drug trade by depriving traffickers of assets allegedly acquired through illicit activities. History

Police also appealed to the public to share credible information regarding drug peddling and other criminal activities, assuring that the identity of informers would be kept strictly confidential.

Decongesting Sopore, improving Fruit Mandi connectivity top priorities: MLA Kar

AGENCIES

SOPORE: Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Sopore Irshad Rasool Kar on Saturday said decongesting Sopore town remains one of his top priorities, while assuring that the long-awaited vital Mazbug Bridge will be thrown open to the public within the current financial year.

Kar said the government is working on improving road connectivity across the constituency, with special focus on strengthening the road link to the Sopore Fruit Mandi to support the horticulture sector.

"Decongestion of Sopore is among our priorities. Better road connectivity, especially to the Fruit Mandi, will provide a major boost to horticulture," he said.

The MLA said the Mazbug Bridge project is progressing steadily and is expected to be completed during the present financial year. He added that most development works

across the constituency are on schedule.

"Departments are making efforts, and the timelines of most projects are on track. The Gogidaji and Seer footbridges are pending, but the concerned departments will also take up those works," he said.

The National Conference (NC) leader said beautification and road improvement works are being carried out with the available resources, while urging people to remain patient as connectivity improves.

On the recurring water scarcity in Sopore, Kar acknowledged the inconvenience faced by residents and attributed the crisis to temporary disruption of some water supply schemes, pipeline ruptures and increased demand from the agriculture and horticulture sectors.

"All major water supply projects will be taken up over the next couple of years. Once completed, they will provide a lasting solution to the problem," he said.

Lakhanpur selected among 50 street food hubs under PM SVANidhi scheme: Dr Jitendra

YOGESH

JAMMU: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, on Saturday announced that the Centre has selected Lakhanpur, the gateway town to Jammu and Kashmir on the Punjab border, for development as a Street Food Hub under a new national initiative.

Dr Singh, who is also the Member Parliament from the Jammu-Udhampur-Kathua-Doda constituency, while sharing the development said, "The initiative is aimed at promoting local culinary heritage and providing dignified livelihood opportunities to street vendors."

He said Lakhanpur is among the first 50 towns across the country chosen under the Government of India's Street Food Hub initiative being implemented as part of the PM SVANidhi scheme.

Calling it "good news for Kathua," the Union Minister said the project would transform Lakhanpur into a world-class vending destination while preserving and showcasing its rich food culture. "Street Food Hubs are sought to be developed as world-class



vending spaces that will promote local culinary heritage and at the same time ensure dignified livelihood for street vendors," Dr. Singh said.

He added that the scheme envisages financial assistance along with additional financial incentives for the development of the proposed hub.

According to Dr. Singh, the proposed Street Food Hub at Lakhanpur Market will comprise two clusters—one near the Old Bus Stand and another near the Sales Tax Office—to facilitate organized vending and improve amenities for visitors and vendors alike.

Expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dr. Singh said the inclusion of Lakhanpur in the very first phase of the national programme reflects the Centre's priority towards the development of Jammu and Kashmir.

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

GOVT. DEGREE COLLEGE DANGIWACHA

BARAMULLA 193303

Website: gdc dangiwacha.edu.in,
Email: gdc dangiwacha786@gmail.com
NO: GD CD/2026/182 | Date:10-07-2026

EXPRESS ION OF INTEREST

Expression of Interest is invited from all the registered members of the Association of Indian Publishers and Book Suppliers (AIPBS) to offer the maximum possible discount, separately for Paperback and hardbound (hardcover), for the supply of Books/periodicals/Reference books for the college Library. The interested parties are requested to offer maximum possible discount for the Library of the College. The discount offers should be accompanied by a CDR amounting to Rs 5000 (Five thousand only) Pledged to Principal GDC Dangi wacha. The offers should reach the college by or before 20-07-2026 up to 4 PM. The interested parties are requested to collect the application form along with Terms and Conditions agreement from the office of the undersigned during official working hours or download from the college website <https://gdc dangiwacha.edu.in/>. The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the offers without any reason.

Sd/
Principal
GDC Dangi wacha

DIPK-3138-26
DT: 11/07/2026



Email ID: gmdic-srinagar@jk.gov.in
TEL/FAX: 0194-2427478

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

DISTRICT INDUSTRIES CENTRE, SRINAGAR

Near Petrol Pump Baghi Ali Mardan Khan, Srinagar - 190011

PUBLIC NOTICE

M/s Friends Concrete Products I/E Khunmoh, Srinagar under No. 01/003/09486/ PMT/MSME dated 30.06.2022 for the activity of "RCC Spun pipe, hollow/Solid cement blocks", as partnership concern of (1) Mr. Hital Ahmad Mir S/o Abdul Majid Mir R/o Khunmoh, Srinagar and (2) Mr. Umar Nazir Khan S/o Nazir Ahmad Khan R/o Khunmoh, Srinagar.

Now the partners of the unit have approached this office with the request to change of constitution by way of retirement of partner namely Mr. Umar Nazir Khan S/o Nazir Ahmad Khan R/o Khunmoh, Srinagar.

Any person having any objection with regard to the above mentioned change of constitution by way of retirement of partner namely Mr. Umar Nazir Khan S/o Nazir Ahmad Khan R/o Khunmoh, Srinagar in favour of the unit, shall report to the Office of General Manager, District Industries Centre, Srinagar within a period of 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained.

General Manager
District Industries Centre
Srinagar

DIPK-3163-26
DT: 11/07/2026

Good Morning Kashmir

Statehood Cannot Remain An Endless Promise

The demand for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood has once again returned to the centre of political discourse. What was once presented as a solemn assurance now risks being viewed as an unending promise, with every passing month adding to public frustration. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's latest remarks reflect a growing sense of impatience within the elected government. His warning that patience should not be mistaken for weakness carries a political message not only for New Delhi but also for the people who voted with the expectation that democratic institutions would gradually regain their full powers.

For nearly two years, the National Conference government has largely chosen dialogue over confrontation. Omar Abdullah repeatedly maintained that statehood would be restored through engagement with the Centre rather than street protests. However, the proposed protest at Jantar Mantar suggests that confidence in that approach is beginning to wear thin.

The issue is no longer about political prestige. It is about democratic accountability. Jammu and Kashmir today has an elected government, yet crucial powers remain outside its control. This often leaves the administration answerable to the people without possessing the authority required to address many of their concerns effectively.

The Centre has consistently maintained that statehood will be restored "at the appropriate time." While such assurances may have initially inspired hope, they now invite an obvious question: when exactly is that appropriate time? Without a clear roadmap or timeline, repeated promises risk losing their credibility.

At the same time, the debate over statehood should not become a convenient diversion from governance. The people of Jammu and Kashmir are grappling with inflation, unemployment, poor infrastructure, and inadequate public services. Political leaders, whether in Srinagar or Delhi, cannot afford to let constitutional questions overshadow the everyday struggles of ordinary citizens.

Statehood is not merely a political slogan. It represents the restoration of democratic dignity, greater administrative autonomy, and stronger accountability to the electorate. If the commitment to restore it was made publicly, it deserves a transparent and time-bound response.

The people of Jammu and Kashmir have shown remarkable patience over the years. Patience, however, cannot be expected to last indefinitely. Democracy thrives on trust, and trust survives only when promises are honoured. The time has come for clarity, not ambiguity; for action, not assurances. Only then can confidence in the democratic process truly be restored.

Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra

A Divine Pilgrimage That Unites Faith, Humanity And The Nation



SACHIN BALI

The annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra is far more than a pilgrimage to one of Hinduism's holiest shrines. It is a profound spiritual journey that embodies India's civilisational continuity, cultural heritage and the timeless ideals of Sanatan Dharma. Every year, the sacred Himalayan cave of Baba Barfani draws devotees from every corner of India and from across the world, reaffirming that faith transcends geography, language and social barriers.

The response to this year's Yatra has once again been extraordinary. Within the first six days alone, more than two lakh devotees had paid obeisance at the holy cave, reflecting the ever-growing faith of pilgrims. Over the years, the number of yatis has consistently increased, demonstrating that the spiritual magnetism of Shri Amarnath Ji continues to inspire generations of devotees.

The Amarnath Yatra is not merely a trek through the rugged Himalayas; it is a divine spiritual discipline. Every step towards the holy cave is an act of devotion, perseverance and self-realisation. The physical hardships of the journey become a means of inner purification, reminding pilgrims that the path to the Divine demands faith, patience and surrender. The Yatra is as much about reaching the sacred cave as it is about discovering the light within oneself.

The holy cave occupies a unique place in Sanatan tradition. According to ancient belief, it was here that Lord Shiva revealed the Amar Katha—the eternal secret of life and immortality—to Goddess Parvati. To ensure complete secrecy, Mahadev is believed to have left behind Nandi, the Moon, Vasuki, Lord Ganesha and the five elements before entering the cave. Yet, tradition speaks of the immortal pair of pigeons that survived to hear the divine discourse



and continue to symbolise eternity and unwavering devotion.

The shrine also finds mention in the broader spiritual traditions associated with ancient Kashmir, including references linked to the Nilamata Purana. Many traditional accounts further associate the Himalayan region with the meditation and spiritual journeys of , whose efforts revitalised Sanatan Dharma across the Indian subcontinent. These traditions underscore the cave's enduring place in India's sacred geography.

Beyond its religious significance, the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra is a remarkable example of national unity and harmonious coexistence. As pilgrims travel through Jammu & Kashmir, they are welcomed by local residents from different communities with warmth, flowers and heartfelt hospitality. This enduring tradition demonstrates that the true purpose of faith is to unite people. The Yatra reflects India's age-old philosophy that while methods of worship may differ, humanity remains one.

Equally inspiring is the spirit of seva witnessed throughout the pilgrimage. Thousands of volunteers, langar committees, civil administration, security forces, healthcare professionals, sanitation workers and local communities work shoulder to shoulder to ensure that every devotee completes the journey safely and with dignity. Their selfless service reflects the Sanatan ideal that serving humanity is itself a form of worship.

The arrangements for the Yatra have reached unprecedented standards in recent years. Modern infrastructure, RFID-based pilgrim tracking, grid-based electricity up to the holy cave through the Baltal route, real-time monitoring, integrated command and control systems, improved accommodation facilities and enhanced medical preparedness have transformed the pilgrimage experience while preserving its spiritual essence. These initiatives have made one of the world's most challenging pilgrimages safer, more organised and more accessible than ever before.

One of the most touching aspects of the Yatra is the participation of Divyangjan and elderly pilgrims. Every year, specially abled devotees overcome physical challenges to seek the blessings of Baba Barfani. Their successful pilgrimage is a living testimony to the strength of human faith and the inclusive arrangements made by the administration. It reminds us that devotion

knows no physical limitations.

The Yatra also reflects India's growing commitment to sustainable pilgrimage. Efforts towards a cleaner, greener and plastic-free Yatra, improved waste management and protection of the fragile Himalayan ecosystem reinforce the belief that reverence for nature is an integral part of Sanatan Dharma. Respect for the mountains that host the abode of Mahadev is itself an act of devotion.

Ultimately, Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra is much more than an annual religious event. It is a living celebration of faith, resilience, service, unity and coexistence. Amidst the majestic Himalayas, lakhs of devotees chant "Har Har Mahadev" in unison, reminding the world that spirituality has the power to unite hearts beyond every social, linguistic and regional divide.

As the number of pilgrims continues to rise year after year, the Yatra stands not only as a symbol of unwavering devotion to Lord Shiva but also as a shining example of India's enduring spiritual heritage, inclusive traditions and collective national consciousness.

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Peer Pressure And Its Social Grip: Impact On Minds And Communities



DR. REYAZ AHMAD

Peer pressure is a powerful social force that influences individuals and communities, shaping their behaviours, decisions, and societal norms. While it can have both positive and negative effects, its impact varies across cultural contexts. In India, peer pressure is often linked to academic success, family expectations, and societal norms. In contrast, Western countries experience peer pressure more prominently in areas such as social behaviour, work culture, and personal lifestyle choices. This article explores the impact of peer pressure in both settings, supported by real-life examples.

Peer Pressure

India's collectivist society places significant importance on conformity, making peer pressure a dominant force in shaping personal and communal decisions.

1. Academic and Career Pressure

Education is one of the most common areas where peer pressure affects Indian students. The societal push for securing government jobs or pursuing specific professions often overrides individual interests.

Real-Life Example:

The Kota Education Crisis – Kota, Rajasthan, is home to thousands of students preparing for IIT-JEE and NEET exams. The immense pressure to succeed has led to rising student suicides. In 2023 alone, 26

students died by suicide in Kota due to academic stress, highlighting the dark side of peer pressure in education.

Real-Life Example:

IAS Aspirants in Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar – Many students in Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar, a coaching hub for the UPSC Civil Services Exam, spend years attempting to crack one of the toughest exams in the country. The pressure from family and peers forces many to continue preparing despite repeated failures, leading to mental health issues and financial strain.

2. Social and Cultural Norms

Indian society expects individuals to conform to traditional norms regarding marriage, gender roles, and lifestyle choices.

Real-Life Example:

The Case of Nikita Tomar (Honor Killing, Haryana) – In 2020, a young woman named Nikita Tomar was killed for rejecting a marriage proposal. Such incidents highlight the intense societal and familial pressure placed on individuals to follow traditional marriage norms, often at the cost of personal freedom and safety.

3. Financial and Lifestyle Pressures

Consumerism and societal expectations often push people to spend beyond their means to maintain a certain social status.

Real-Life Example:

Big Fat Indian Weddings – In India, weddings are seen as a status symbol, with families spending exorbitant amounts of money to match societal expectations. The 2023 wedding of Anant Ambani, estimated to cost over 1,000 crores, set a new benchmark, increasing the pressure on middle-class families to host extravagant ceremonies even when finan-



cially unsustainable.

Real-Life Example:

Social Media Influencer Culture – The rise of Instagram and YouTube influencers has led to peer pressure among young Indians to buy luxury products, travel frequently, and present an idealized lifestyle, often leading to financial strain and anxiety.

Peer Pressure Abroad

In Western societies, peer pressure manifests in areas such as workplace expectations, lifestyle choices, and social media trends.

1. Substance Abuse and Risky Behaviour

The influence of peer groups plays a major role in substance use and other high-risk behaviours among youth.

Real-Life Example:

The "Binge Drinking Culture" in the UK and USA – College students in the US and UK often feel pressured to engage in binge drinking to fit in. According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), nearly 50% of college students in the US engage in excessive drinking due to peer influence.

Real-Life Example:

The Tide Pod Challenge (USA, 2018) – Social media peer pressure led teenagers to consume toxic laundry deter-

gent pods for viral videos. This dangerous trend resulted in multiple hospitalizations and poison control warnings.

2. Body Image and Social Media Influence

Social media has intensified peer pressure related to body image, leading to eating disorders and mental health issues.

Real-Life Example:

Kylie Jenner Lip Challenge (USA, 2015) – Teenagers worldwide attempted to plump their lips using vacuum suction, inspired by Kylie Jenner's appearance. Many suffered bruising and permanent lip damage due to the challenge, showcasing the negative influence of social media peer pressure.

Real-Life Example:

The Impact of Instagram Filters – Studies show that apps like Instagram contribute to increased body dysmorphia, especially among teenage girls. The pressure to appear "flawless" online has led to a rise in plastic surgeries and mental health issues.

3. Career and Workplace Pressures

In many developed nations, workplace culture fosters high-stress environments where employees feel pressured to overwork.

Real-Life Example:

Karoshi (Death by Over-

work) in Japan – The term karoshi refers to employees dying due to excessive work hours. Japan's corporate culture encourages long work hours, often forcing individuals to sacrifice personal well-being for professional success. The government has had to introduce work-life balance laws to curb this issue.

Real-Life Example:

The "Hustle Culture" in Silicon Valley – Tech workers in Silicon Valley often feel pressured to work 80-hour weeks to stay ahead in the competitive industry. Many suffer from burnout, anxiety, and depression, leading to a growing conversation about mental health in the workplace.

Conclusion

Peer pressure affects individuals and communities worldwide, albeit in different ways. In India, it predominantly influences education, societal norms, and financial decisions, while in Western countries, it impacts lifestyle choices, workplace culture, and social behavior. Although peer pressure can sometimes encourage positive behavior, such as promoting hard work and social activism—its negative effects often lead to stress, anxiety, and unhealthy decision-making.

Understanding and resisting negative peer pressure is crucial for mental well-being and personal growth. By promoting self-awareness, independent decision-making, and supportive communities, individuals can navigate societal expectations without succumbing to undue pressure.

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Good Morning Kashmir

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B-11, Budshah Flats, Jehangir Chowk, Srinagar-190001
Printed at:
Khidmat Offset Printing Press, The Bund, Srinagar
Published From:
Main Bus Stand, Near Masjid Rehmat, Lal Bazar, Srinagar - 190023
Layout Designer
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Addiction To Smartphones: A Silent Crisis Of The Digital Age

DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

The smartphone has undoubtedly become one of the greatest inventions of the twenty-first century. It has transformed communication, education, healthcare, commerce, entertainment, and social interaction in unprecedented ways. With a device that fits comfortably into a pocket, people can access a universe of information, attend virtual classes, conduct business meetings, pay bills, shop online, and connect instantly with loved ones across continents. However, every technological revolution carries its own challenges. Alongside its remarkable benefits, the excessive use of smartphones and addictive game applications has emerged as one of the most pressing public health and social concerns of our time.

Smartphone addiction among Kashmiri youth has emerged as a growing social and psychological concern, reshaping daily life, academic performance, and interpersonal relationships. The widespread availability of affordable devices and constant internet access has made smartphones an integral part of young people's routines, but this dependence often crosses into compulsive use. Many adolescents spend hours scrolling through social media, gaming, or consuming short form videos, which gradually reduces their attention span and weakens their ability to focus on studies. Teachers across the Valley report declining classroom engagement, while parents observe increasing irritability and withdrawal when devices are restricted. Beyond academics, excessive screen time contributes to anxiety, sleep disturbances, and reduced physical activity, creating a cycle where digital escape becomes a coping mechanism for stress and uncertainty. The cultural fabric of Kashmir, once centered around close knit family interactions and outdoor social life, is also affected as youth prefer virtual spaces over traditional gatherings. This shift not only distances them from community values but also exposes them to harmful online influences. Smartphone addiction in Kashmir is therefore not just a technological issue but a multi-dimensional challenge that demands awareness, balanced digital habits, and collective efforts from families, schools, and society to restore healthier patterns of living.

All over India this is all that is happening and Kashmir is no exception. What was initially introduced as a tool for convenience has gradually become an object of dependency for millions. Many people begin and end their day by checking their smartphones. Notifications, social media updates, short videos, and mobile games continuously compete for atten-

tion. Hours pass unnoticed as individuals scroll endlessly through digital content or immerse themselves in gaming environments. This growing dependence is no longer confined to teenagers. Children, university students, working professionals, homemakers, and even elderly citizens are increasingly vulnerable to smartphone addiction. The popularity of game applications has intensified this problem. Mobile games are designed not merely for entertainment but also to maximize user engagement. Features such as daily rewards, competitive rankings, achievements, virtual currencies, and multiplayer interactions encourage users to play repeatedly. Game developers employ sophisticated psychological techniques that stimulate the brain's reward system.

Every victory, unlocked level, or collected reward releases dopamine, creating a sense of pleasure and accomplishment. Over time, users begin to crave these experiences, leading to compulsive gaming habits. Children are perhaps the most vulnerable victims. Parents often hand smartphones to young children to keep them occupied during meals, travel, or social gatherings. Initially perceived as harmless entertainment, prolonged exposure gradually develops into dependency. Many children lose interest in outdoor activities, books, creative hobbies, and face-to-face interaction. Instead, they become emotionally attached to digital devices, reacting with anger, frustration, or anxiety whenever their screen time is restricted.

The educational consequences are significant. Students addicted to smartphones frequently struggle to concentrate in classrooms. Homework remains unfinished as gaming sessions extend late into the night. Sleep deprivation reduces memory retention, problem-solving ability, and academic performance. Teachers increasingly report shorter attention spans among students who constantly switch between educational tasks and digital distractions. Even during study hours, notifications from gaming apps interrupt concentration, making sustained learning difficult. Physical health also suffers from excessive smartphone use. Long hours spent staring at screens contribute to digital eye strain, headaches, neck pain, shoulder stiffness, and poor posture. Sedentary lifestyles associated with prolonged gaming increase the risk of obesity and cardiovascular problems. Blue light emitted from screens disrupts the body's natural sleep cycle, making it difficult to fall asleep and reducing overall sleep quality. Chronic sleep deprivation further affects emotional regulation, immunity, and cognitive functioning.

Mental health implications are equally alarming. Numerous psychological studies have linked excessive smart-



phone use with increased levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness, irritability, and stress. Ironically, devices intended to connect people often leave users feeling socially isolated. Online friendships frequently replace meaningful personal relationships. Individuals become more comfortable interacting through screens than engaging in real-life conversations. This digital isolation weakens emotional bonds within families and communities. Game addiction can become particularly destructive when financial incentives are involved. Many popular games encourage in-app purchases, allowing users to buy virtual items, costumes, weapons, or additional lives. Some individuals spend substantial amounts of money without realizing the cumulative financial burden. Children may unknowingly make unauthorized purchases using their parents' accounts, creating unexpected expenses. In extreme cases, addiction has resulted in significant debt and family conflict.

Social relationships are increasingly affected by smartphone dependency. Family members sitting in the same room often remain absorbed in their individual screens rather than communicating with one another. Dinner tables, once places of conversation and shared experiences, have become silent spaces interrupted only by notification sounds. Couples complain about emotional neglect as partners devote more attention to digital devices than to each other. Friendships become superficial when physical meetings are replaced by endless online messaging. The workplace is not immune to this growing problem. Employees distracted by smartphones experience reduced productivity, increased errors, and diminished creativity. Frequent checking of messages and social media interrupts workflow, making it difficult to complete complex tasks efficiently. Many organizations have introduced digital wellness policies encouraging employees to limit non-essential smartphone use during working hours.

Road safety presents another serious concern. Distracted driving caused by texting, gaming, or checking notifica-

tions has become a major cause of traffic accidents worldwide. Pedestrians crossing roads while looking at smartphones are equally vulnerable. Public awareness campaigns continue to emphasize that a single moment of distraction can have fatal consequences. Healthcare professionals now recognize gaming disorder as a legitimate mental health condition. Individuals suffering from severe gaming addiction often neglect education, employment, personal hygiene, nutrition, and social responsibilities. They continue gaming despite experiencing negative consequences in multiple aspects of life. Treatment may require psychological counselling, behavioural therapy, family support, and structured digital detox programmes.

Parents play a crucial role in preventing smartphone addiction among children. Establishing clear rules regarding screen time is essential. Bedrooms should ideally remain screen-free zones during nighttime to promote healthy sleep. Parents must also lead by example, demonstrating balanced technology use in their own lives. Children are more likely to adopt healthy digital habits when adults model responsible behaviour. Schools can contribute significantly by incorporating digital literacy into their curricula. Students should learn not only how to use technology effectively but also how to recognize signs of digital addiction, misinformation, cyberbullying, and online manipulation. Educational institutions can organize workshops involving psychologists, educators, and parents to promote healthy technology habits.

Governments and policymakers also have important responsibilities. Stronger regulations regarding children's online safety, transparent app design, and responsible gaming practices are necessary. Developers should avoid manipulative features targeting young users and provide effective parental control mechanisms. Age verification systems, spending limits, and screen-time reminders can help reduce excessive use.

Technology companies themselves have begun acknowledging the issue.

Many smartphones now include digital wellbeing features that monitor screen time, track app usage, and allow users to set daily limits. While these tools are valuable, they remain effective only when users willingly adopt healthier habits. Community organizations, libraries, sports clubs, and cultural institutions can provide attractive alternatives to excessive screen use. Participation in sports, music, reading, volunteering, gardening, art, and community service encourages meaningful human interaction while reducing dependence on digital entertainment. The solution is not to reject technology altogether. Smartphones have become indispensable tools in modern life, especially for education, healthcare, emergency communication, and professional work. The challenge lies in using technology wisely rather than allowing technology to control human behaviour. Digital devices should serve humanity instead of dominating daily life.

Individuals can adopt several practical strategies to maintain balance. Setting designated screen-free hours, disabling unnecessary notifications, keeping phones away during meals, engaging in regular physical exercise, spending time outdoors, practising mindfulness, and pursuing offline hobbies all contribute to healthier digital habits. Families can establish weekly "digital-free evenings" dedicated to conversation, board games, reading, or outdoor activities. The growing addiction to smartphones and game applications represents one of the defining social challenges of the digital era. Addressing it requires collective action involving families, educators, healthcare professionals, technology companies, governments, and individuals themselves. Awareness is the first step toward meaningful change. As society embraces rapid technological advancement, equal emphasis must be placed on preserving human relationships, mental well-being, physical health, and balanced living.

Technology is among humanity's greatest achievements, but its true value lies in how responsibly it is used. A smartphone should remain a powerful tool in human hands—not a master controlling human minds. Only by cultivating digital discipline can we ensure that technological progress enhances the quality of life rather than diminishing it. The future belongs not to those who spend the most time on screens, but to those who learn to balance the virtual world with the richness of real human experience.

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Dowry System

Beneath The Veil, Beyond The Price

"Love Is Priceless; The Moment It Demands A Price, It Ceases To Be Love."

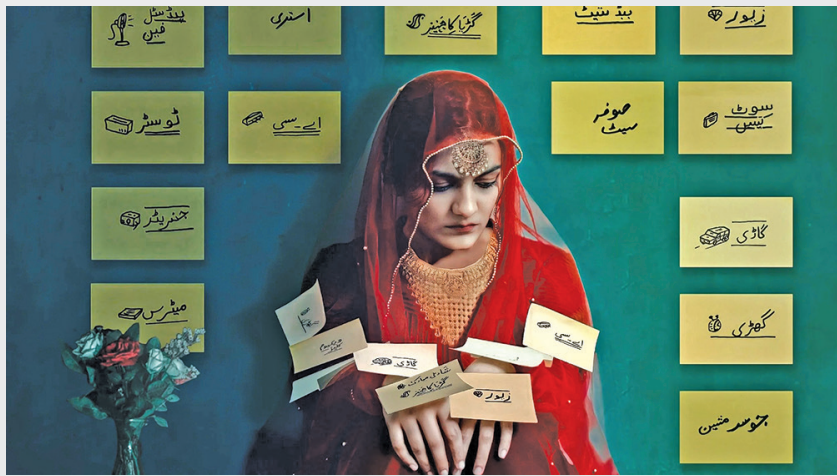


NAZRANA MUSHTAQ

Marriage is one of the most sacred and meaningful relationships in human life. It is not merely a social contract but a lifelong commitment built on love, trust, compassion, sacrifice, and mutual respect. Two individuals come together with the hope of creating a peaceful home where they can support each other through every joy and hardship. Yet, despite the beauty of this institution, the practice of dowry has cast a dark shadow over countless marriages, turning what should be a celebration of love into a transaction based on wealth.

Dowry refers to the transfer of money, jewellery, property, household goods, or other valuable possessions from the bride's family to the groom or his family at the time of marriage. Historically, voluntary gifts were offered by parents to help their daughter begin a new chapter of life. Over time, however, this custom has been transformed into an expectation and, in many cases, a demand. What was once a gesture of affection has become a measure of status, prestige, and financial gain.

Behind every wedding celebration stands a father who has silently spent decades saving every possible coin for his daughter's future. He sacrifices his comforts, postpones his dreams, works



beyond exhaustion, and often denies himself even the simplest pleasures because he believes his daughter's happiness is worth every hardship. Many parents borrow money, mortgage their homes, sell their land, or spend their lifetime savings to fulfil dowry demands. Their love becomes overshadowed by financial pressure, and the joy of seeing their daughter married is often mixed with anxiety and fear.

For many daughters, the burden of dowry begins long before the wedding day. Instead of looking forward to marriage with excitement and confidence, they carry feelings of guilt, believing they have become a financial responsibility. They witness their parents struggling to arrange money and sacrificing everything they own. This emotional burden can leave lasting scars. No daughter should ever feel that her worth depends on the wealth her parents can provide. "The worth of a daughter can never be counted in gold, for she is a blessing, not a bargain."

The consequences of dowry extend

far beyond financial hardship. Across many societies, dowry-related disputes have led to emotional abuse, domestic violence, broken families, and, in tragic cases, the loss of innocent lives. Countless women have suffered humiliation, neglect, or cruelty simply because the expectations of the groom's family were not fulfilled. Such incidents remind us that when material possessions become more important than human dignity, the very purpose of marriage is destroyed.

A successful marriage is never built on expensive gifts, luxurious furniture, or large sums of money. It survives through honesty, patience, forgiveness, understanding, equality, and mutual respect. Jewellery may sparkle for a day, but good character shines for a lifetime. A home filled with kindness and compassion is infinitely more valuable than one decorated with costly possessions but lacking peace and love.

The dowry system also weakens society as a whole. Families often spend enormous amounts of money

on weddings while neglecting more meaningful investments such as education, healthcare, or personal development. Young people begin to compare wealth instead of values, and marriage becomes a competition of status rather than compatibility. Such thinking encourages greed and social inequality, widening the gap between different sections of society.

Education plays a crucial role in eliminating this harmful practice. Parents should teach both sons and daughters that respect, honesty, and kindness are the true foundations of marriage. Sons must be raised to reject dowry in every form and to value their future spouses for their character rather than material wealth. Daughters should grow up knowing that they deserve dignity, equality, and unconditional respect, regardless of their family's financial condition.

Religious leaders, educators, community elders, and social organizations also have an important responsibility. They should actively promote simple weddings, discourage unnecessary extravagance, and speak openly against dowry demands. Awareness campaigns, educational programmes, and community discussions can gradually change attitudes and inspire future generations to reject traditions that cause suffering.

Governments have enacted laws against dowry in many countries, but legislation alone cannot solve the problem. Laws can punish offenders, but they cannot transform hearts. Real and lasting change begins within families and communities. It begins when parents refuse to offer dowry, when sons proudly reject it, and when society honours marriages based on love rather than wealth. Every young person has the power to become an agent of change. Choosing a marriage based on

mutual understanding instead of financial expectations sends a powerful message to society. Every family that celebrates a dowry-free marriage inspires others to do the same. One courageous decision can influence an entire community and gradually replace harmful customs with healthier traditions.

"Gold may decorate a wedding, but only love can illuminate a marriage." Imagine a society where no father lies awake worrying about how he will arrange his daughter's marriage, where no mother hides her tears over financial burdens, and where no daughter feels guilty for being born. Imagine weddings filled with laughter instead of negotiations, blessings instead of demands, and hope instead of fear. Such a society is possible when we choose humanity over greed and compassion over materialism.

Marriage should unite hearts, not bank accounts. It should celebrate companionship, not commercial exchange. Every daughter deserves to enter her new home carrying dreams instead of burdens, confidence instead of fear, and love instead of guilt. Every son should proudly declare that his life partner is not a source of wealth but a companion worthy of honour and respect.

Let every father witness his daughter's wedding with peace instead of anxiety. Let every mother smile without worrying about debts. Let every daughter walk into her new life with dignity held high. Let every promise exchanged during marriage be written with sincerity rather than wealth, and let every home become a sanctuary where love, equality, and respect are the only treasures that truly matter.

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5TH T20I

Curran picks 3-36 as England beat India by 56 runs, win series 4-0



IAN S

SOUTHAMPTON: Chasing a monumental target of 258, India's run-chase got off to a flying start, but ultimately fizzled out as England secured a comprehensive 56-run victory in the fifth T20I here at The Rose Bowl on Saturday and clinched an emphatic 4-0 clean sweep.

With this win, England climbed to the top of the ICC Men's T20I team rankings and dethroned India, the reigning world champions, who suffered their sixth consecutive defeat in the format after ending up at 201/8 in 20 overs, despite fifties from Ishan Kishan (56) and Tilak Varma (53).

India's response began aggressively, with Sanju Samson (27) smashing Jofra Archer for two boundaries in the opening over. Samson, brought in place of Vaibhav Soory-

avanshi, kept the momentum going by launching Josh Tongue for two spectacular sixes in the next over.

However, Archer broke the 23-run opening stand in the third over, extracting extra bounce to have Abhishek Sharma (3) caught behind, while Samson (27) fell after slicing to cover point off Sam Curran (3-36).

Skipper Shreyas Iyer joined Kishan and played a brisk cameo of 28 off 16 balls before stepping out to left-arm spinner Liam Dawson, only to slice it to backward point in the 11th over. Despite wickets falling, Kishan anchored one end with his strokeplay and brought up a 30-ball half-century.

His stay was cut short on 56, laced with seven fours and two sixes, when he fell to Adil Rashid, playing his 150th T20I game, courtesy

of a sliding catch by Phil Salt. Varma provided some late fireworks by smashing a blistering 24-ball fifty, decorated with four sixes and three boundaries.

Curran derailed any remaining hopes of an Indian fightback by removing Shivam Dube (14) and Suryansh Shedge (7) in quick succession, while Varma was eventually caught behind off Tongue for 53 in the 18th over. Rashid then removed Axar Patel (3) in the final over as India's forgettable series came to an end after yet another hammering at the hands of England.

Brief scores:
England 257/3 in 30 overs (Jos Buttler 131, Harry Brook 95 not out; Shivam Dube 2-22, Prasidh Krishna 1-38) beat India 201/8 in 20 overs (Ishan Kishan 56, Tilak Varma 53; Sam Curran 3-36, Adil Rashid 2-24) by 56 runs

Wimbledon: Patten/Heliovaara wins men's doubles title to set record for winning multiple titles

IAN S

LONDON: Henry Patten became the first British man to win two Wimbledon men's doubles titles in the Open era after partnering Harri Heliovaara to victory over El Salvador's Marcelo Arevalo and Mate Pavic of Croatia in the final at Wimbledon in London on Saturday.

In a serve-dominated match with no break points, the Anglo-Finnish partnership triumphed 7-6(4), 7-6(3). Patten and Heliovaara, the top seeds, first won the title here in 2024 and also lifted the trophy at the 2025 Australian Open.

Heliovaara and Patten became the first men's doubles team to claim multiple Wimbledon crowns since Bob Bryan and Mike Bryan did so in 2011. They are the 11th team in the Open Era to achieve the feat. "It's surreal," said Colchester-born Patten, who served an ace on the second match point. "When we won the first time, we didn't know if we would have the opportunity to ever experience this again. We just feel so lucky to be out here again." Heliovaara thanked the British player "for being the best partner in the world."

Four other British men



have won the Wimbledon gentlemen's doubles title in the Open era – Jonathan Marray (with Frederik Nielsen in 2012), Neal Skupski (with Wesley Koolhof in 2023), and Julian Cash and Lloyd Glasspool, who won the title here last year.

Across the fortnight, the champions won three final-set tie-breaks, battling past Mac Kiger and Patrik Thrac in the second round, Adam Pavlasek and Patrik Rikl in the third round, and eighth seeds Guido Andreozzi and Manuel Guinard in the quarter-finals. They won eight of their nine tie-breaks in The Championships.

Patten crushed an ace down the T in the Ad court to claim their third major trophy as a team, having also emerged victorious at Wimbledon in 2024 and at last year's Australian Open. The lefty Patten is the first British men's doubles player in the Open

Era to lift the Wimbledon trophy more than once.

There were no break-points for either team in the match. Heliovaara and Patten won 41 of their 45 first-serve points (91%) to avoid falling under pressure.

This was a rematch of the Queen's Club final, which Arevalo and Pavic won 6-2, 6-4. In that match, Heliovaara and Patten won just 56 per cent of their first-serve points.

Heliovaara and Patten now lead Arevalo and Pavic 6-3 in their Lexus ATP Head2Head series, including a 4-1 record this year. Arevalo won the Wimbledon mixed doubles title with Jelena Ostapenko.

"Just want to say thank you to everybody who showed up today to support. I think it was a great match," Arevalo said. "I want to take the time to congratulate Henry and Harry on these amazing two weeks, on getting a title here again."

Indian football team set for first-ever New Zealand tour with two friendlies in November

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The Indian men's national football team will travel to New Zealand for two friendly matches against the hosts on November 12 and 15, during the FIFA International Match Window, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) announced on Saturday.

The matches were announced as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to New Zealand and will form part of a series of sport-

ing events to celebrate '100 Years of Unity Through Sport' between the two nations.

India and New Zealand have faced each other on two previous occasions. Their first meeting ended in a goalless draw in the 1981 Merdeka Tournament in Malaysia, while New Zealand registered a 2-1 victory in the 2018 Intercontinental Cup in Mumbai.

The upcoming tour will mark the Indian men's national team's first-ever visit to New Zealand. It will also be their first trip to an

Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) member nation since 2005, when India played two international friendlies against Fiji.

New Zealand recently participated in the FIFA World Cup 2026, where they drew with Iran and suffered defeats against Egypt and Belgium.

India head coach Khalid Jamil believes the two matches will provide his players with a valuable challenge against a side with recent experience of competing at the highest level.

SPORTS

5th T20I: Win against India a big achievement; delighted with top ranking, says Buttler

IAN S

SOUTHAMPTON: England wicketkeeper-batter Jos Buttler expressed immense delight on securing a comprehensive 4-0 series sweep against India, which also propelled the hosts to the number one spot in the ICC Men's T20I team rankings, adding that it's a big achievement that came due to the contributions of all players.

Buttler, who roared back to form with a blistering 131 off 64 balls to claim the player-of-the-match award, stitched a massive 233-run second-wicket partnership with Brook (95 not out) to guide England to a colossal 257/3 in the fifth and final T20I here at The Rose Bowl on Saturday.

"Delighted. Had a lean patch for a bit. Happy to be back to my best. Always feel due, just the World Cup actually. Felt good about my game in the IPL, something about putting on the Eng-



land shirt. Harry's incredible, putting incredible pressure on bowlers. Gotta give yourself time, belief, and trust in your game.

"We were going for as many as possible. We got twos on this big ground, which helped construct big overs. Good pitch too, we needed the runs too."

Great team performance, to win 4-0 against India is a big achievement. Different players have made great contributions across disciplines, which is the most pleasing thing for the guys."

Buttler said at the post-match presentation.

Brook, who became Player of the Series for hitting 229 runs in four

innings, lauded his bowling unit, particularly the spinners, for executing the plans perfectly and added that he enjoyed batting with Buttler.

"We had a lot of fun. Ran well, hit boundaries, and complemented each other. We were just trying to get ourselves into the best position we could. Cricket is a simple game we complicate. Just watched the ball and played the best shot for it. I'm striking the ball nicely."

"We've got ourselves to World No. 1, which was a game after a couple of games. All boys are delighted, and we deserve to celebrate. You have to create pace on the ball while hitting the spill. We have spinners with nous and have the ability to make batters think. We've bowled a lot of spin, and they've been exceptional. We've communicated really well in the last 12 months, and we've executed things really well," he concluded.

Asian U-19 & U-23 Boxing: India assured of six U-19 men's medals after dominant QF display

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JAKARTA: India guaranteed themselves six medals in the U-19 men's competition at the Asian U-19 & U-23 Boxing Championships after six participants advanced to the semifinals with commanding victories in Jakarta, Indonesia, on Saturday.

The Indian contingent produced an impressive all-round display across multiple weight categories, with Aditya (55kg), Sikan-der (60kg), Mausam Suhag (65kg), Devender Choudhary (75kg), Sagar (85kg), and Shubham Rajput (90kg) all progressing to the last four to ensure podium finishes for the country.

Aditya opened India's successful run with a clinical 5:0 unanimous decision over the Philippines' Baruis Ephraim John in the 55kg category. Sikan-der followed suit in the 60kg division, overcoming



Tajikistan's Sharifkhon Nuraliev 4:1 to book his place in the semifinals.

Mausam Suhag also advanced in the 65kg category, adding another assured medal to India's tally.

In the higher weight

classes, Devender Choudhary dominated host boxer Muhammad Rayhan Athaillah of Indonesia, claiming a comprehensive 5:0 victory in the 75kg quarterfinal.

Sagar produced one of the standout performanc-

es of the day in the 85kg division, forcing a referee-stopped contest (RSC) in the second round against Indonesia's Irnanda Firmanda. Shubham Rajput was equally dominant in the 90kg category, registering an RSC vic-

tory in the opening round over Indonesia's Nouval Nouval.

India also endured a few heartbreaks in closely fought contests. Ambekar Meitei Lairenlakp (50kg) narrowly missed out on a semifinal berth after suffering a 3:2 split-decision defeat to Japan's Kotaro Nishizaki. Lokesh (80kg) lost 3:1 to Kazakhstan's Timur Taibekov, while Loven Gulia (+90kg) went down via an RSC in the second round against Kazakhstan's Vladislav Samozhonov.

With six semifinalists in the U-19 men's draw, India has already secured six medals at the continental championships, underlining the country's growing depth in age-group boxing. The Asian U-19 & U-23 Boxing Championships, being held in Jakarta from July 5 to 16, will continue with the semifinal bouts in the coming days.

MOVIES

SCHEDULE

Sunday

12TH JULY

INOX

SRINAGAR

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FOR TICKET ASSISTANCE

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HINDI ATMOS

U/A 13+

10:35 AM, 01:25 PM, 04:20 PM, 07:15 PM

EVIL DEAD BURN

ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLE

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11:00 AM, 04:15 PM

WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

HINDI

U/A 16+

01:25 PM, 07:30 PM

ALPHA

HINDI

U/A 16+

11:00 AM, 04:40 PM

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MAIN VAAPAS AAUNGA

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