

Good Morning

Kashmir

17th  
Year Of Publication

Lok Bhavan Jammu & Kashmir  
@LokBhavanJandK



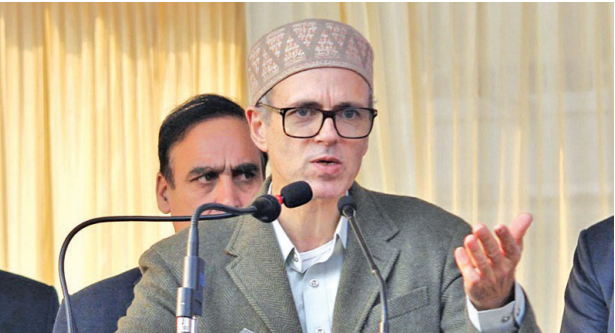
Education should not be confined to classrooms. It must prepare every student to begin life's journey with confidence, skills, and practical understanding.

GMK

Srinagar • Wednesday 29, July 2026 • Vol: 17 • Issue No: 180 • Pages: 08 • Price: ₹ 2/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

Mehbooba's Statement Was Clarification, Not Apology: CM Omar

Says Those Who Claimed Ai Should Also Express Regret, Slams PDP



REHAN QAYOOM

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said those who claimed for the past five days that Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti's controversial video was AI-generated should also express regret after she herself acknowledged the remarks were made by her. He said there is a clear distinction between expressing regret and apologising and also questioned a PDP MLA's stand on the issue. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the Mega Job

Fair at Amar Singh College here, Omar, said Mehbooba Mufti's statement could not be termed an apology. "When someone says 'if anyone was hurt', it is not an apology. There is a difference between regret and forgiveness," he said. The Chief Minister said the bigger question was about those who spent five days claiming the controversial video was AI-generated. "For five days people were told it was AI. Today their own party president admitted she herself made those remarks. Those who misled the people should

LG Sinha Urges Industry-Led Employment Drive In J&K

Addresses 77th State-Level Mega Job Fair in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said unemployment cannot be addressed through government jobs alone, calling for stronger industry-academia collaboration and greater private sector participation while addressing the 77th State-Level Mega Job Fair in Srinagar. Organised by Desh Bhagat University, Punjab, and Cluster University Srinagar in collaboration with NIELIT, Nations Development Association (NDA) and MY Bharat, the Mega Job Fair aimed to directly connect youth with industries. The fair brought together more than 50 reputed companies across diverse sectors including information technology, healthcare, banking, financial services, manufacturing, retail, hospitality, education, logistics, and engineering. The Mega Job Fair aims to directly connect youth with industries. The fair brought together more than 50 reputed companies across diverse sectors including information technology, healthcare, banking, financial services, manufacturing, retail, hospitality, education, logistics, and engineering. In his keynote address, the Lieutenant Governor described the job fair as a powerful means of connecting



the aspirations of the youth with opportunities, and as an important step toward building the nation's bright future. "This is a platform where dreams meet direction, where education meets industry, and where the foundation of a new Jammu Kashmir is being strengthened," he said. Highlighting the participation of thousands of registered students, the Lieutenant Governor emphasized that the greatest value of

■ Ganderbal Accident  
**LG Visits SKIMS, Enquires Well-Being Of Pilgrims**  
GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha visited SKIMS Hospital in Srinagar and inquired about the health and well-being of Amarnathji Yatra pilgrims who were injured in the road accident in Ganiwan, Ganderbal, on Tuesday. The Lieutenant Governor met the injured pilgrims undergoing treatment at the hospital and wished them a speedy recovery. The team of doctors briefed the Lieutenant Governor about the treatment being provided to the injured pilgrims. The Lieutenant Governor directed the hospital administration to provide the highest standard of medical care to the injured. He has also

Two Held In B'la For Alleged Gang Rape, Filming Assault



WARIS FAYAZ

**BARAMULLA:** Police have arrested two men for allegedly gang raping a 21-year-old woman, recording the assault on a mobile phone and threatening her into silence in Baramulla district. Addressing a press conference here in North Kashmir, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Baramulla Gurinderpal Singh, said the woman approached Police Station Baramulla on July 25 and lodged a written complaint alleging that the incident had taken place on July 3 at Jalsheeri Drangbal. ■P-06

'J&K Has 836.29 Crore Pending MGNREGS Dues'

RAJA SYED

**SRINAGAR:** The Union government on Tuesday informed the Lok Sabha that Jammu and Kashmir has pending liabilities of 836.29 crore under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), while Ladakh has pending dues of 5.33 crore as on April 1, 2026. Replying to a question raised by Adv

CM Calls for More Youth Jobs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday reaffirmed his government's commitment to expanding employment opportunities for the youth, saying that while government jobs alone are not the solution to unemployment, it is the

government's responsibility to create more avenues for youth through private sector recruitment, entrepreneurship and industry partnerships. The Chief Minister made these remarks while addressing the valedictory session of the 77th State-Level Mega Job Fair at Amar Singh

“PROFITS SHOULD NOT REMAIN CONFINED TO LARGE ENTERPRISES. TOURISM MUST provide dignified incomes, training, and opportunities to all stakeholders to ensure sustainability. Together, let us ensure that prosperity reaches to the last village, the last family, and the last citizen in the queue,” he said.

J&K Records Decline In Cyber Crime Cases In 2024: MHA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir recorded a decline in cyber crime cases in 2024 compared to the previous two years, while Ladakh reported only one such case during the year, the Ministry of Home Affairs informed the Lok Sabha on Monday. Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar informed that the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) maintains data on cyber crimes, while States and Union Territories are primarily responsible for

preventing, investigating and prosecuting such offences. The Centre supports them through financial assistance, advisories and capacity-building initiatives. According to the official data, Jammu and Kashmir registered 173 cyber crime cases in 2022, 185 in 2023 and 114 in 2024. Police disposed of 123, 130 and 94 cases, respectively, while courts disposed of 7, 9 and 8 cases during the three years. In Ladakh, three cyber crime cases were registered in 2022, one in 2023 and one in 2024. The minister informed the House that



■ 1.03 Lakh Progs Held In 3 Years

Drug Awareness Campaign Reaches Over 1.20 Crore People In J&K: GoI

'21 Addiction Treatment Facilities, 12 De-Addiction Centres Functional Across UT'

RAJA SYED

**SRINAGAR:** More than 1.20 crore people, including 69.14 lakh youth and 51.20 lakh women, have been sensitised under the Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) in Jammu and Kashmir, while 8,565 Nasha Mukti Mitras have joined the campaign across the Union Territory. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, in a written reply to an unstarred question in the Lok Sabha by Srinagar MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, said the campaign is being implemented through awareness programmes, de-addiction services, rehabilitation and counselling facilities. The ministry, said the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing



the National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR), under which financial assistance is provided to States and Union Territories, NGOs and Government hospitals for preventive education, awareness generation, capacity building, rehabilitation and treatment of persons affected by substance abuse. It said the scheme supports 344 Integrated Rehabilitation Centres for Addicts (IRCA), 45 Community-based Peer Led Intervention (CPLI) programmes, 76 Outreach and Drop-In Centres (ODICs), 155 Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATFs) in Government hospitals and 145 District De-addiction

39 E-Zero FIRs Registered In J&K Since Rollout: Centre

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** The Central government on Tuesday informed the Lok Sabha that 39 e-Zero FIRs have been registered in Jammu and Kashmir since the rollout of the e-Zero FIR system in July 2026, making the Union Territory one of the 18 States and UTs where the facility has been implemented to ensure faster action in cyber financial fraud cases. Replying to a question raised by Dr. Raj Kumar Chhabewal, Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar, said the Centre has provided a common platform to States and Union Territories for registering e-Zero FIRs in cyber financial fraud cases reported through the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP) or the 1930 cyber fraud helpline. The minister said that under the new mechanism, complaints involving the financial loss threshold fixed by the

Amarnath Yatra Over 4.35 Lakh Pilgrims Pay Obeisance Since July 3



UMAISAR GULL

**SRINAGAR:** A fresh batch of 3,029 Amarnath pilgrims, including 30 foreign male devotees, reached the Baltal base camp on Tuesday after departing from Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu under tight security arrangements, officials said. According to details available, the 21st batch left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas at 2:45 am in a convoy of 151 vehicles, comprising 57 buses, 30 medium motor vehicles (MMVs), 58 light motor vehicles (LMVs) and six two-wheelers. No convoy was dispatched for Pahalgam route. The batch comprised 2,310 male pilgrims, 590 women, 14 children, 45 sadhus, 40 sadhvis and 30 foreign male pilgrims. Meanwhile, 9,073 pilgrims paid obeisance at the holy cave shrine on Tuesday, taking the total number of devotees who have undertaken the pilgrimage since its commencement on July 3 to 4,35,412, officials said. On Tuesday 5,526 men, 3,090 women, 162 children, 41 sadhus, 12 sadhvis, three transgender devotees and 239 security personnel completed Yatra. The total number of pilgrims who have departed from Bhagwati

High-Density Apple Harvest Begins On Positive Note In Kashmir

Premium Early-Season Prices Boost Confidence As Modern Orchards Outperform

JAHANGEER GANAIE

**SRINAGAR:** The harvesting of high-density apples has begun on an encouraging note across Kashmir, with growers receiving between Rs 100 and Rs 150 per kilogram directly at orchard sites, even before grading, packing or transportation. According to the details available, the strong opening prices have raised hopes of a profitable season for thousands of orchardists, who say buyers are purchasing fruit directly from orchards due to its superior quality and attractive colour. "We are receiving Rs 100 to Rs 150 per kilogram without spending on packing material or transport. Buyers are coming directly to our orchards, which has reduced our marketing expenses



considerably," said Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, a high-density apple grower from Shopian. Another grower, Abdul Rashid Wani from Pulwama said the early market response has exceeded expectations. "The colour, size and uniformity of high-density apples are much better than traditional varieties. Traders are

willing to pay premium prices because they know the fruit has strong demand in wholesale markets," he said. Mushtaq Ahmad Dar, another orchardist from Anantnag said although establishing a high-density orchard requires heavy investment, the returns justify the expenditure. "The initial investment is

several times higher than conventional orchards because of imported plants, trellis systems and drip irrigation. However, the orchards start commercial production within two to three years and the returns are much better if market prices remain favourable," he added. Introduced in Jammu and Kashmir over a decade ago under the High-Density Plantation Programme, the new system has gradually transformed the Valley's apple industry. Unlike traditional orchards, where trees are planted at wider spacing and generally begin commercial bearing after seven to ten years, high-density plantations accommodate many more trees per hectare and start yielding economically within a much shorter period. The system also

# Two Army Personnel Injured in Mine Explosion Along LoC in Uri



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA:** Two Army personnel were injured in a mine explosion near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Uri sector of Baramulla district on Tuesday, officials said.

The explosion occurred in the vicinity of the Upper Garh Forward Post of 8 Rashtriya Rifles (8 RR),

operating under the 12 Infantry Brigade in the Kamalkote sub-sector, which falls under the jurisdiction of Police Station Uri.

The injured personnel were immediately evacuated from the site and airlifted to the Army's Base Hospital at Badamibagh, Srinagar, where they are undergoing medical treat-

ment.

The injured soldiers have been identified as Dafadar Vijay Kumar (42) and Naik Sharanapa Angari (28). Both are serving with 8 Rashtriya Rifles.

Officials said the circumstances leading to the mine explosion are being ascertained. Further details are awaited as the investigation progresses.

# Cloudburst Triggers Flash Floods in Bandipora's Nagmarg

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** A cloudburst struck the Nagmarg area of north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Tuesday, triggering flash floods in several downstream villages and sending panic among residents.

The sudden cloudburst in the upper reaches unleashed a massive surge of muddy water and debris, which rushed downstream, inundating low-lying areas and disrupting normal life in the affected villages.

Locals said water levels rose rapidly within a short span, with floodwaters entering vulnerable stretches and posing a threat to residential



houses, agricultural land and local infrastructure.

The flash floods left people scrambling to move to safer locations as streams swelled and torrents of water swept through parts of the area.

Officials are monitoring the situation and assess-

ing the extent of damage. There were no immediate reports of any loss of life, while authorities have advised people living along vulnerable streams and flood-prone areas to remain vigilant in view of the continuing adverse weather conditions. [KNT]

# DC B'gam inaugurates day-long Kisan Mela, directs for maximum farmer outreach

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Tuesday inaugurated a day-long Kisan Mela under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) 2026-27, organised by the Department of Agriculture Production at Sheikh-ul-Alam Hall, Budgam.

The one-day Mela and Awareness Cum Workshop was aimed at empowering farmers, promoting sustainable agriculture and creating awareness about various government initiatives for the farming community.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that the agriculture is the backbone of the economy and sustained efforts are on to strengthen the sector. He stressed on ensuring maximum farmer outreach under government schemes and initiatives.

Describing adoption of latest and scientific technologies as imperative for progressive farming, the Deputy Commissioner asserted that farmers have access to modern technologies, scientific farming practices and government welfare schemes.

He directed all Agriculture and allied departments to remain in constant communication with farmers and ensure effective outreach through awareness and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) programmes at the, District, Block and panchayat levels.

The DC emphasised that farmers be made aware of the latest scientific farming



techniques, modern agricultural technologies and flagship initiatives such as HADP, JKICP and other farmer-centric schemes so that they can maximise productivity and improve their livelihoods.

Urging farmers to register under schemes, the Deputy Commissioner said, "all farmers of district Budgam should take maximum benefits under schemes for better yield and for their economic growth."

He also inspected various stalls set up by the Agriculture and allied departments, showcasing agricultural products, modern farm machinery, innovative technologies, high-yield crop varieties and information on different government schemes and services available to farmers.

The Kisan Mela also featured a farmers' workshop-cum-training programme, where experts from Agriculture and allied sectors interacted with farmers and provided practical guidance on improved cultivation practices, crop diversification, soil health management, integrated pest management, value addition and sustainable farming methods.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional District

development commissioner Budgam, Vivek Agarwal encouraged the farming community to adopt modern agricultural practices and take full advantage of the schemes being implemented by the government.

Among others, CPO, Javed Ahmad; Joint Director Extension, Mujtaba Yahya and other resources persons and experts from SKUAST-K, Agriculture and allied Sectors also interacted with farmers and spoke on different government initiatives, welfare schemes and financial assistance available for farmers.

On the occasion, Chief Agriculture Officer, Farzana Tabasum highlighted significant achievements under various flagship programmes, including HADP, JKICP, MIDH and Natural Farming, while emphasizing the importance of scientific interventions, quality seed, crop diversification, mechanization and regular field-level extension services.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of farmers, representatives of Agriculture and allied departments, progressive farmers and other stakeholders from across the district.

# Div Com, IGP Jammu review arrangements for I-Day-2026 celebrations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar and Inspector General of Police Jammu Zone Bhim Sen Tuti Tuesday held a high level meeting of senior officers to review the arrangements for Independence Day, 2026 celebrations at the meeting Hall of the Divisional Commissioner's Office.

DIG Jammu-Samba-Kathua, DCs/SSPs from Jammu Division, Commissioner JMC; MD JPDCL, Director School Education Jammu, SSP Traffic attended the meeting in person and virtual mode.

Besides, officers from Health, PWD, Jal Shakti, JPDCL, Information, Transport and other concerned departments also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on various aspects to ensure that Independence Day 2026 is celebrated in a grand, organized and befitting manner. Key areas reviewed included security arrangements, traffic management, parade, cultural programs, stage setup, lighting, drinking water, medical facilities, sanitation and other essential arrangements at the main venue and other district headquarters.

The Divisional Commissioner directed all



concerned departments to complete their assigned responsibilities well in time and to maintain close coordination among themselves. He stressed that the convenience and safety of the general public shall be the top priority during the celebrations. He also emphasized punctuality, discipline and proper protocol during the events at M.A Stadium Jammu and other venues across the Jammu division.

Briefing on security arrangements, the IGP Jammu said that foolproof security arrangements will be put in place at the main venue and in the surrounding areas. He added that a comprehensive traffic management plan will be prepared to ensure smooth flow of traffic and

hassle-free movement of the public, invitees and participants on the day of the function.

The Divisional Commissioner asked the senior officers of the Education and Information Department to coordinate for participation of school children, NCC, NSS and Cultural groups and to give wide publicity to the program schedule and ensure media coverage. He also directed the Deputy Commissioners to convene meetings at the district level and finalise all arrangements within the stipulated timeframe.

He further directed that attendance at the Independence Day celebrations shall be compulsory for all government employees.

The JPDCL, Jal Shakti, Health and Fire & Emergency Services departments were directed to ensure adequate arrangements for drinking water, power supply, sanitation, medical teams and fire safety at the rehearsal and main event venues. The PWD was further instructed to ensure cleaning of the grounds and cutting of grass at all identified venues.

Departments were directed to submit their final preparedness reports within the stipulated timeframe.

The Divisional Commissioner reiterated that all departments must work in synergy to make the Independence Day celebrations a grand success and a befitting tribute to the nation.

# FDA prohibits manufacture and sale of Milk Product Unit in Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** The Food and Drugs Administration (FDA), has prohibited the manufacture and sale of milk and milk products at a food business unit in Talangam Pulwama after an inspection found deficiencies in hygiene and sanitation.

During the inspection, conducted by the Food Safety Officer, Pamore, the premises of the unit operated by Suhail Maqbool S/o Mohammad Maqbool Sheergogri of Talangam, Pulwama, was found to be operating under insanitary conditions in violation of the hygiene and sanitary requirements prescribed under Schedule IV of the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011.

Based on the inspection report, the Designated Officer, Food Safety, prohibited the manufacture and sale of milk and milk products from the premises in the interest of public health. The owner of the unit has been directed not to resume operations until the required corrective measures are taken and compliance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the Rules and Regulations made thereunder is ensured.

# FDA conducts Enforcement Drive on Bakery and Milk Products

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Considering the high consumption and public importance of bakery and bakery products, the Food & Drugs Administration (FDA), J&K, conducted a special enforcement-cum-sampling drive focusing on bakery and bakery products, along with milk and milk products, to ensure their quality and compliance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

As part of the drive, food safety inspections and sampling were carried out across various districts. During the drive, Food Safety Officers conducted 159 inspections of Food Business Operators (FBOs) and collected 114 food samples for quality and safety testing. In addition, 12 surveillance samples were collected from ICDS Centres to monitor the quality and safety of food being supplied to beneficiaries.

During the inspections, hygiene and sanitary conditions of the food establishments were also verified. Seven FBOs were compounded under Section 69 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and a fine of ₹11,000 was imposed for violations of the Act.

# MC Shopian spearheads cleanliness drive at Sanglo Nallah

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** In a major effort to protect local water resources and improve urban sanitation, the Municipal Council (MC) Shopian organized an extensive cleanliness drive at Sanglo Nallah.

The initiative was executed under the nationwide "Safai Apnao, Bimari Bhagao" (SABB) campaign, launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). Aligned with the July IEC Action Plan under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0, the drive focused on restoring the natural water body, curbing environmental pollution, and reducing health risks during the monsoon season.

The field operation brought together municipal staff, Community Mobilizers, Swachhata Executives, and local citizens in a joint effort to clean the water body and its surrounding banks. Participants systematically removed accumulated solid waste, plastic debris, and silt from Sanglo Nallah. Clearing these obstructions restored the natural flow of water and eliminated waste accumulation points, directly helping to reduce vector breeding and prevent the spread of water-borne diseases in neighboring areas.

Alongside the physical cleanup, field teams conducted on-site awareness sessions for local residents and commercial operators living and working near the nallah. The team highlighted the environmental and public health impacts of dumping waste into open water bodies and urged citizens to practice mandatory source segregation and responsible waste disposal.

# DC Sgr reviews progress under TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, Vay Vandana enrolment

# DC Sgr reviews progress in implementation of flagship welfare, pension schemes

GMK NEWS NETWORK



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting in his Office Chamber to evaluate the implementation of key health schemes in District, with a focus on expanding outreach of Vay Vandana Yojana to achieve 100% senior citizens (Above 70 years) coverage and reviewing the progress under TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Fayaz Ahmad Dar, District TB Officer Dr Abdul Rouf, Medical Superintendents of SMHS Hospital, JLNH Hospital and CD Hospital, Block Medical Officer Hazrabal, all Zonal Medical Officers of Srinagar District, CSC District Manager and other concerned.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner stressed on dedicated outreach efforts in all tertiary care hospitals and all Medical Block/Zones of the district to achieve 100% enrolment of eligible individuals aged 70 and above so that they receive the additional benefit of Rs 5 lakh free health treatment. He directed Block and Zonal Medical Officers, along with other concerned Officials to organize outreach camps to mobilize beneficiaries in their respective jurisdiction to ensure that no eligible individual is deprived of affordable and free healthcare services in the district.

The DC also assessed the Tuberculosis (TB) control measures and implementation of TB presumptive testing, surveillance and initiatives to enhance screening and treatment across the District.

The DC called for enhanced inter-departmental coordination and stronger community outreach under the TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

The DC also reviewed the initiatives undertaken to strengthen patient care and enhance healthcare delivery across the District.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Joint Commissioner SMC, District Programme Officer, ICDS, Chief Planning Officer, General Manager DIC, Assistant Commissioner Development, Deputy Director Employment, Chief Education Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Assistant Labour Commissioner, AD Handicraft/Handloom, ARTO, District Health Officer, District Officer, KVIB/KVIC, DPM NRLM, District Manager CSC and other concerned.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner was given a department-wise presentation on the progress achieved under the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (PM-SYM), JK Samadhan, Pradhan

Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana (PM-KMY) and the National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-Employed Persons in the District. The presentation highlighted the status of enrolment, beneficiary coverage and implementation of these flagship welfare and pension schemes.

The DC reviewed the status of beneficiary registration, enrolment progress, awareness campaigns and the overall implementation of the schemes by the concerned Departments and implementing agencies. He stressed the need to intensify outreach and awareness efforts to ensure that every eligible beneficiary is enrolled under the schemes within the stipulated timelines.

The DC also underscored the importance of close coordination among all stakeholders for the effective implementation of the welfare programmes and timely delivery of benefits to the intended beneficiaries.

The DC further directed the concerned Departments to organise special awareness-cum-registration camps under the National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-Employed Persons to accelerate awareness generation and voluntary registrations. He emphasized the need to maximise outreach and ensure wider coverage of eligible beneficiaries under all the welfare and pension schemes.

# DC Kulgam reviews PMAY-G 2.0

Directs publication of Gradation List, timely redressal of grievances

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM:** A review meeting regarding the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) 2.0 was held Tuesday under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC), Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, in his office chamber.

During the meeting, a detailed review was conducted of the applications received under PMAY-G 2.0. It was informed that a total of 21,533 applications had been received across the district, of which 17,701 applicants were found eligible.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all concerned officers to publish the gradation list of eligible applicants for wide publicity to ensure transparency. He stated that public disclosure of the priority list would enable applicants to verify their status and facilitate timely correction of any discrepancies.

The DC further directed all BDOs to conduct Gram Sabhas from August 9 to August 12, 2026, for public verification of the gradation lists. The schedule of Gram Sabhas, along with the Panchayat-wise dates and gradation lists, shall be widely publicized through media

and displayed at other prominent public locations to ensure maximum public participation.

It was also decided that each Block shall separately publish Panchayat-wise Gram Sabha schedules along with the respective gradation lists. All Gram Sabha proceedings must be videographed, with the recordings to be properly preserved for future reference and for addressing any grievances, if required, said the DC.

All Block Development Officers were directed to ensure that all grievances are addressed by or before August 03, 2026, with proper documentation and evidence of the proceedings.

Emphasizing transparency, accountability, and timely implementation, the Deputy Commissioner instructed all officers to strictly adhere to the prescribed timelines and ensure that the PMAY-G 2.0 beneficiary selection process remains fair and transparent.

The meeting was attended by Altaf Ahmad Khan, Additional District Development Commissioner, Kulgam; Bilal Ahmad, Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD); Malik Suheel, Chief Planning Officer (CPO), Kulgam; and all Block Development Officers (BDOs) of the district.

NEWS

GANDERBAL ROAD ACCIDENT

# CM expresses concern, directs best medical care for injured pilgrims

Deputes Minister Sakina Itoo to SKIMS to oversee treatment of injured pilgrims

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday expressed deep concern over the road accident at Gund, Kangan in Ganderbal district, in which several Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra pilgrims returning to Srinagar after paying obeisance at the holy cave shrine sustained injuries.

The Chief Minister directed the Health & Medical Education Department to ensure the best possible medical care for all the injured pilgrims and deputed Minister for Health & Medical Education, Sakina Itoo, to Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura to personally oversee their treatment.

Acting on the directions of the Chief Minister, the Health Minister visited SKIMS, where she met the injured pilgrims and enquired about their well-being. She also interacted with



the attending doctors and hospital authorities to assess the nature of injuries and the treatment being provided.

The Minister directed the hospital administration to ensure the best possible medical care for all the injured pilgrims and instructed that no effort be spared in their treatment and recovery.

The Chief Minister wished the injured pilgrims a speedy recovery and reaffirmed the Government's commitment to extending every possible assistance to them and their families during this difficult time.

Earlier this morning, a bus carrying Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra pilgrims returning from the holy cave shrine skidded off the road near the Ganiwan/Hariganiwan stretch in the Gund area of Kangan, Ganderbal district, after the driver reportedly lost control while negotiating a curve. Thirty-nine pilgrims sustained injuries in the accident. A swift rescue operation was soon launched, shifting the injured initially to Sub-District Hospital, Kangan, before they were referred to SKIMS, Soura for specialised treatment.

## Javed Rana assures swift action on issues raised by MLA's, contractors

Stresses legislators involvement to enable people centric, inclusive development

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Multiple deputations, including Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from different constituencies Tuesday called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, at the Civil Secretariat here and discussed a wide range of public welfare issues.

The legislators who met the Minister included Hilal Akbar Lone, Sajjad Shaheen, Irshad Rasool Kar, Pyare Lal Sharma, Saifuddin Bhat, Randhir Singh and Zafar Ali Khatana.

During the interaction, the MLAs apprised the Minister of the developmental needs and public concerns of their respective constituencies. They highlighted issues related to drinking water supply, irrigation infrastructure, flood protection measures, road connectivity, healthcare, education and other sectoral requirements, while also seeking timely execution of ongoing development works.

The legislators urged



the Minister to ensure early completion of projects of public importance and called for effective coordination among the departments to address the aspirations of the people.

Giving a patient hearing to each of the legislators, Javed Rana assured them that all their genuine issues projected during the meetings would receive due attention. He directed the concerned officers to examine the matters on priority and take appropriate action wherever required.

The Minister reiterated that the Omar Abdullah-led government is committed to strengthen the public service delivery, ensuring that developmental benefits reach every region in a fair and transparent manner. He said the government remains focused on responsive governance, prompt resolution of public grievances and accelerated implementation of infrastructure projects aimed at improving the quality

of life of the people.

Emphasising close coordination between the public representatives and the administration, the Minister said that the elected legislators play a vital role in identifying the developmental priorities of their constituencies and ensuring that governance remains people-centric. He said the government values their feedback and will continue to work in close consultation with them to achieve balanced and inclusive development across Jammu and Kashmir.

Later, a delegation of contractors associated with the Jal Shakti Department also called on the Minister and projected issues related to pending payments and execution of departmental works.

The Minister gave a patient hearing to the delegation and assured them that all their genuine concerns would be examined and addressed in accordance with the rules.

## Nizam-ud-Din Bhat chairs Ethics Committee meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** A meeting of the Ethics Committee of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly was held Tuesday at Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Secretariat, here, under the Chairmanship of its Chairman MLA Nizam-ud-Din Bhat.

The meeting was attended by Members of the Committee including MLA, Gh. Mohi-ud-Din Mir; MLA, Salman Sagar; MLA, Hilal Akbar Lone; MLA, Zafar Ali Khatana; MLA, Peerzada Feroz Ahmad; MLA, Satish Kumar Sharma; MLA, Surinder Kumar; MLA, Randhir Singh and MLA Arvind Gupta.

The Chairman briefly highlighted the role and importance of the Ethics Committee. He said that the Committee has been constituted to uphold the dignity, decorum and prestige of the House by ensuring

that the highest standards of parliamentary ethics, conduct and discipline are maintained by the Members.

The Chairman emphasized that the Committee bears a significant responsibility in promoting accountability, transparency, integrity and ethical values in public life, thereby strengthening the public confidence in democratic institutions. He further impressed upon the Members that it is the collective responsibility of the Committee to preserve the sanctity of the Legislature by fostering exemplary standards of conduct among public representatives.

The Chairman further proposed that, with a view to create greater awareness about parliamentary ethics and democratic values, the Committee should undertake interaction programmes with the students and faculty members of the Departments

of Law and Political Science of the University of Kashmir and the University of Jammu. He observed that such interactions would provide an opportunity to obtain valuable feedback and perspectives from the academic community regarding the role, conduct and responsibilities of legislators in a democratic system.

The Chairman also suggested that the Committee should pay a visit to the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to interact with the Chief Justice and other Judges for an exchange of views on ethical standards in public life. He said that such interactions would be beneficial in enriching the Committee's understanding of ethical governance and in strengthening ethical values, not only within the Legislature but also in the conduct of public representatives and public servants.

## Viral video genuine, but statement taken out of context: Mehbooba Mufti

Apologises for Jantar Mantar remarks; says meant 'Bahana Banta Hain'

REHAN QAYOOM

**SRINAGAR:** Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Tuesday clarified the controversy surrounding her remarks during the Jantar Mantar protest, expressing regret and saying the statement had been taken out of context because of a "slip of the tongue", while maintaining that the viral video of her statement was genuine.

Mufti said she had intended to say "Bahana Banta Hain" while referring to militancy, but due to the rush of media interactions, she could only utter "Banta Hain".

"I gave bytes to a lot of people there. In one byte I said there is militancy and intended to say 'Bahana Banta Hain', but I could not utter the word 'Bahana' due to hurriedness. I thought I had said that," she said, addressing a press conference on the party's 27th Foundation Day here.

Rejecting claims that the clip had been manipulated, the former Chief Minister, said the circulating video was authentic. "I wouldn't say that the video is fake; it is genuine," she said.

Mufti said she has consistently raised issues concerning the rights, dignity and democratic aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir throughout her political career and that the remark did not reflect her intended message. She reaffirmed her party's commitment to the restoration of Article 370 and Article 35A, announced peaceful protests across Jammu and Kashmir on August 5.

Mehbooba said the PDP had adopted a comprehensive political resolution reaffirming the vision of its founder, late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, centred on "peace with dignity", democratic engagement, reconciliation and political dialogue.

She said the party had planned district-level Foundation Day celebrations across Jammu and Kashmir, but scaled them down in view of the recent heavy rains and the loss of lives and property, particularly in Rajouri and Poonch.

Congratulating party workers, Mehbooba said the PDP had survived repeated political attacks during its 27-year journey and that its workers had remained com-



mitted to the party's ideology despite hardships and political pressure.

Reading out the party's political resolution, Mufti said the PDP would continue its constitutional struggle for the restoration of Articles 370 and 35A and all constitutional guarantees that protected the identity, special status and rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. "The only way to establish lasting peace is through dialogue, reconciliation and confidence-building measures. That remains the vision of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and the commitment of the PDP," she said.

Announcing the party's future political programme, Mehbooba said the PDP would hold peaceful protests across Jammu and Kashmir on August 5 to press for the

restoration of the erstwhile constitutional position of the region and oppose what she termed the erosion of democratic and federal principles.

Referring to the developments after August 5, 2019, she said the PDP leadership and workers had been subjected to intimidation, detentions and political targeting because of their stand on Jammu and Kashmir.

Despite the pressure, she said, the party would continue to speak for the people and would not compromise on its principles.

Describing Jammu and Kashmir as a natural gateway between South and Central Asia, Mehbooba urged the Centre to reopen the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakote Cross-LoC routes for trade and travel, saying the links would strengthen commerce, tourism and people-to-people contact.

She also sought the reopening of access to Sharda Peeth for Kashmiri Pandits and reiterated that dialogue and reconciliation remained the only viable path to resolving the Jammu and Kashmir issue.

## Min Itoo visits Family of Martyr Constable Ashiq Hussain, Assures Govt Support

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM:** Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Tuesday visited the residence of Martyr Head Constable Ashiq Hussain Qureshi at Lalpora, Beerwah to express solidarity with the bereaved family following his supreme sacrifice in the line of duty during the recent terror attack in Anantnag.

The Minister was accompanied by MLA Beerwah, Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani, MLA Khansahib, Saif-ud-Din Bhat, and MLA Tangmarg, Farooq Ahmad Shah and other concerned officers.

The Minister offered heartfelt condolences to the family and paid rich tributes to the martyred constable.

Interacting with the family members, the Minister conveyed that the Government stands firmly beside them during this difficult time. She assured them that every possible assistance and welfare support will be extended to ensure the family's well-being and dignity.

## Sakeena Itoo visits SKIMS Soura, reviews treatment of injured pilgrims



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** On the directions of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, Tuesday visited the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura, to enquire about the health condition of the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra pilgrims who sustained injuries in a road accident in Ganiwan, Ganderbal.

During the visit, the Minister met the injured pilgrims undergoing treatment and interacted with them individually to enquire about their well-being and recovery. She also spoke to their attendants and assured them of the Government's full support.

The Minister reviewed the treatment being provided to the injured pilgrims and held a detailed interaction with the doctors and senior officers of the hospital regarding their medical condition and progress.

Emphasising that the

health and well-being of the pilgrims is the Government's foremost priority, Sakeena Itoo directed the hospital administration to ensure that all the injured receive the best possible medical care, specialised treatment and every required facility for their speedy recovery.

"The Government is committed to providing the highest standard of healthcare to every injured pilgrim. There should be no compromise in treatment, and all necessary medical assistance and support must be extended to them," the Minister said.

She also instructed the hospital authorities to closely monitor the condition of each patient and ensure round-the-clock availability of specialist doctors, medicines and other essential healthcare services.

Director SKIMS, Dr. Ashraf Ganie informed the Minister that all injured pilgrims are under constant medical supervision and are being provided comprehensive treatment by teams of specialists.

## Javid Dar meets delegations; assures early redress of public grievances

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Tuesday met several delegations and individuals from different parts of the Union Territory and listened to their grievances and developmental concerns.

During the interaction, the Minister heard a wide range of issues raised by the visiting delegations and individuals, including the blacktopping and upgradation of roads, improvement of civic amenities, augmentation of basic infrastructure, service-related matters, pension cases, employment issues and other public welfare concerns.

The Minister directed the concerned officers to take immediate cognisance of the genuine grievances and ensure their timely redress in accordance with the established rules and procedures.

A deputation of the Junior Rural Stewards (JRS) also called on the Minister and apprised him of issues concerning their service conditions. The deputation particularly urged the Minister to consider enhancing their monthly stipend in view of their increasing responsibilities in the implementation of various Rural Development programmes across the Union Territory.

## Satish Sharma reviews progress of Science & Technology initiatives

Reaffirms commitment to renewable energy, innovation led development in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, Tuesday reviewed the progress of key renewable energy, science and technology initiatives being implemented across Jammu and Kashmir, reiterating the Government's commitment to accelerate sustainable development, clean energy adoption and scientific innovation across the Union Territory.

The Minister had a comprehensive review of the flagship programmes being executed by the Department of Science & Technology, Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency (JAKEDA) and the Jammu & Kashmir Science, Technology & Innovation Council (JKSTIC). These included rooftop solarisation of government buildings, small hydro power projects, PM-KUSUM implementation, biotechnol-

ogy infrastructure and science outreach initiatives.

Commissioner Secretary Science and Technology Babila Rakwal, CEO JAKEDA P.R.Dhar and other senior officers were present in the meeting.

Reviewing the progress under the flagship Solarization of Government Buildings Programme, Satish Sharma expressed satisfaction over the remarkable achievement registered under the CAPEX and RESCO models. He was informed that 8,181 government buildings have already been solarized with a cumulative installed capacity of 85.8 MW, placing Jammu and Kashmir 3rd among 31 States and Union Territories in the country in terms of the number of government buildings solarized.

The Minister was informed that under the CAPEX mode, 65 MW capacity has been allocated for 5,600 government buildings, of which 3,388 buildings have already been solarized with an installed capacity of 46.8 MW. In addition, material for 1,462

buildings has already been supplied while installations in another 800 buildings are in transit. Under the RESCO mode, implementation is progressing with a target capacity of 175 MW covering nearly 8,000 government buildings, with work orders already issued for 1,360 buildings.

Describing the achievement as a significant milestone in Jammu and Kashmir's clean energy journey, Satish Sharma said that expanding renewable energy infrastructure is vital for reducing carbon emissions, lowering electricity costs and making government institutions energy efficient.

"The remarkable progress achieved in rooftop solarisation demonstrates the commitment of the government towards sustainable development. Jammu and Kashmir is steadily emerging as a frontrunner in renewable energy adoption and we will continue to strengthen these initiatives with greater speed and transparency," the Minister said.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Slip Of Tongue Or?

**M**ehbooba Mufti's apology over her controversial remarks at Jantar Mantar may have acknowledged a "slip of the tongue," but it also exposes a much deeper problem in Jammu and Kashmir's political culture, the dangerous consequences of careless public mes-saging by those who have held the highest offic-es. Words spoken by ordinary citizens may fade quickly. Words spoken by former chief ministers shape narratives, influence public opinion, and often become political ammunition. When such statements appear to justify or normalize vio-lence, even unintentionally, they cannot simply be dismissed as verbal mistakes.

Her admission that she intended to say "Bahana Banta Hai" but instead said "Banta Hai" is wel-come, yet it raises an uncomfortable question: Why did it take widespread outrage and politi-cal pressure for this clarification to emerge? Accountability delayed often appears as damage control rather than genuine introspection. Equal-ly disappointing is the familiar pattern that fol-lowed. Instead of limiting the response to an apology, the controversy quickly descended into a blame game, with fresh allegations against political rivals and references to the darkest chapters of Kashmir's past. Every crisis in the Valley cannot become an opportunity to reopen decades-old political wounds.

The people of Jammu and Kashmir have paid an unbearable price for violence, mistrust, and political confrontation. Thousands of families continue to live with memories of conflict. They deserve leaders who heal divisions—not remarks that risk reopening them. This episode is also a reminder for every political leader, regardless of party, that public discourse demands precision, maturity, and responsibility. In today's digital age, every sentence is recorded, replayed, and scrutinized. A single misplaced word can inflame tensions far beyond the speaker's intention. The larger tragedy is that Kashmir's politics con-tinues to revolve around controversy instead of governance. While unemployment, inflation, education, healthcare, tourism, and infrastruc-ture demand urgent attention, political energy is repeatedly consumed by avoidable verbal battles. An apology is the first step, not the final one. True leadership lies in ensuring that such mistakes are never repeated and in restoring public confidence through responsible conduct. Jammu and Kashmir does not need more politi-cal theatrics. It needs restraint over rhetoric, accountability over excuses, and leadership that unites rather than divides. The people deserve nothing less.

How Homes Shape Worldviews

Family Environment And Youth Development



RAKSHANDA GUL

**W**hen we talk about the development of young people, our minds often go to schools, colleges, or social media. These things certainly influence today's generation; I believe that the first and most lasting influence comes from home. A child spends the early years of life with family, and during this time, many habits, values, and ways of thinking begin to develop. Long before children understand the outside world, they learn by watching the people around them. This is why the family environment plays a very important role in shaping their worldview. A home where people care for one another, respect, and solve problems peacefully gives children a strong foundation for life.

Culture exists within each family. For example, some families value the tradition of having meals together, while other families consider it important to get together with relatives or be helpful to people. The above-mentioned habits might seem insignificant, but they gradually become a part of a child's daily life. The child who was raised in a polite environment will definitely carry that trait into adulthood. Just as when parents act responsibly and honestly, children automatically start imitating them.

I can confidently say that I have noticed children remember the simplest family moments for a long time. For instance, the father helping the old woman, the mother behaving respectfully towards other people, and grandparents telling their grandchildren about honesty and hard work- all this seems insignificant, but still leaves a trace in their lives.

It is also the parents' job to inspire their



kids to use reason rather than simply accept all the information they receive without thinking. The kids are naturally curious and have numerous questions as a result. The families must support their questioning. A proper discussion allows kids to understand the rationale behind various values and decisions. Being inspired to think and analyze, compare different options and share one's opinion acceptably increases one's confidence and teaches one to make sensible choices instead of following the examples of other people blindly.

The children nowadays have numerous information sources at their disposal. With the help of mobile phones and the Internet, they get exposed to new ideas constantly. There is some beneficial information, and there is some that is misleading. Parents cannot accompany their kids all the time; however, they can teach them to think before believing or disseminating any information. It will be very helpful for kids to have such practice since every stage in one's life requires reasoning.

Communication is yet another aspect that plays an essential role in a family. In most

cases, members of a family are engaged in various activities such as work, studying, or other responsibilities. Members may live in one house and never get the opportunity to communicate. Any parent needs to spend even a few minutes communicating at the end of the day. It is good to ask children about their day, listen to them attentively, and appreciate their point of view. They will be comfortable talking about their successes and concerns.

I think children do not necessarily expect their parents to find solutions to all their problems. Most often, they just need someone to listen to them without any kind of judgment. When parents keep calm when having conversations, children feel relaxed enough to share everything.

Things may not turn out the way we plan all the time. All young people have had moments of disappointment in their lives; for example, bad grades in exams, losing a contest, or being rejected. Such moments may either demotivate them or make them stronger. The way in which the family deals with such situations makes a big difference. A family that encourages the young person

to learn from failures teaches him or her the following lesson: that failure is just a chance for improvement. With this mentality, one becomes resilient and gets the motivation to try again.

Simple responsibilities around the house can help make a young person strong. For instance, organizing one's desk for studies, contributing to household chores, or looking after younger children helps instil discipline and a sense of responsibility. This way, a child learns that all family members have different roles. With age, one develops the ability to take up bigger responsibilities.

Respect among family members also contributes to how youngsters will act in society. Kids pay attention to how adults deal with each other. They see how arguments between family members are discussed and resolved either patiently and respectfully or aggressively and disrespectfully. Children understand that problems can be worked out in a civilized manner. Such knowledge will remain with them in life as respectful behaviour leads to healthy relationships and successful workplaces.

The strength of a society depends on how strong families are in society. The knowledge is obtained in schools, and opportunities exist in society, but the lessons are learned at home. An ideal family is not necessary, but people who love and support each other and are ready to listen, communicate, and learn from one another should exist there.

To sum up, family plays an important role in the development of one's personality. The family culture influences behaviour; dialogues teach people to think independently; open dialogue builds trust; emotions contribute to forming resilience. Families that spend much time, effort, and energy raising their kids will help create responsible, loving and confident citizens of the future society.

*Author writes on themes related to women's empowerment, rural livelihoods, entrepreneurship, health, and changing social realities. She can be mailed at rakshandagul629@gmail.com*

Scientific Journey Towards Sustainability

FAROOQ AHMAD

**!!** The Earth is not inherited from our ancestors; it is borrowed from our children." This timeless saying reminds us of our greatest responsibility, to protect our planet for future generations. Today, climate change has become one of the most serious challenges facing humanity. Rising temperatures, melting glaciers, destructive floods, powerful storms, prolonged droughts, forest fires, and declining biodiversity are no longer distant warnings. They are realities that affect millions of lives across the globe. The good news is that science is not standing still.

Around the world, researchers are using contemporary experimental means, modern scientific methods and advanced technologies to understand climate change, predict its future impacts, and develop effective solutions. These innovative techniques are helping humanity respond to one of the greatest environmental crises in history. Climate change research begins with one simple principle: accurate observation. Scientists first collect reliable information before drawing conclusions. Modern satellites orbiting the Earth continuously observe our planet from space. They record changes in temperature, rainfall, sea levels, cloud cover, forest area, and the size of glaciers. By comparing satellite images collected over many years, researchers can clearly see how rapidly the Earth's climate is changing. Satellite observations have become the eyes of climate scientists. Another remarkable scientific achievement is the use of supercomputers and climate models. These powerful computers process enormous amounts of information gathered from weather stations, oceans, forests, and satellites.

Scientists use this information to create computer models that simulate the Earth's climate. These models help predict future weather patterns, estimate rising sea levels, and assess the impact of greenhouse gas emissions. Governments rely on these predictions while preparing policies for climate adaptation and disaster management. One of the most important areas of climate research is the study of greenhouse gases. Carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide trap heat in the atmosphere,

causing global temperatures to rise. Modern laboratories use highly sensitive instruments capable of measuring even the smallest amounts of these gases. Scientists collect air samples from cities, forests, mountains, oceans, and even remote polar regions. This research helps identify the major sources of pollution and supports efforts to reduce emissions. To understand the future, scientists often study the past. One fascinating experimental technique involves analysing ice cores extracted from Antarctica and Greenland.

These deep cylinders of ice contain tiny bubbles of ancient air trapped thousands of years ago. By studying these bubbles, researchers discover what the Earth's atmosphere was like long before factories, vehicles, and modern industries existed. This comparison clearly shows how human activities have accelerated climate change. The oceans also play a crucial role in climate research. Covering more than seventy percent of the Earth's surface, oceans absorb vast amounts of heat and carbon dioxide. Scientists use research ships, floating buoys, underwater robots, and advanced sensors to measure ocean temperature, acidity, salinity, and currents. These observations explain why coral reefs are bleaching, marine ecosystems are changing, and sea levels continue to rise. Better understanding of the oceans also improves weather forecasting and helps coastal communities prepare for cyclones and storms.

Forests are another important focus of climate studies. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, making them one of nature's greatest defences against global warming. Researchers use drones, laser scanning technology, and satellite imagery to monitor forests, detect illegal logging, estimate carbon storage, and assess damage caused by fires or pests. Such experiments help governments and conservation organisations protect valuable ecosystems. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has added a new dimension to climate research. AI systems can analyse millions of pieces of information within minutes, identify hidden patterns, and improve climate predictions. They help detect wildfires at an early stage, forecast floods, monitor crop health, and issue timely weather warnings. Farmers, disaster management agencies, and policymakers are increasingly



benefiting from AI-based climate solutions.

Modern drones have become valuable scientific tools. They can safely reach glaciers, mountain peaks, forests, wetlands, and disaster-hit areas where human access is difficult. Equipped with high-resolution cameras and specialised sensors, drones collect detailed environmental data quickly and economically. Their observations help scientists monitor changing landscapes and assess environmental damage after natural disasters. Another promising area of experimental research is carbon capture and storage. Scientists are developing technologies that capture carbon dioxide released from industries before it enters the atmosphere. The captured gas can then be stored safely underground or used in manufacturing.

Although these technologies are still evolving, they offer hope for reducing greenhouse gas emissions while cleaner energy systems continue to expand. Renewable energy research represents another shining example of scientific innovation. Researchers are constantly improving solar panels, wind turbines, hydrogen fuel technologies, and advanced batteries. Every improvement increases efficiency, lowers costs, and reduces dependence on fossil fuels. As renewable energy becomes more affordable, it offers a cleaner and more sustainable future for all. Agriculture is also benefiting from contemporary experimental methods. Scientists are developing crop varieties that can withstand drought, floods, high temperatures, and changing rainfall patterns. Precision farming uses satellites, sensors, GPS technology, and artificial intelligence to supply water and fertilisers only where they are needed. This saves resources, increases crop production, and protects the environment.

Protecting wildlife is another important part of climate research. Scientists use camera traps, satellite tracking, drones, and DNA analysis to study how climate change affects animal migration, breeding, and survival. Their findings help conservationists protect endangered species and preserve biodiversity for future generations. Climate research is truly a global effort. Scientists from different countries work together, share information, conduct joint experiments, and exchange ideas. Climate change affects every nation, regardless of its size or wealth. International cooperation strengthens scientific understanding and ensures that successful solutions can benefit people around the world. However, scientific discoveries alone cannot solve the climate crisis. They must be supported by responsible governments, environmentally conscious industries, effective laws, quality education, and active public participation. Every citizen can contribute by planting trees, conserving water, reducing electricity consumption, avoiding single-use plastics, using public transport, and supporting clean energy.

Young people have a particularly important role. Schools and colleges should encourage environmental awareness, scientific thinking, and innovation. Students can participate in science exhibitions, plantation drives, recycling programmes, and climate awareness campaigns. Today's students are tomorrow's scientists, engineers, policymakers, and leaders. Their ideas and determination will shape the future of our planet. Looking ahead, climate science will continue to evolve. Future technologies such as quantum computing, advanced Earth-observing satellites,

biotechnology, and next-generation sensors will provide even greater understanding of our changing environment. These innovations will help humanity detect environmental threats earlier and respond more effectively. Climate change is undoubtedly one of the greatest challenges of our time.

Yet it is also an opportunity to demonstrate the remarkable power of science, innovation, and global cooperation. Contemporary experimental means have transformed climate research from simple observation into precise scientific investigation. They provide the knowledge needed to protect nature, save lives, and build a sustainable future. The message is clear. Every scientific discovery brings hope, but every citizen must also act responsibly. Governments must support research, industries must adopt cleaner technologies, educational institutions must promote environmental literacy, and individuals must embrace sustainable lifestyles. Our planet has given humanity clean air, fertile soil, flowing rivers, majestic forests, and countless blessings. It is now our turn to protect it. Through science, innovation, and collective responsibility, we can ensure that future generations inherit not a planet in crisis, but a world filled with life, opportunity, and hope. The future of the Earth depends not only on what scientists discover—but also on what each one of us chooses to do today.

The battle against climate change cannot be won by scientists alone. It requires the commitment of governments, industries, educational institutions,NGO, s and every responsible citizen. Contemporary experimental means have given us the knowledge and the tools to protect our planet, but knowledge becomes meaningful only when it is translated into action. The choice before us is simple: either we act today or we pay a far greater price tomorrow. Let science guide our decisions, let innovation inspire our actions, and let responsibility define our future. Together, we can ensure that the Earth remains not just a place to live, but a thriving home for generations yet to come.

*Author is a govt teacher. He can be mailed at fariafarooq343@gmail.com*

IDEAS, OPINIONS AND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED ARE WRITERS' OWN AND MAY NOT BE FOUND IN ACCORD WITH THOSE OF GOOD MORNING KASHMIR

Good Morning

Kashmir

Editor, Owner, Printer, Publisher

Javed Ashraf Shah

Associate Editors

Mir Suhail

Sulaiman Muhammed Shah

Legal Advisor

Bashir Sidiq

Bureau Chief Jammu:

Harbans Nagokay

R.N.I No: JKENG/2010/36998

Regd No: 109555

Office No: 0194-3593724

Email:

goodmorningkashmir@gmail.com

Office Address:

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

Aijaz Ahmad Dar

■ Dying For A Drop

# Can Kashmir Survive The Loss Of Its Waters?



DR. RIZWAN RUMI

There was a time when Kashmir's lakes and rivers were celebrated not merely for their breathtaking beauty but for the life they sustained. They nourished settlements, supported agriculture, regulated floods, preserved biodiversity, and shaped the Valley's cultural identity. Dal Lake mirrored the Zabarwan hills in pristine clarity, Wular Lake breathed life into the Jhelum, Nigeen shimmered like a sapphire amidst the willows, while countless streams carried crystal-clear waters from glaciers and springs to villages across the Valley.

Across Kashmir, a quiet ecological crisis is unfolding in plain sight. Our lakes, wetlands, rivers, and streams are dying a slow and painful death. What once symbolized abundance is increasingly becoming a reminder of neglect. Floating plastic bottles, untreated sewage, construction debris, encroachments, invasive weeds, and shrinking shorelines have become distressingly common sights. The tragedy is that this decline has not happened overnight. It has unfolded gradually, year after year, while society watched with concern but often without meaningful action.

The deterioration of Kashmir's water bodies has become one of the greatest environmental challenges facing the region. Yet it is also among the most misunderstood. Public discourse often revolves around one recurring question: How can our lakes remain polluted despite hundreds of crores being spent on their restoration? It is a valid question, but it tells only part of the story.

The truth is that no amount of government spending can revive a lake if pollution continues to flow into it every single day. Mechanical dredging, weed removal, and beautification projects may offer temporary relief, but they cannot substitute for responsible governance, scientific planning, and public stewardship. Saving Kashmir's waters requires much more than money—it demands a collective change in attitude. **KEY TAKEAWAY:** The truth is that no amount of government spending can revive a lake if pollution continues to flow into it every single day.

The scale of the crisis is alarming. According to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, Jammu and Kashmir had 697 recorded water bodies in 1967. Today, 315 of them have disappeared completely, while another 203 have shrunk considerably. These are not merely disap-

pearing ponds or marshes; they represent vanishing ecosystems that once stored floodwaters, recharged groundwater, supported wildlife, moderated local climate, and sustained livelihoods.

Dal Lake perhaps best illustrates both the beauty and the tragedy of Kashmir's environmental story. Spread over nearly 25 square kilometres in the early twentieth century, the lake has steadily shrunk because of encroachments, siltation, pollution, and unchecked urban expansion. Decades of conservation programmes have involved dredging operations, de-weeding campaigns, relocation initiatives, and infrastructure development. Hundreds of crores of rupees have been spent over the years, yet the lake continues to battle eutrophication, nutrient enrichment, declining water quality, and increasing human pressure.

The problem lies not only within Dal itself but in everything that flows into it. Untreated sewage from surrounding settlements, household waste, detergents, agricultural runoff, and plastic waste continue to enter the lake through drains and channels. Every fresh load of pollutants undermines the progress made by restoration projects. It is like attempting to empty a flooded room while leaving the tap running. Wular Lake presents an equally worrying picture. Recognised as one of Asia's largest freshwater lakes and designated as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance, Wular performs ecological functions that extend far beyond its shoreline. It acts as a natural flood basin for the Jhelum River, supports thousands of migratory birds, sustains fisheries that provide livelihoods to local communities, and plays a vital role in regulating Kashmir's hydrological cycle.

Yet Wular has suffered extensive degradation due to excessive silt deposition, encroachments, willow plantations, agricultural expansion, and pollution carried by the Jhelum and its tributaries. Similar pressures are evident in Nigeen Lake, Manasbal Lake, Anchar Lake, Hokersar Wetland, Shallabugh Wetland, and numerous smaller streams that once formed the ecological arteries of the Valley.

The degradation of these water bodies is no longer merely an environmental concern; it has become an economic, social, and public health challenge. Tourism—the backbone of Kashmir's economy—depends heavily upon the Valley's natural beauty. Visitors arrive expecting pristine lakes, tranquil waterways, and breathtaking landscapes. Polluted shorelines, foul-smelling waters, and floating garbage diminish that experience and threaten the reputation Kashmir has earned over generations.

Fisheries have also suffered. Declining water quality affects fish breeding, reduces aquatic biodiversity, and undermines the livelihoods of thousands of families dependent on freshwater resources. Farmers increasingly face uncertainty as degraded wetlands lose their capacity to store and gradually release water during dry periods. Even more concerning is the impact on flood management. Wetlands function like



natural sponges, absorbing excess rainwater during heavy precipitation and releasing it gradually afterwards. Their disappearance increases flood vulnerability. The devastating floods of 2014 reminded Kashmir that nature's protective systems cannot be replaced simply by concrete embankments and engineering structures. Healthy lakes and wetlands remain among the Valley's most effective natural flood defences.

Climate change has further intensified these challenges. Rising temperatures, declining snowfall, retreating glaciers, erratic rainfall patterns, and prolonged dry spells are placing unprecedented stress on freshwater ecosystems throughout the Himalayas. Reduced snow accumulation means less sustained inflow during summer months, while intense rainfall events increase erosion and sediment transport into rivers and lakes. Ironically, just as climate change increases our dependence on healthy freshwater ecosystems, we continue to weaken them through pollution and poor planning.

Government institutions undoubtedly bear a significant responsibility. Conservation cannot succeed without efficient sewage treatment plants, scientific catchment management, strict environmental regulation, regular monitoring of water quality, effective solid waste management, and firm action against illegal encroachments. Equally important is transparency. Conservation projects involving public funds should be subject to periodic environmental audits, publicly accessible progress reports, and independent scientific evaluation. Citizens deserve to know not only how much money has been spent but also whether measurable improvements in water quality, biodiversity, and ecosystem health have actually been achieved.

However, it would be both unfair and inaccurate to assign the entire blame to government agencies alone.

Environmental degradation begins long before

waste reaches a lake. It starts when a household dumps garbage into a nearby stream, when untreated wastewater is discharged into drains, when plastic bottles are discarded carelessly after picnics, when construction debris is dumped along riverbanks, or when commercial establishments bypass proper waste disposal systems. Every such action contributes incrementally to the degradation of Kashmir's waters. Perhaps the greatest challenge is not technological but behavioural.

No government can deploy enough workers to monitor every stream, every drain, and every village. Environmental protection ultimately depends upon civic responsibility. If citizens continue to treat rivers and lakes as convenient dumping grounds, even the most ambitious restoration programmes will struggle to achieve lasting success. This calls for a new environmental ethic—one that recognises water bodies not merely as tourist attractions but as living ecosystems essential for human survival.

Schools and universities must strengthen environmental education beyond classroom textbooks. Community organisations should adopt local streams and wetlands for regular clean-up campaigns. Religious institutions can play an influential role by encouraging environmental stewardship as a moral obligation. Tourism operators should promote responsible tourism practices, while hotels, restaurants, and household owners must comply strictly with waste management norms. Local communities should become active partners rather than passive observers. Citizen-led monitoring groups can report illegal dumping, identify encroachments, and work alongside authorities in protecting neighbourhood water bodies. Such community participation has proven successful in several countries where lake restoration became a shared public movement rather than solely a government programme.

There is also much that policymakers can learn from successful restoration efforts across the world. London's River Thames, once declared biologically dead, has been revived

through decades of strict pollution control, sewage treatment, and continuous monitoring. South Korea restored Seoul's Cheonggyecheon stream by removing concrete structures and reviving natural waterways. Similar examples demonstrate that degraded water bodies can recover when science, political commitment, and public participation work together. Kashmir need not replicate these models blindly, but it can certainly adapt their guiding principles: pollution prevention before restoration, scientific planning over cosmetic beautification, transparency over bureaucracy, and public participation over administrative isolation.

The future demands a comprehensive and integrated water management strategy. Every lake, wetland, stream, and river must be viewed as part of one interconnected ecosystem rather than as isolated conservation projects. Catchment forests must be protected. Decentralised sewage treatment facilities should intercept wastewater before it enters natural water bodies. Modern technologies such as satellite monitoring, GIS mapping, drone surveys, and real-time water quality sensors should complement traditional ecological knowledge possessed by local communities.

Most importantly, conservation should become a permanent commitment rather than a seasonal campaign launched whenever environmental concerns dominate headlines.

Kashmir's waters have shaped its civilisation for centuries. They have inspired poets, sustained communities, welcomed travellers, and nurtured extraordinary biodiversity. They are far more than scenic landscapes; they are living lifelines that support the Valley's ecology, economy, and identity. History will judge our generation not by the number of restoration projects we announced or the amount of money we spent, but by whether we had the wisdom to preserve these priceless natural treasures before it was too late.

Saving Dal, Wular, Nigeen, Manasbal, Hokersar, the Jhelum, and countless streams is not solely the responsibility of the government, nor can it be left entirely to environmental activists. It is a shared obligation that belongs equally to policymakers, local bodies, scientists, businesses, tourists, and every citizen who calls Kashmir home. The silent choking of Kashmir's waters can still be reversed. But that reversal will begin not with another dredging machine or another budget announcement. It will begin the day we collectively realise that every drop of water we protect today is an investment in the future of Kashmir.

**KEY TAKEAWAY:** The silent choking of Kashmir's waters can still be reversed... it will begin the day we collectively realise that every drop of water we protect today is an investment in the future of Kashmir. For if our lakes disappear, we will lose far more than beautiful landscapes. We will lose a part of our history, our culture, our resilience, and ultimately, ourselves.

The author can be mailed at rizwan-roomi2012@gmail.com

World Hepatitis Day 2026

## Political Will Will Decide If We End Hepatitis, Aids By 2030

SHOBHA SHUKLA

As World Hepatitis Day falls on 28 July, the global health community confronts a stark reality: the science to eliminate viral hepatitis, HIV and related epidemics already exists. What remains missing is the political courage, sustained funding and integrated delivery systems to put those tools into the hands of the people who need them most.

**South-East Asia: High burden, emerging successes and the logic of convergence**

In World Health Organization (WHO)'s South-East Asia region the numbers are daunting. The region carries 14% of the global hepatitis-B and hepatitis-C burden. Hundreds of thousands of pregnant women living with hepatitis-B still risk transmitting the virus to their newborns because birth-dose vaccination coverage sits at only 58% - far below the more than 90% needed.

Surveillance for sexually transmitted infections remains weak; congenital syphilis still claims roughly 8,000 infants a year. The region accounts for nearly 40% of global TB cases and deaths, and half of TB-affected households face catastrophic costs. Yet Dr Po-Lin Chan pointed to genuine breakthroughs. Dr Chan leads the WHO as Unit Head for Hepatitis, HIV, STIs, EMTCT, and TB for southeast Asian region.

Maldives last year became the first country in the world to achieve triple elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B. Thailand and Sri Lanka have eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis. Case notification and treatment success for TB are strong once people are found. These results prove that elimination is feasible when political commitment, surveillance and integrated programmes align, she said.

**Are paths forward converging?**

Dr Chan argued that the path forward lies in convergence - breaking disease silos so that the same primary-care platforms, community networks and financing streams deliver multiple interventions. Multiplex diagnostics, self-testing, self-care, oral and long-acting injectable PrEP for HIV prevention, digital tools and AI-assisted X-Ray screening already exist. The challenge is scaling them while addressing the multi-sectoral drivers of disease: undernutrition, diabetes, poverty



and catastrophic household expenditure. "It is really about doing differently," she said. "If we do differently in partnership, converge, break the silos, I believe we can get there."

**Bridging the policy-to-implementation divide**

Why proven tools take so long to reach scale? asks Dr Reshu Agarwal, Technical Expert for HIV, Hepatitis, STI and EMTCT, World Health Organization (WHO) India. Viral-load monitoring was recommended in 2013; by 2023 only 74 countries had routine programmes. PrEP was approved by US FDA in 2012 and its guidelines appeared in 2016; by 2021 only 120 of 180 countries had adopted them, and actual coverage lagged further. HIV self-testing, recommended in 2017, had policies in 109 countries and implementation in 90. Differentiated service delivery and multi-month dispensing accelerated during COVID-19 but quality and scale remain uneven. Long-acting PrEP guidelines issued in 2022 had been adopted by only 21 countries by 2025, said Dr Reshu Agarwal.

The exceptions are instructive. One of the new lifesaving HIV medicines, Dolutegravir, was adopted rapidly almost everywhere and produced sharp improvements in ensuring that those people living with HIV who are receiving the therapy, remain virally suppressed. When policy decisions are made quickly and financing follows, impact follows, she said.

Agarwal listed the usual suspects for delay: slow national adoption of WHO recommendations, restrictive laws, financing shortfalls, weak supply chains and health workforce capacity, and persistent equity gaps driven by gender,

geography, stigma and discrimination. The human and economic costs of inaction are measurable in preventable deaths, morbidity and missed Sustainable Development Goal targets.

What works, she said, is strong leadership, community-led responses, data-driven targeting and integrated delivery. The shift required is from pilot projects to national scale, from disease silos to convergent platforms, from short-term project funding to sustainable domestic financing, from top-down programmes to community-led services, and from counting activities to measuring impact and equity.

**Four practical Ds to get As in programme outcomes!**

WHO India's Dr Reshu Agarwal offered four practical "Ds" for closing the gap: monopolise knowledge so communities and frontline providers understand what is available; democratise access by decentralising services to the last mile; differentiate approaches to reach micro-populations and sub-national hotspots with person-centred care; and demystify innovations so that simplification and integration become routine rather than exceptional.

**Eastern Europe and Central Asia: The region where AIDS still grows**

Eastern Europe and Central Asia remain the only region in the world where the HIV epidemic continues to expand and death rates keep rising. The driver is clear: One large country that accounts for around 70% of new HIV cases in the region has banned opioid agonist treatment by law and frames harm reduction as a 'danger-

ous Western influence.' That same country, also pressures neighbouring governments to restrict or dismantle services, said Ganna Dovbakh of the Eurasian Harm Reduction Association in Lithuania. The result is a predictable cascade of preventable infections and deaths. People who inject drugs - still the population bearing the heaviest burden - face criminalisation, stigma and the absence of proven interventions. "If political decisions will not be made in Russia then we could not stop AIDS in our region," Dovbakh stated bluntly.

Yet the picture is not uniformly bleak. Over three decades, civil society, communities of people who use drugs and progressive health professionals across the 28 countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia have transformed repressive Soviet-era narcological systems - once compared to forced-labour camps - into evidence-based services. Most governments now formally recognise the necessity of harm reduction. Needle and syringe exchange programmes, opioid agonist maintenance therapy, community-based testing, naloxone for overdose prevention and, increasingly, drug checking and fentanyl test strips exist in many places.

**Service coverage remains far too low to bend the epidemic curves**

Coverage, however, remains far too low to bend the epidemic curves for HIV, viral hepatitis or TB (deadliest infectious disease globally). Dovbakh identified the primary obstacle: criminalisation of drug use and possession. Punitive laws keep people away from testing, treatment, HIV prevention options like Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and every other public service. Stigma compounds the exclusion.

She welcomed the 2026 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS: United to end AIDS, which was adopted at the United Nations General Assembly High Level Meeting (UNHLM) in June 2026. This Political Declaration's reaffirmation of the 10-10-10 targets on removing societal and legal barriers, and the imminent launch of new UNAIDS-UNODC guidance on decriminalisation co-authored with the community-led International Network of People Who Use Drugs.

"Criminalisation is the first barrier which stops people," she said. Comprehensive harm reduction must go beyond methadone or buprenorphine to include needle-syringe exchange programmes, information and drug checking for stimulant users, community test-

ing, overdose prevention and integrated services delivered by community-led organisations contracted as equal partners.

**Barriers to end AIDS are political, not technical**

The threat to that progress is mounting. Criminalising laws (which are not-in-step with public health evidence-based policies), 'undesirable organisation' statutes and anti-drug propaganda legislation are shrinking civic space and choking advocacy funding. "Remaining barriers to respond to HIV/AIDS till 2030 are political, not technical," Dovbakh concluded. Free civic space, supported civil society, decriminalised drug use and comprehensive harm reduction could end AIDS in the region faster than 2030.

**Shared agenda for World Hepatitis Day and beyond**

Taken together, the three perspectives form a coherent diagnosis. Hepatitis-B and Hepatitis-C, HIV, syphilis, TB and the overlapping epidemics among people who use drugs cannot be defeated in isolation. Criminalisation and stigma remain the biggest barriers ever invented against public health. Siloed programmes waste scarce resources. Delayed adoption of new tools exacts a preventable human cost. Shrinking civic space undermines the very community systems that deliver results.

The good news is equally consistent. Where political leaders have protected harm reduction, contracted community organisations as partners, invested in integrated maternal and child health platforms, and moved rapidly from evidence to national policy, elimination targets have moved within reach. Maldives' triple elimination is the clearest recent proof. Rapid Dolutegravir scale-up is another. Expanding community-led monitoring and advocacy funding is a third.

On World Hepatitis Day 2026 the message from the experts is unambiguous. The remaining distance to the 2030 goals is not measured in missing technologies. It is measured in political decisions still unmade, laws still unrepealed, budgets still unallocated and silos still unbroken. Close those gaps, and the epidemics of hepatitis, HIV and TB can still be ended - on time or even ahead of schedule. Leave them open, and the cost will continue to be paid in lives.

Author is a feminist, health and development justice advocate

## Mehbooba’s Statement

answer for it.”

Taking a swipe at a PDP MLA, Omar said the party’s own president had disproved the AI claim. “Her own party president has exposed that claim. He kept saying for five days that it was AI-generated, but today Mehbooba Ji herself has admitted there was no AI. Those people should also express regret. Even if they don’t apologise, they should at least express regret,” he said.

Highlighting the outcome of the Mega Job Fair, CM Abdullah said around 5,300 youth had registered for the event, with nearly 470 receiving on-the-spot job offers while another 430 were short-listed for further interviews.

“If the shortlisted candidates are also selected, around 900 youth will get jobs. It is a significant achievement. We hope more such Mega Job Fairs are organised as our continuous effort is to reduce unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir,” he said.

The CM said more than 60 recruiting companies from Jammu and Kashmir; other parts of the country and firms with overseas offices participated in the event, creating employment opportunities for local youth.

On the National Testing Agency (NTA) Bill introduced in Parliament, the Chief Minister welcomed the move and said it was the students’ protests that had pushed the Centre to strengthen the examination system. “If the examination system improves because of the students’ protest, it is a positive outcome. Let Parliament pass the Bill,” he said.

Responding to the PDP’s proposed August 5 protest seeking restoration of Article 370, Omar said the party itself was responsible for the present political situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

“Had they not brought the BJP to power in Jammu and Kashmir; we would not have reached this stage. If they now realise their mistake and want to rectify it, that is their decision,” Abdullah said—(KNO)

## CM Calls for More

College, Srinagar. The event was organised by Desh Bhagat University, Punjab, and Cluster University of Srinagar in collaboration with NIELIT, Nations Development Association (NDA) and MY Bharat.

Minister for Education Sakina Itoo, Commissioner Secretary School Education Ram Niwas Sharma, Vice Chancellor Cluster University of Srinagar, Vice Chancellors of several universities from Jammu and Kashmir, President Desh Bhagat University Punjab Dr. Sandeep Singh, Principal Amar Singh College, principals and deans of various colleges, members of the teaching fraternity and students were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said that institutions of higher learning have a responsibility that extends beyond awarding degrees. He observed that universities and colleges must actively support students in transitioning from education to employment through continuous engagement and career facilitation.

He noted that for decades, educational institutions in Jammu and Kashmir had largely considered their responsibility fulfilled once students graduated. Appreciating the initiative taken by Cluster University Srinagar and Desh Bhagat University in organising the mega job fair, he described it as a significant step towards bridging the gap between education and employment.

The Chief Minister highlighted the encouraging outcome of the job fair, stating that of the nearly 5,300 registered candidates, around 470 youth secured job offers, while another 430 candidates reached the final stages of recruitment, requiring only the completion of interview formalities. He said that nearly 900 young men and women had either secured employment or were on the verge of being employed, describing it as an impressive success rate for an initiative that is still in its early stages.

He expressed confidence that with more such employment drives, the number of placements would continue to rise. Calling the event a landmark initiative for Cluster University Srinagar, he said it demonstrated the immense potential of structured campus recruitment in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister stressed the need to institutionalise campus recruitment across all universities and colleges in Jammu and Kashmir. He said that universities, including the University of Kashmir, Islamic University of Science and Technology, University of Jammu, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology and other higher educational institutions, should organise recruitment drives regularly so that students get employment opportunities before completing their studies.

Stating that merely asserting government jobs are not the solution to unemployment is not enough, Omar Abdullah said the government cannot abdicate its responsibility after making such a statement. “If we cannot provide government employment to every young person, then it becomes our duty to open more doors of opportunity. We cannot simply tell our youth to look elsewhere; we must create opportunities for them through private sector engagement, skill development and industry partnerships,” he said.

Emphasising the immense talent among the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Minister said that what they require is greater exposure and wider opportunities.

The Chief Minister also underscored the importance of promoting entrepreneurship alongside employment. Referring to the government’s recent initiatives to strengthen the startup ecosystem, he said efforts were underway to connect young entrepreneurs with venture capital fund and handholding of startups so that those wishing to establish their own enterprises receive the necessary institutional support.

He reiterated that the government would continue making every possible effort to ensure that the youth of Jammu and Kashmir receive opportunities comparable to those available elsewhere in the country and abroad.

Congratulating the candidates who secured placements during the recruitment drive, the Chief Minister wished them success in their professional careers. He also extended his best wishes to those who had reached the final stage of the recruitment process, expressing hope that they too would soon secure employment.

Earlier, the Chief Minister handed over offer letters to students who were selected during the campus recruitment process. Congratulating the newly recruited candidates, he expressed confidence that they would excel in their respective careers and serve as an inspiration for other aspiring youth.

On the occasion, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between Cluster University of Srinagar and Desh Bhagat University, Punjab in presence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, aimed at strengthening academic collaboration, skill development initiatives and enhancing employment opportunities for students.

The mega job fair brought together more than 50 reputed employers from various parts of the country, including companies with operations in the Gulf and Middle East.

The event offered direct employment opportunities to graduates, postgraduates, diploma holders and skilled youth through on-the-spot interviews, screening and recruitment, while also providing career guidance and valuable industry exposure.

direction of the nation’s development. You are the strength of Skill India, the face of Digital India, and the true bearers of Aatmanirbhar Bharat,” the Lieutenant Governor told the aspirants.

The Lieutenant Governor also outlined six key objectives of the Mega Job Fair. He said the fair will ensure meaningful employment for youth to become self-reliant and contribute to society. It will also pave the way for Industry-academia partnerships to bridge the gap between degrees and workplace skills. The Lieutenant Governor said that the Job Fair will ensure that skill development programmes are aligned with digital literacy and technical capabilities and a roadmap will be created for simplified recruitment through on-the-spot interviews and direct hiring. He said the Job fair will also ensure entrepreneurship promotion to encourage job creators alongside job seekers and it will prepare a future-ready workforce to strengthen India’s development journey.

The Lieutenant Governor urged students to embrace three guiding principles- never make dreams small, never stop learning, and always embrace innovation.

“Dream big and focus on new discoveries. The future belongs to those who seek new solutions, develop new thinking, and lead change. Success is meaningful only when achieved with ethics and responsibility,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor stressed that colleges and universities must evolve into institutions that prepare students for life beyond examinations.

“Education should not be confined to classrooms. It must prepare every student to begin life’s journey with confidence, skills, and practical understanding,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also called upon industry representatives to act as recruiters, mentors and partners in shaping the future workforce.

“If industry and education work together, we can create an environment where knowledge and experience strengthen each other, and innovation and employment advance together,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor underscored the growing interest of youth in entrepreneurship, citing that since 2020, lakhs of youth became entrepreneurs. He recalled that the Union Territory led the country in PMEGP in 2021–22, and expressed confidence that the UT will carve a new identity in innovation, startups, and modern industries.

He further emphasized that unemployment cannot be solved through government jobs alone, as government vacancies are limited. Instead, he outlined three priorities- aligning skills with industry needs, promoting private sector job creation through MSMEs and SMEs, and bridging the transition from college to workplace through internships, mentorships, and career guidance.

“Let us resolve that this 77th Mega Job Fair will mark the beginning of a new chapter in the employment history of Jammu Kashmir,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Shri Ram Niwas Sharma, Commissioner/Secretary, Higher Education Department; Prof. Mohammad Mobin, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University of Srinagar; Prof. K.S. Chandrasekar, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu; Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, Vice Chancellor, IUST; Dr. Sandeep Singh, President of Desh Bhagat University; Prof. Tehmina Yousuf, Principal, Amar Singh College, senior officials, representatives of leading industries, heads of educational institutes, and youth in large number were present.

## LG Visits SKIMS,

instructed the senior officials to ensure that all necessary assistance and personal care are extended to the pilgrims, and that arrangements for their safe return to their hometowns are prioritized upon their recovery.

In a post on X, the Lieutenant Governor wrote: “Today, visited SKIMS, Srinagar; to inquire about the health and well-being of pilgrims of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, who were injured in the unfortunate road accident in Ganiwan, Ganderbal. By the grace of the Baba Amarnath, all 39 Yatris admitted this morning are currently in stable condition and responding well to treatment. I have directed the hospital administration to provide the highest standard of medical care to the injured.

The senior officials have been instructed to ensure that all necessary assistance and personal care are extended to the pilgrims, and that arrangements for their safe return to their hometowns are prioritized upon their recovery.”

## Two Held In B'la For

According to the complaint, the woman had gone to Jalsheeri Drangbal with a male friend for an outing when two unknown men allegedly approached them, harassed them and started recording videos on their mobile phones.

The SSP said the accused allegedly assaulted the victim’s companion before chasing him away. They then allegedly overpowered the woman and sexually assaulted her one after the other while recording the act on a mobile phone. The accused later fled from the spot.

During the incident, the complainant told police, the accused addressed each other as “Shakir” and “Ashraf.” The SSP said this was the only clue available to investigators initially, making the case particularly challenging.

He said the woman delayed approaching the police as she had allegedly been threatened by the accused. Police have since provided security to the victim.

Following the complaint, Police Station Baramulla registered FIR No. 112/2026 under Sections 70(1) and 351(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The investigation was entrusted to PSI Menakshi under the supervision of the Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP) Headquarters Baramulla and the Station House Officer (SHO) Police Station Baramulla.

The SSP said investigators launched sustained searches and employed technical analysis, human intelligence and scientific investigative methods to identify the accused.

“Since the victim knew the accused only by their first names, we relied on technical and human intelligence to establish their identities. The two accused were arrested yesterday,” Singh said.

The accused have been identified as Shakir Ahmad Lone, 22, son of Abdul Gani Lone, and Mohammad Ashraf Dar, 27, son of Abdul Hamid Dar, both residents of Jalsheeri, Baramulla. Police said Ashraf works as a driver.

During sustained interrogation, both accused disclosed their involvement in the crime, the SSP said, adding that the mobile phone allegedly used to record the assault has also been recovered.

Police said further investigation is underway to collect scientific, medical, digital and other corroborative evidence in accordance with law.

The SSP said police are committed to conducting a fair, impartial and expeditious investigation to ensure all evidence is collected meticulously and strict legal action is taken against those found involved—(KNO)

## ‘J&K Has 836.29

Chandra Shekhar, Minister of State for Rural Development

Kamlesh Paswan said the government has made a budgetary provision of 95,692.31 crore for Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) for the period from July 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027. He said an additional 36,000 crore was also allocated for MGNREGS for the first three months of the current financial year.

According to the data tabled in the House, Jammu and Kashmir’s pending dues include 207.69 crore under the wage component and 628.60 crore under the material component, taking the total pending liability to 836.29 crore. Ladakh has pending dues of 0.89 crore towards wages and 4.44 crore under the material component, with a total liability of 5.33 crore.

The minister further informed the House that during the current financial year, the Centre has released 9,711.98 crore towards pending wage liabilities, including all admissible wage liabilities for 2025-26. It has also sanctioned 7,765.68 crore as the first instalment for clearing material liabilities, of which 5,440.07 crore has already been utilised by States and Union Territories.

He added that the release of funds for settlement of pending MGNREGS liabilities is a continuous process and is based on demand, utilisation of previously released funds, and submission of complete proposals by the States and Union Territories in accordance with the prescribed guidelines—(KNO)

## J&K Records Decline

the Centre has strengthened cyber crime prevention through the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), cyber forensic laboratories, the Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) scheme, and nationwide awareness campaigns. These include caller tune alerts, SMS campaigns, social media outreach, school programmes, television and radio campaigns, as well as awareness drives at railway stations, airports and other public places—(KNO)

## Drug Awareness

Centres (DDACs) across the country.

For Jammu and Kashmir, the Ministry said assistance is being provided to 1 IRCA, 3 ODICs, 2 CPLIs, 6 DDACs and 21 Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATFs).

The ministry further informed that the 14446 toll-free de-addiction helpline is providing counselling and referral services, with over 4.6 lakh calls received across the country, including more than 11,000 calls from Jammu and Kashmir.

Sharing year-wise details, the Ministry said 18,939 awareness programmes were conducted during 2023-24, sensitising 1,00,02,860 people, while 35,639 drug users were treated and rehabilitated.

During 2024-25, 5,851 awareness programmes were organised, reaching 84,89,948 people, with 39,711 drug users treated and rehabilitated.

In 2025-26, 6,346 awareness programmes were conducted, covering 6,24,867 people, while 28,366 drug users received treatment and rehabilitation.

The ministry also informed Parliament that 3,072 drug traffickers were arrested in 2023, 2,158 in 2024, and 2,500 in 2025.

Regarding monitoring, the Ministry said the implementation of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan is reviewed regularly through monthly review meetings, Chintan Shivirs and national-level conferences with States and Union Territories. State, district and block-level NMBA committees have been constituted to ensure coordinated implementation and regular review.

The ministry stated that the campaign has strengthened awareness generation, community participation, inter-departmental coordination and outreach for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of persons affected by substance abuse.

As per the reply, the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, launched on 15 August 2020, initially covered 272 vulnerable districts and was extended to all districts of the country from August 2023, with a special focus on higher educational institutions, universities and schools.

The ministry said 21 Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATFs) have been established in Government hospitals across Jammu and Kashmir at GMC Anantnag, District Hospital Bandipora, GMC Baramulla, District Hospital Budgam, GMC & Hospital Doda, District Hospital Ganderbal, GMC Jammu, GMC Kathua, District Hospital Kishtwar, District Hospital Kulgam, District Hospital Kupwara, District Hospital Poonch, District Hospital Pulwama, District Hospital Ramban, Government Medical College & Hospital Rajouri, District Hospital Samba, District Hospital Shopian, the Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences at GMC Srinagar, SKIMS Srinagar, GMCH Udhampur and District Hospital Reasi.

The ministry further said 12 NGO-supported de-addiction centres are functional in the UT, including J&K Students Welfare Mission (DDAC) in Bandipora, Cultural Educational and Environmental Organization (DDAC) in Budgam, Himalaya Sewa Sang (CPLI) in Jammu, J&K Society for the Promotion of Youth and Masses operating an IRCA and an ODIC in Jammu and a DDAC in Kulgam and Samba, National Educational Society and Social Welfare Organization operating an ODIC in Kupwara and a CPLI and an ODIC in Srinagar; Concerned About Universal Social Empowerment (CAUSE) (DDAC) in Pulwama, and National Educational Society and Social Welfare Organization (NESSWO) (DDAC) in Rajouri—(KNO)

CS reviews

timely establishment of beneficiary units and measurable improvement in rural livelihoods.

Regarding enhancing the participation of women and youth as envisaged under the programme, the Chief Secretary directed the Agriculture Production Department to reach out to the women registered under the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) of the Rural Development Department (RDD) and utilise the database of Mission YUVA to effectively engage the aspiring young entrepreneurs across Jammu & Kashmir. He emphasised that convergence with these flagship initiatives would significantly broaden the programme’s outreach and ensure greater inclusion of eligible beneficiaries.

The Chief Secretary further directed the Deputy Commissioners to institute a roster-based mechanism for regular field inspections by designated officers to assess the quality of implementation, verify the functionality of beneficiary units established under JKICIP, and obtain first-hand feedback from applicants. He instructed that the field visits should also focus on identifying implementation bottlenecks and addressing the challenges faced by beneficiaries in a timely manner to ensure effective execution of the programme.

The Chief Secretary further observed that the implementation of the programme must concentrate on improving the pace of establishment of sanctioned units, strengthening field-level supervision and ensuring that approved beneficiaries are provided all necessary support for timely completion of their enterprises.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Dr. Ashish Chandra Verma, observed that farmer participation under JKICIP has witnessed

remarkable growth since the last review, reflecting the increasing confidence of the farming community in the programme.

While expressing satisfaction over this incremental progress, he maintained that considerable scope still exists for further improvement. He called upon all implementing agencies to intensify awareness campaigns, strengthen grassroots outreach, and ensure that every eligible farmer, youth and aspiring agri-entrepreneur is able to avail the benefits of the project through proactive facilitation and effective last-mile delivery.

While providing the details the MD, JKICIP, Dr. Sagar Doidode Dattatray stated that the number of registered farmers has increased to 60,283, reflecting an increase of nearly 189 per cent over the past. Similarly, he gave out that the number of applications received under various project interventions has risen to 67,579, while 43,168 applications have been approved with 7,501 beneficiary units already been established across Jammu & Kashmir.

A detailed department-wise review revealed substantial progress under Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries, Sheep Husbandry, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture Planning & Marketing and SKUASTs. The Agriculture Department as the principal implementing agency has made large-scale interventions in vegetable cultivation, aromatic rice, saffron, protected cultivation, water management systems, medicinal and aromatic plants, honey production, mushroom cultivation and other niche agricultural enterprises.

Similarly, the Horticulture Department has expanded interventions relating to orchard rejuvenation, apple, walnut, kiwi, citrus, mango, guava, litchi, nursery development and water management. Significant progress has also been registered under Fisheries, Sheep Husbandry and other allied sectors through livelihood-oriented interventions aimed at strengthening income generation among rural households.

Reviewing the progress under Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) development, the meeting was informed that almost the entire project target relating to registration and identification of FPOs has been achieved.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) for 2026-27 and directed all implementing agencies to ensure timely execution of approved activities, optimum utilisation of available financial resources and strict adherence to implementation schedules. He emphasised that financial progress must be closely aligned with physical achievements to maximise development outcomes and avoid delays in project execution.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary also reviewed district-wise implementation bottlenecks, scheme-wise progress and project monitoring mechanisms. He directed all implementing agencies to strengthen field verification, maintain complete transparency in beneficiary selection, intensify awareness generation at the grassroots level and regularly review district-wise performance so that implementation gaps are identified and addressed promptly.

The meeting concluded with the Chief Secretary directing all implementing agencies to maintain the present momentum, closely monitor monthly progress against approved targets and ensure that every intervention under the project translates into visible socio-economic benefits for farmers across all districts of the Union Territory.

High-Density Apple

enables scientific canopy management, efficient irrigation, better sunlight penetration and easier mechanisation, resulting in improved fruit quality, higher productivity and reduced labour requirements.

According to the Jammu and Kashmir Horticulture Department, thousands of hectares have already been brought under high-density plantations as part of efforts to rejuvenate ageing orchards and enhance productivity. Officials have consistently promoted the system to increase growers’ income while improving the global competitiveness of Kashmiri apples.

The Horticulture sector remains the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir’s rural economy, supporting nearly 3.5 million people directly or indirectly. The Union Territory produces over 21 lakh metric tonnes of apples annually, accounting for more than 70 percent of India’s apple production, making Kashmir the country’s largest apple-producing region.

Horticulture experts believe that the shift towards high-density cultivation is helping improve productivity, with properly managed orchards capable of producing substantially higher yields per hectare than conventional plantations.

They, however, emphasised the need for continued government support in the form of quality planting material, scientific extension services, cold storage expansion and better market linkages to sustain the sector’s growth—(KNO)

39 E-Zero FIRs

respective State or UT are automatically converted into an e-Zero FIR at the State or UT e-Crime Police Station and are then transferred to the concerned territorial cyber crime police station. The complainant is required to visit the police station within three days to convert the Zero FIR into a regular FIR.

According to the data tabled in Parliament, Jammu and Kashmir recorded 39 e-Zero FIRs after implementing the system in July 2026. Other States and UTs where the system has been introduced include Delhi, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Goa, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Assam, Odisha, Haryana, Gujarat, Tripura, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Bihar and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

The minister also informed the House that under Section 173(1) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, information relating to a cognisable offence can be provided orally or electronically irrespective of where the offence was committed. He added that while the Centre has provided the technology platform, registration of FIRs, investigation, arrests and filing of charge sheets remain the responsibility of the respective State and Union Territory law enforcement agencies—(KNO)

Over 4.35 Lakh

Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu for the annual pilgrimage this year has reached 1,30,355, officials added.

Every year, thousands of devotees from across the country undertake the pilgrimage to the Amarnath cave shrine, situated at an altitude of 3,880 metres nestled in the Himalayas, traversing steep mountain trails, glaciers and ice-fed streams. The two main base camps for the pilgrimage are Baltal in Central Kashmir and Nunwan (Pahalgam) in South Kashmir.

With 4,35,412 pilgrims having paid obeisance so far this year, the Yatra has already surpassed last year’s total of over 4.14 lakh devotees. In 2024, around 5.12 lakh pilgrims performed the pilgrimage. The highest-ever footfall was recorded in 2011 and 2012, when 6.35 lakh and 6.22 lakh pilgrims, respectively, visited the holy cave shrine—(KNO)

ADDRESS:- SADAT MARKET, NEAR PNB, SHADIPORA SUMBAL

+91- 9906230114- 6006600834

DAR MATTING SHOP

DEALS IN:- BLANKETS, BED SHEETS, BED COVERS, PILLOW COVERS, DOOR MATS, ROOM SHEETS, GRAPHICS, LINING, ROTTERY & MUCH MORE

# Mehbooba’s apology came with excuses, not regret: Tanvir Sadiq

REHAN QAYOOM

**SRINAGAR:** National Conference (NC) chief spokesperson and MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq on Tuesday said PDP president Mehbooba Mufti’s explanation over her controversial Jantar Mantar remarks was an “excuse, not regret.”

Talking to reporters here Sadiq, said that Mehbooba should offer an unconditional apology to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly pellet victims and their families.

He said the PDP Chief’s clarification failed to address the real issue. “The people expected a simple and unconditional apology. Instead of admitting her mistake directly, she tried to justify what she had said. This was not an apology; it was an excuse,” he said.

Referring to the controversy over the viral video, Sadiq accused Mehbooba of first allowing PDP MLA

Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra to defend her by questioning the authenticity of the clip and later contradicting him by admitting that the video was genuine.

“You threw your own MLA under the bus to cover up the controversy created by your own remarks and then publicly contradicted him when the damage could no longer be controlled,” he said, adding that leaders who face such public humiliation should introspect about their political future.

Sadiq said Mehbooba should not only apologise for her recent remarks but also for her earlier “Doodh & Toffee” statement.

“If today’s remarks were merely a slip of the tongue, then what about the ‘Doodh & Toffee’ remarks? She owes the people an apology for those as well,” he said.

He also reiterated that Mehbooba should apologise to pellet victims, grieving families and the people of Jammu and Kashmir who, he said, were hurt by

her comments.

The NC leader castigated the PDP’s alliance with the BJP, saying Mehbooba should also apologise for “bringing the BJP to power in Jammu and Kashmir.”

“The people have not forgotten that decision,” he said.

Reacting to the PDP’s announcement of August 5 protests seeking the restoration of Article 370 and Article 35A, Sadiq dismissed the programme as “political drama.”

He alleged that the parties now protesting against the developments of August 5, 2019, had themselves created the circumstances that led to those decisions.

“The people of Jammu and Kashmir understand the reality. These protests are nothing but political drama aimed at diverting attention from the real issue,” he said.

Earlier, in a post on X, Sadiq wrote, “What a weak, selfish, and ungrateful leader. You pushed your

own MLA, Waheed, under the bus to clean up the mess created by your own remarks, only to publicly humiliate him when the damage couldn’t be contained. But @parawahid, you can say what she said is also AI.”

He further wrote that there was no ambiguity in Mehbooba’s remarks and that people across Jammu and Kashmir were “appalled” by the statement.

“There is no ‘if’ or ‘but’ here. People across Jammu & Kashmir were appalled by your statement. The only appropriate response is a clear and unconditional apology to every Kashmiri who was hurt, especially the victims of pellet injuries,” he wrote.

Referring again to Mehbooba’s “Doodh & Toffee” remark, Sadiq wrote, “And while you’re at it, apologise for your ‘Doodh & Toffee’ remark as well. If today’s statement was merely a slip of the tongue, are you suggesting those remarks reflected your actual position?”

## DG Rural Sanitation calls for Mission-Mode execution of SBM (G) initiatives across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Director General, Rural Sanitation, J&K, Anoo Malhotra Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the implementation and progress of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) across all districts of Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Director Rural Sanitation, Jammu / Kashmir, Shabir Ahmad Hakak, Accounts Officer of the Directorate Ajay Singh, Assistant Commissioners Panchayat (ACPs) of all the districts, other officers and consultants of the Directorate.

During the meeting, the Director General conducted a detailed review of the expenditure status under SBM(G), emphasizing the need for timely and effective utilization of available funds to achieve intended outcomes. Districts were directed to closely monitor financial progress and ensure that resources are utilized efficiently for priority interventions.

The progress of spill-over works was also reviewed, with instructions to expedite the completion of all pending projects within the prescribed timelines. The Director General stressed that delayed works should be closely monitored to ensure early completion without compromising quality.

A detailed assessment of the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) was undertaken, focusing on the status of tendering and implementation of approved works. Districts were instructed to fast-track pending tendering processes and ensure timely execution of infrastructure and sanitation projects to strengthen rural sanitation systems.

The meeting also reviewed the District Sani-

tation Plans, highlighting district-specific interventions aimed at improving solid and liquid waste management, strengthening community participation, and enhancing Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities.

The Director General directed the districts to intensify field-level monitoring, strengthen documentation, improve service delivery, and ensure greater community participation to enhance overall performance in the national survey.

The Model Verification Status of villages and the functionality status of sanitation assets, including Solid and Liquid Waste Management infrastructure and Community Sanitary Complexes, were also reviewed.

The Director General directed district officials to undertake regular inspections and ensure that all sanitation assets remain fully functional, properly maintained, and effectively utilized by rural communities.

The meeting further reviewed the progress made in the identification and verification of Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs) across rural areas as per the Solid Waste Management Rules 2026. Districts were instructed to complete the identification process at the earliest and ensure compliance with the provisions of the Solid Waste Management Rules through appropriate monitoring and institutional engagement.

The Director General further underscored the importance of convergence among stakeholders, effective utilization of available resources, and continuous public engagement to sustain the gains achieved under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and further improve the quality of life in rural Jammu & Kashmir.

## YourStory Founder Shradha Sharma inspires JK Startups during interactive session at JKEDI

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) organised an inspiring interaction session with Shradha Sharma, Founder and CEO of YourStory, here at its Sempora campus on Tuesday.

The session witnessed enthusiastic participation from innovators, entrepreneurs and startup founders from across the region.

The programme was held in the presence of Mohammad Younis Malik, Director JKEDI, who in his welcome address, emphasised that the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir has been steadily evolving and urged the startup community

to move beyond the “survival mode” and embrace a mindset focused on growth and long-term sustainability.

Highlighting the transformative role of entrepreneurship, Director JKEDI observed that several startups from the region have successfully broken conventional stereotypes by emerging as job creators rather than job seekers. He remarked that building a vibrant startup ecosystem is a continuous process and meaningful interactions with accomplished entrepreneurs and industry leaders play a vital role in motivating young innovators, broadening their perspectives and equipping them for future challenges.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Where, I Mr/Ms Sheikh Abdush Shakoor and others S/o D/o Abdul Gaffar Sheikh R/o Gulshan Nagar Nowgam Srinagar Kashmir, intends to apply office of Prescribed Authority of Directorate of Tourism Kashmir for registration of my proposed Paying Guest House /Home Stay under name and style “Alasha Retreat Homesaty” Situated at Gulshan Nagar Nowgam Srinagar Kashmir under the Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011. Whereas, I will submit Landownership Certificate from Concerned Tehsildar with attested photographs of the unit through Dy. Commissioner concerned, Rent/Lease Deed/Partnership Deed/issued by concerned Sub-Registrar, Judicial Magistrate (if applicable NOC from the owner to the effect that the property can be used as Home stay), Character Certificate of the applicant from the concerned Police Station, undertaking from the owner as self declaration, Public Notice inviting objections, if any in print media, list of family members Name, Age, and Photograph self attested by owner, Photographs of the unit as mentioned in the application (each of exterior and individual bed rooms and bathrooms), Inspection report by the Committee (The recommendation of the inspection Committee shall decide whether to issue a registration to the unit or not keeping in view, the type of accommodation and amenity, adhar card. Now before my case is processed for registration by the Prescribed Authority. The matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/ organizations for objections if any and the same should reach to the office of Prescribed Authority within a period of 7days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper of the Valley. Objections received beyond the period of 7 days from the date of publication shall not be entertained and the case shall be processed under rules as per merit.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information to the general public that I Abdul Qudoos intend to correct the name of my son in his aadhar card bearing no. 725265375677 from Musavir Shad to MASAVIR SHAD as per his matriculation certificate. This needs to be rectified. In this regard if anybody have any kind of objection he/she may file the same with concerned authority within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained afterwards.

## Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles, Indian Army come together for Shaurya Vijay Yatra

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**DRAS:** Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles’ Shaurya Vijay Yatra, organised in partnership with the Indian Army, culminated at the Kargil War Memorial in Dras on Kargil Vijay Diwas, completing a 1,900-km journey that began at the National War Memorial in New Delhi. Bringing together serving and retired defence personnel, Veer Naris, families of martyrs and civilian riders, the expedition paid homage to the valour, dedication and supreme sacrifice of the heroes of the 1999 Kargil War.

A defining moment of the expedition was the ceremonial carriage of sacred soil from the National War Memorial to the Kargil War Memorial, symbolically connecting generations of Indian soldiers whose unwavering commitment continues to safeguard the nation’s freedom.

Travelling through the rugged terrains of Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh, par-



ticipants paid respects at key military landmarks including Chandimandir, Rezag La and the Leh War Memorial before arriving in Dras. The journey served not only as a memorial ride but also as a reminder of the enduring legacy of India’s armed forces and the values they embody.

Since its inception in 2021, the ride conceptualised by Jawa Yezdi motorcycles has sought to carry the stories of India’s soldiers beyond military circles and into public consciousness. By bringing together members of the riding community, serving personnel, veterans, Veer Naris and families of mar-

tyrs, the initiative has evolved into a unique civil-military movement dedicated to preserving the spirit of courage, duty and selfless service for future generations.

This year’s expedition was flagged off by Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh and attended by senior military officials, veterans and invited guests, underscoring the significance of the initiative and its growing role in fostering public remembrance.

The expedition was completed aboard a fleet of Jawa and Yezdi motorcycles, including the Jawa 350, Jawa 42, Jawa 42 FJ, Yezdi Adventure and Yezdi Scrambler.

Traversing high-altitude passes, challenging mountain routes and some of India’s most significant military landmarks, the motorcycles enabled riders to undertake a demanding journey befitting the spirit of the occasion.

Anupam Thareja, Co-founder, Classic Legends, said: “The Shaurya Vijay Yatra is our way of ensuring that the stories of India’s bravehearts continue to inspire future generations. From the National War Memorial to Dras, every kilometre of this journey was dedicated to honouring those who gave everything for the nation. We are proud to undertake this tribute alongside the Indian Army and the wider riding community. By bringing together serving and retired defence personnel, Veer Naris and civilian riders, we hope to ensure that the values of courage, service and national pride continue to resonate across generations.”

## UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR, OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION KRALPORA

E tendering NIT No 25/RnB/Kralpora of 2026-27Dated: 28-07-2026

For & on behalf of the Lt. Governor Jammu & Kashmir(UT), e-tenders are being invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K UT Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/Central Governments for the following works

| S.No | Name of Work                                              | Adv. Cost (In Lacs) | Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees) | Earnest Money Deposit | Time of completion | Class of Contractor | Major Head              |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1    | Construction of Culvert at Bagh Mohalla Dardpora Kralpora | 15.64               | 800                        | 31300                 | 60 days            | Bee/Cee             | UT Capex Budget 2026-27 |

Position of AAA/ TS:- Accorded

Position of funds:- Available

1. The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) on the dates tabulated below:

|   |                                            |                                                                                 |
|---|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Date of Issue of Tender Notice             | 28-07-2026                                                                      |
| 2 | Period of downloading of bidding documents | 28-07-2026(4:00 PM) to 06.08.2026 (6:00PM)                                      |
| 3 | Bid submission Start Date                  | 28-07-2026(4:00PM)                                                              |
| 4 | Bid Submission End Date                    | 06.08.2026 (6:00PM)                                                             |
| 5 | Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)    | 07.08.2026 (11:00AM) In the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora. |

Upload/Disclose the bank account number which is linked with the GSTIN and Mapped with JKPWDOMS along with proof. No payments shall be released by the department to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder.

- Bids must be accompanied with Cost of Tender Document in the shape of Treasury Challan (dated between the bid start date and the Bid Submission End date) deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora (tender inviting authority). Treasury Challan must be written boldly and clearly with Name of Work, Name of the Contractor along with Contact No, NIT No and Serial No of Work on NIT(if any).
- At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora. Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% of the allotted Cost in the form of CDR/FDR at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government’s circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the allotted cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.
- In case of abnormally low bid price the Circular instructions issued by the Finance Department vide No FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 dated 08-08-2025 regarding seeking of additional performance security from the selected bidder for quoting ALB are as follows:
  - Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee/ Security percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of the project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on bid price.
  - Where the bid price is below 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on bid price.
  - The additional performance guarantee percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of the bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of the bid price is 0.5% or more.
  - The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security and shall be released after successful completion of DLP.

No: Div-KRLP/1757-71  
Date:28-07-2026

DIPK-3833-26  
DT: 28/07/2026

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
R&B Division Kralpora

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

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

### NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NIT No.18 OF R&B/QAZIGUND/2026-27 /E-TENDERING/2197-2211 DATED:27-7-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works :-

| S. No | Name of Work                                                                                                                                                     | Estimated Cost (in Rs) | Basic Cost (In Rs) | GST Amount (In Rs) | Cost of T/ Doc. (in Rs) | Earnest Money (In Rs) | Time of Completion | Head of Account                     | Class of Contractor |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1.    | C/O Tiled lane with minor drain from H/o Shabir Ahmad Wagay to H/o Gh Ahmad Wagay and tiled lane from H/o Bashir Ahmad Najar at Kurigam Ward No.01 (MC Qazigund) | 154907.21              | 131277.30          | 23629.91           | 200/=                   | 3098/=                | 15 Days            | District Capex Budget (UDS) 2026-27 | DEE Class           |
| 2.    | C/O Chainlink fencing at Old Grave yard Shampora Ward No.03 MC Qazigund.                                                                                         | 196242.85              | 166307.50          | 29935.35           | 200/=                   | 3925/=                | 20 Days            | District Capex Budget (UDS) 2026-27 | DEE Class           |
| 3.    | Construction of 04 No. Trout Raceways at Trout Fish Farm Panzath.                                                                                                | 2110962.36             | 1788951.16         | 322011.20          | 800/=                   | 42219/=               | 60 Days            | HADP Project 2026-27                | BEE & CEE Class     |

Position of AAA: Order No. 304-DDCA of 2026 Dated: 15-07-2026 (Item No.01 & 02)

Position of AAA: Fisheries Order No. 393 of 2026 Dated: 15-07-2026 (Item No.03)

Position of TS: Accorded

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](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:

| S.No. | Particulars                               | Dated                                               |
|-------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | Date of Issue of Tender Notice            | 27.07.2026                                          |
| 2     | Period of Downloading of bidder documents | From 29.07.2026 (11:00 AM) To 17.08.2026 (04:00 PM) |
| 3     | Bid submission Start Date                 | From 29.07.2026 (11:00 AM)                          |
| 4     | Bid Submission End Date                   | To 17.08.2026 (04:00 PM)                            |
| 5     | Date and time of opening of bid(online)   | 18.08.2026 (11:00 AM)                               |

vPooling Account No. 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKA0LALANG) (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 1st 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. In addition, the differential amount of performance security shall be furnished by the bidder in cash to the designated authority.

4. All the Bidders have to submit/upload Earnest Money/Bid Security (EMD@2% of Advertised Cost). Non submission of Earnest Money/Bid Security shall render the bidder as Non-responsive. Failure to produce Performance Security shall render the L1 as non-responsive and case for debarring of the Contractor for a period of 01 Year be forwarded to Higher Authorities.

The bidders are requested to quote their rates excluding GST. GST @18Percents shall be added to the contract value by the allotting authority at the time of issuance of allotment.

6. The date and time of opening of Bid shall be notified on Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://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.

- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of Opening of Technical bids.
- The Earnest Money/Performance Security shall be forfeited if:
  - Any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in the terms and conditions of the bid.
  - Failure of successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within specified time period before issue of letter of intent.
  - Successful Bidder fails to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
  - If at any stage of work, the Bidder back up from the contract, again the Performance security/EMD as well as work done claim will be forfeited.

No.2197-2211  
DATED:27-7-2026

DIPK-3798-26  
DT: 28/07/2026

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
PW (R&B) Division QAZIGUND

# 'Could see that hunger in all youngsters': Iyer credits fearless next generation after Zimbabwe sweep



IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** India captain Shreyas Iyer hailed the hunger and determination of the team's young players after guiding the side to a 3-0 T20I series sweep over Zimbabwe, saying their eagerness to seize every opportunity was the driving force behind the turnaround.

Speaking after securing his maiden series victory as India's T20I captain, Iyer explained how contributions from the emerging core, led by youngsters such as Mayank Yadav and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, helped India recover from successive series defeats to Ireland and England.

The Zimbabwe triumph marked a significant milestone for Iyer, who had endured six consecutive defeats at the start of his tenure, two against Ireland and four against England, before his side responded with three straight wins to complete a clean sweep.

"I feel when you step out on the field, you could see that hunger in all these youngsters who want to represent the team. They

know how the competition is back in India. So, whenever they step on, they want to see to it that they contribute to the best of their abilities and see to it that they win matches," Iyer said in a BCCI video.

That hunger, according to the skipper, translated into impactful performances throughout the series, with several young players stepping up at crucial moments.

Among those singled out was pace bowler Mayank Yadav, whose willingness to absorb instructions and execute plans impressed his captain.

"Mayank, I feel that his approach and his attitude was a standpoint in this tournament. I interacted with him during the match and every ball he was asking me what I should do. And the best thing about him was that he was able to execute whatever we decided. So, that's very heartening to see," he added.

Iyer also highlighted the influence of teenage opener Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, whose aggressive starts gave India early

momentum and allowed the middle order to build on solid foundations.

"With Vaibhav, we know what he can get to the table. Especially the starts which he gave in almost the two games, which were very crucial as a team. He set the rhythm for us and then Ishan coming in, Tilak coming in. You know, contribution from each and every individual wins you matches. So, today was another opportunity for us and we seized it," he mentioned.

Having watched different players shoulder responsibility across the three matches, Iyer said the collective effort reflected the standards the squad had set internally rather than an obsession with results.

"It's a very special feeling; I can't mention it in words. Representing the country and winning the first series, it's something that you always dream of as a player. And I personally feel that as a team we had set a standard for ourselves, rather than thinking much about the outcome and it pretty well worked for us," Iyer expressed.

## 135th Durand Cup: TRAU vs NEROCA derby ends in stalemate before a packed stadium

IAN S

**IMPHAL:** TRAU FC and NEROCA FC shared spoils in a fiercely contested goal-less derby, with both sides creating several promising chances but failing to find the breakthrough at the packed Khuman Lampak Main Stadium in Imphal on Tuesday.

The match was played at a high intensity throughout, featuring end-to-end action, disciplined defending and a second-half red card that saw TRAU FC finish the contest with ten men. Both coaches opted for a balanced 4-2-3-1 formation, signalling an intent to maintain defensive solidity while posing a threat on the counterattack.

TRAU FC head coach Thangjam Saran Singh has built his side around a strong foreign spine, with Senegalese defender Seila Toure marshalling the backline, Ugandan midfielder Adriko Rogers controlling the midfield, and Liberian striker Ghanefo Ansumana Kromah leading the attack.

Meanwhile, NEROCA FC head coach Yumnam Raju Mangang has also entrusted his overseas players with key roles, deploying Ghanaian defender Ben Nash Quansh to anchor the defence and Ghanaian forward Charles Teiko Folley as the focal point of the attack, while relying on a disciplined midfield to provide balance and creativity.

Both teams started positively, playing attacking football while remaining compact defensively. With both sides controlling the midfield and looking to exploit openings, the contest settled into an evenly fought affair in the opening exchanges. The first real opportunity of the match fell to NEROCA FC from a corner kick.

After a TRAU FC player's header from the corner



was initially kept out by the NEROCA defence, the loose ball fell kindly to Sridarth Nongmeikam, whose powerful follow-up effort was brilliantly denied by the goalkeeper, ensuring the deadlock remained intact.

TRAU FC nearly found the breakthrough moments later from a corner of their own. Defender Seila Toure rose highest to meet the delivery with a firm header, but his effort crashed against the post, leaving the NEROCA defence relieved as both sides continued to search for the opening goal.

TRAU FC came close to breaking the deadlock when Afridi Buyamayum burst through the middle before unleashing a powerful long-range effort that flashed narrowly wide of the post.

The remainder of the first half saw both teams continue to attack with intent, creating chances through counter-attacks, set-pieces and sustained spells of possession. Despite a series of fouls and Imphal Derby Ends in Stalemate Before a Packed Khuman Lampak Crowd

NEROCA FC began the second half on the front foot and nearly took the lead when Lambalayum Hembra Meetei delivered an inviting cross from the right for Charles Teiko Folley, whose powerful header was

brilliantly saved by TRAU FC goalkeeper Sapam Nongpoknganba Singh. The skipper showed excellent reflexes and kept his eyes firmly on the ball to pull off a fine save.

NEROCA FC squandered another golden opportunity when substitute Ngathem Imarson Meitei produced a skilful run down the left flank before delivering a precise pass into the box for Sridarth Nongmeikapam. Sridarth's first-time effort was well saved by the TRAU goalkeeper, and although the rebound fell back to him, he was unable to keep his follow-up attempt on target as the ball went behind for a goal kick.

NEROCA FC won a dangerous free-kick after Ronaldo Wairokpan was penalised for a high boot on Charles Teiko Folley. From around 25 yards out, Ngathem Imarson Meitei curled a powerful effort towards goal, but the TRAU goalkeeper produced a brilliant diving save to push the ball away for a corner.

TRAU FC were reduced to 10 men when Adriko Rogers was shown a second yellow card, followed by a red, after a heated exchange with the referee. The dismissal handed NEROCA FC a numerical advantage for the remainder of the contest.

## CWG 2026

# 'My mother is blind, supported me despite criticism all over,' says Sharmila after historic gold

IAN S

**GLASGOW:** India's Sharmila Dhankar dedicated her historic Commonwealth Games gold medal to her visually impaired mother after producing a season-best throw of 9.81m to win the women's shot put F57 title, becoming the country's first-ever para-athletics gold medallist at the Games.

Her victory not only ended India's 20-year wait for a Commonwealth Games para-athletics medal but also spearheaded a landmark double podium finish alongside compatriot Shilpa Shyla, who claimed bronze following a successful post-event protest and review.

While the achievement will be remembered as a watershed moment for Indian para-athletics, Sharmila said her thoughts immediately turned to the person who stood by her throughout her journey.

"I will dedicate this medal to my mother. My mother is blind, and despite criticism from all round, she has been supporting me ever since I was a kid. I am very happy that I have fulfilled



my mother's dream," Sharmila told IANS.

The victory marked a breakthrough not only for the 2026 Commonwealth Games campaign but also for Indian para-athletics as a whole. Sharmila said the medal belonged to the country and hoped it would inspire many more podium finishes in the years ahead.

"We are very happy. We will continue to win medals for our country. We will continue to work

hard. We will prepare well for the next Commonwealth Games. This is the first gold medal of our Parathletics," she added.

Despite scripting history in Glasgow, the significance of the achievement had yet to fully sink in for the new Commonwealth champion.

"I am very happy to win this medal. But I don't know. I will realise after 2-3 days that I have won the medal. It feels like a dream," Sharmila stated.

With her maiden major international gold now secured, Sharmila has already shifted her attention to the challenges that lie ahead, setting her sights on an even bigger stage, as she said, "We will play in the next Olympic Games. This is my first medal and I want to win more medals in the future."

The 2026 Commonwealth Games champion also pledged to continue striving for excellence while hoping fellow Indian athletes enjoy similar success. "Gold is for our country. I want all athletes to win gold. I will keep winning and will work hard. This medal has made the path for my future even brighter. I will work hard and will make a good record."

India's celebrations were further enhanced by Shilpa Shyla, who secured the bronze medal in dramatic fashion after officials upheld a post-event protest that invalidated Nigeria's Eucharia Iyiazi's mark. Shilpa's personal-best throw of 7.26m elevated her onto the podium, ensuring India finished with both gold and bronze in the women's shot put F57 competition.

## Indian women narrowly lose to Malaysia in World Junior squash group match

IAN S

**ONTARIO (CANADA):** The Indian women's team will need to win their final group match against South Africa to advance after narrowly losing 1-2 to Malaysia in the World Squash Junior Team Championships underway in Ontario, Canada.

After Rudra Singh lost to Harleen Tan 5-11, 4-11, 6-11 in the opening match, Anika Dubey was involved in a five-game thriller against higher-ranked Ye San Lee, which the Malaysians clinched 8-11, 11-8, 11-8, 10-12, 11-9.

The outcome of the match depended on the second rubber between Anika and Ye San Lee. After the pair had shared the opening three games, with Lee leading 2-1, the drama reached its peak as Anika fought back from 10-7 down in the fourth to force a deciding game.

However, Lee had other ideas. The Malaysians held her nerve to come through an absorbing fifth game, winning 11-9, drawing a huge roar from the Malaysian bench, and sealing the tie for her team.

With the outcome already decided, India's No.1 player Anahat Singh took to the court for the final match and brushed aside Whitney



Wilson 11-2, 11-4, 11-5 in the concluding match, recording a straightforward straight-games victory.

Meanwhile, the Indian men's team is drawn to meet Kuwait in the pre-quarter-finals. No.11 seeds Kuwait progressed to the Round of 16 after a strong victory over Chinese Taipei.

Elsewhere, one of the matches of the day took place on Court 5 at White Oaks Resort & Spa, where No.19 seeds Hong Kong, China produced a stunning comeback to defeat No.14 seeds South Africa and secure second place in Group 3.

South Africa made the ideal start, with Joseph Feast completing a remarkable comeback from two games down to defeat Ting To Brogan Cheng 3-2.

However, this proved not to have any effect on Hong Kong, China, who responded

immediately as third-string Pak To Lau levelled the tie with a commanding straight-games victory over Benjamin Newman, winning 13-11, 11-4, 12-10.

With the tie level at 1-1, everything came down to the deciding match, where Long Hin Larry Wong held his nerve to defeat Juan Corné Brand in straight games, sealing a memorable comeback victory and confirming Hong Kong, China's place in the men's Round of 16.

In the men's draw, hosts Canada booked their place in the knockout stage with a comfortable victory over Macau, China. Germany secured second place in Group One with a straight-games victory over New Zealand, while No.13 seeds Australia confirmed their place in the Round of 16 with a win over No.20 seeds Mexico.

## Gukesh to face challenger Sindarov in World Chess Championship match at Geneva

IAN S

**MUMBAI:** India's reigning World Champion D Gukesh will take on challenger Javokhir Sindarov in the FIDE World Chess Championship Match 2026 at Geneva, Switzerland, from November 25 to December 15, 2026, the sport's global governing body FIDE announced on Tuesday.

Both Gukesh, who became the World Champion by beating China's Ding Liren in Singapore in 2024, and Uzbekistan's Sindarov, who came through the FIDE Challenger Tournament, will be 20 years old when the event begins, making it the youngest World Championship contest in history.

The FIDE World Championship Match will consist of 14 classical games. The first player to score 7½ points will win the match, with no further games played once that score has been reached. Should the score be tied after all 14 classical games, the World Champion will be decided through tiebreaks.

FIDE Interim President and former World Champion Viswanathan Anand



welcomed the announcement and said besides Switzerland, the United States and Cyprus had bid to organise the match.

"Several countries expressed a strong interest in hosting the FIDE World Championship Match, including India, the United States and Cyprus. After carefully considering all the proposals, FIDE has decided to stage the match on neutral soil and bring it to Geneva, a city with a historic tradition of bringing nations and cultures together. We look forward to welcoming the global chess community to Switzerland. The local chess fans will have the opportunity to experience world-class chess in person, while millions of fans around the globe can follow the battle online as the duel for the highest title in chess unfolds," Anand was quoted as saying in a press release on Tuesday.

## 'She makes everyone feel valued': Perry hails Molineux's captaincy after T20 WC win

IAN S

**SYDNEY:** Australian veteran Ellyse Perry has heaped praise on captain Sophie Molineux, saying her leadership helped the team produce some of the best cricket it has ever played as Australia clinched a record-extending seventh ICC Women's T20 World Cup title at Lord's cricket ground earlier this month.

Australia defeated England by seven wickets in the final to complete an unbeaten campaign, with Molineux leading the side to the title in her first ICC tournament as captain. Perry, who has now won seven Women's T20 World Cup titles, said the triumph was made even more special by Molineux's remarkable journey back to international cricket.

"We lived together in Melbourne for a period of time and, I guess, over that period, I've seen some really big challenges from a cricket perspective, and I've also seen throughout that whole time the amazing fortitude and tenacity that she has to get back and to play cricket for Australia. She's also one of the most naturally talented cricketers I've ever come across," Perry told cricket.com.au.

Perry said Molineux's qualities extended well beyond her skills as a player.

INOX

— SRINAGAR —

LIVE the MOVIE

Movies

SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY

29<sup>TH</sup>

JULY

TICKET ASSISTANCE

95416 13868

INOX

SRINAGAR

JAN NETA

HINDI

A

SCHEDULE

01:00 PM

05:20 PM

DHAMAAL 4

HINDI

U/A 13+

SCHEDULE

10:05 AM

04:35 PM

07:30 PM

THE ODYSSEY

ENGLISH

WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLE

A

SCHEDULE

10:30 AM

12:10 PM

01:55 PM

03:35 PM

07:00 PM

CMYK