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Kashmir

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Ahead Of I-Day

Security Forces Step Up Vigil Along LoC



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Security has been stepped up along the Line of Control (LoC) and International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of Independence Day, with security forces maintaining heightened vigilance to foil any infiltration or other attempts to disrupt the August 15 celebrations.

An official said that the security grid has been strengthened across vulnerable stretches of the LoC, particularly in the Gurez, Uri, Karnah and Tangdhar sectors of North Kashmir and the

Sunderbani area of Jammu. “Additional surveillance and area domination measures have also been put in place along the IB in the Jammu region, where Border Security Force personnel are conducting round-the-clock patrolling and monitoring sensitive locations using electronic and digital surveillance systems,” the official added.

He said troops deployed along the LoC have intensified patrolling and surveillance, with units maintaining close coordination to detect and respond to any suspicious movement.

“Security forces **●P-06**

Multi-Tier Security Arrangements Put In Place Across Kashmir: IGP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir V K Birdi on Tuesday said that multi-tier security arrangements have been put in place across Kashmir to ensure peaceful Independence Day celebrations.

IGP Birdi while talking to reporters here, said, “Security has been strengthened at key venues across Srinagar city and districts of the Valley.”

The IGP said, “Multi-tier security **●P-06**

Apple Scab Threat Looms Over Kashmir Orchards

Wet Spell Fuels Fungal Infections, Waterlogging, Fruit Cracking

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SHOPIAN: Prolonged rainfall across South Kashmir is throwing fresh challenges for apple growers in various with cases of secondary apple scab and other moisture-related diseases being reported from several fruit-growing areas of the districts.

Farmers said the continuous wet conditions over the past fortnight have kept orchards excessively moist, creating a favourable environment for fungal infections and raising concerns over the quality of the apple crop



as the season progresses.

The secondary scab has emerged in Nagbal area of Shopian, Dachnipora area of Anantnag, Aharbal side of Kulgam and Shadimarg area of Pulwama besides other major apple-producing pockets in Kashmir.

Growers said that while timely rainfall is **●P-06**

886 Workers Affected In Three Years

174 Textile MSMEs Shut Down In J&K: Centre

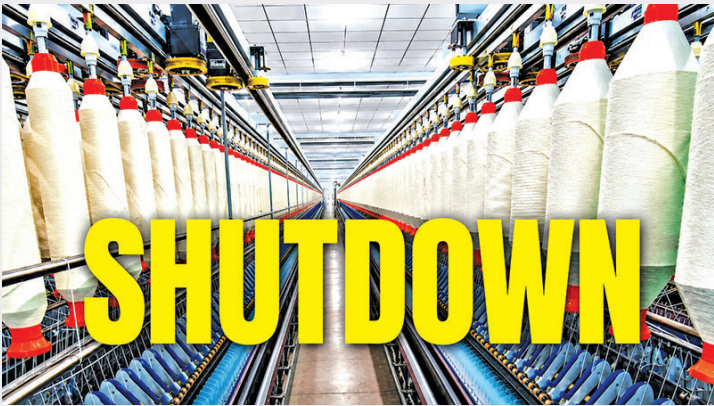
‘Six Units Closed In Ladakh; Rs 35.73 Cr Released For J&K Textile Park’

RAJA SYED

SRINAGAR: As many as 174 textile-sector MSME units in Jammu and Kashmir were reported to have shut down between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2026, affecting 886 workers, while six such units were reported closed in Ladakh, impacting 27 workers, the Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday.

Minister of State for Textiles Pabitra Margherita gave the information in a written reply to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3864, raised by Mohibbullah, who sought details of textile and ready-made garment exports, the impact of rising input costs and global demand slowdown, closure of textile MSMEs, funds under textile cluster development schemes and measures being taken to improve exports and support the industry.

According to the Ministry of Textiles, 7,894 textile MSME units across the country were reported to have shut down during the three-year period from April 2023 to March 2026.



The Ministry, said 24,73,634 textile-sector MSMEs were registered on the Udyam Portal during the same period, while a total of 36,00,012 textile MSMEs were registered and active on the portal as on March 31, 2026.

The reported closures constituted around 0.32 per cent of the total textile MSMEs registered during the last three years, the Ministry said.

As per the State/UT-wise data, Jammu and Kashmir recorded

174 textile MSME closures with employment of 886, while Ladakh recorded six closures involving 27 workers during the period under review.

The Centre also informed the House that under the Scheme for Integrated Textile Park (SITP), a component of the Textile Cluster Development Scheme, a project in J&K was approved at Rs 39.70 crore, against which Rs 35.73 crore of the Government of India share was released **●P-06**

THE MINISTRY SAID INDIA'S EXPORTS OF TEXTILES AND APPAREL, including handicrafts, increased from Rs 2,49,250 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 3,25,339 crore in 2025-26, registering a compound annual growth rate of about 4.5 per cent during the period.

J&K Gets Rs 261.87 Cr Under PMGSY In 2025-26; 2,132 Habitations Connected

Rs 420.50 Cr Expenditure Incurred, Including State Share, Centre Informs Lok Sabha

RAJA SYED

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir received Rs 261.87 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) during 2025-26, while an expenditure of Rs 420.50 crore, including the State share, was incurred under the programme, the Union Government informed the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

The information was provided by Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development Kamlesh Paswan in a written reply to an Unstarred Question raised by Atul Garg, Dr D. Purandeswari, Dr Lata Wankhede, Arun Bharti, Shambhavi and Rajesh Verma.

As per the reply, a total of 2,132 rural habitations in Jammu and Kashmir have been provided all-weather road connectivity under PMGSY. Ladakh has recorded

connectivity to 64 habitations.

The Ministry stated that PMGSY-III, launched in 2019, focuses on consolidation of existing rural roads and improving connectivity to key socio-economic growth centres, including Gramin Agricultural Markets, schools and hospitals.

At the national level, PMGSY-III has facilitated connectivity to over 6.96 lakh socio-economic facilities, including 1.38 lakh agricultural markets, 1.46 lakh educational institutions and 82,806 medical facilities, the reply stated.

The government further informed the House that

independent National Quality Monitors (NQMs) conduct quality inspections of PMGSY road works. Works requiring improvement or rectification are graded as “Unsatisfactory”, while State governments are required to ensure that identified defects are rectified through contractors before final bill clearance.

On maintenance, the Ministry said PMGSY construction contracts carry a mandatory five-year Defect Liability Period, during which the same contractor remains responsible for routine maintenance and keeping the road and associated structures in serviceable condition.

Maintenance during the five-year period is **●P-06**



Heavy rain likely in Jammu today

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness another spell of heavy to very heavy rainfall in parts of the Jammu division on Wednesday, with the weather department warning of flash floods, landslides and mudslides in vulnerable areas.

The Meteorological Centre, said one or two spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers are expected at many places across the Union Territory on August 12.

However, some districts of the Jammu division could receive heavy to very heavy rainfall, while isolated areas of Kashmir may experience brief spells of intense showers, it said.

The advisory comes after several parts of the Jammu region received significant rainfall during the past 24 hours.

Kathua KVK recorded the highest rainfall of 156 mm, followed by Jammu with 79 mm, Katra 71 mm and Samba 55 mm, according to the weather department.

The department said the prevailing wet spell is likely to continue in a subdued form between August 13 and 16, with light to moderate rain and thundershowers possible at many places and brief intense showers at isolated locations.

ANOTHER WET SPELL EXPECTED BETWEEN Aug 17-19

Another spell of wet weather is expected between August 17 and 19, when heavy rain or brief intense showers could occur in a few districts, particularly during the early morning and afternoon hours.

The weather is expected to improve thereafter, with only light rain or **●P-06**



Repora Emerges As Kashmir's 'Grape Village' As Centuries-Old Cultivation Thrives In Ganderbal

RAJA SYED

GANDERBAL: Repora village in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district has emerged as a prominent grape-growing hub, with the traditional crop supporting the livelihoods of a large section of the local population.

Located in the Lar area, Repora is popularly known as the 'Grape Village' and is renowned for producing varieties including Sahibi, Hussaini and Thomson. The village witnesses a significant influx of visitors during the harvesting season, with people arriving to see the vineyards and purchase fresh grapes.

Ganderbal is among Jammu and Kashmir's leading grape-producing districts, with around 206 hectares under



grape cultivation and an estimated annual production of nearly 1,500 metric tonnes, according to official figures accessed. The produce is supplied to local markets as well as markets outside Jammu and

Kashmir.

Repora alone has around 80-90 hectares under grape cultivation, according to growers, making it one of the key grape-producing areas of the district. Farmers said the crop

has become an important source of livelihood, with a large majority of households in the village associated with grape cultivation.

The harvesting season generally begins in August and continues through September, providing seasonal employment and income opportunities to hundreds of people, particularly during the peak harvesting period.

Farmers and horticulture experts said the timing of Repora's grape crop gives it a distinct market advantage, as the grapes become ready for harvesting at a period when fresh grapes are relatively scarce in several international markets.

Experts also highlighted the size and quality of the grapes produced in the area. While a berry size of around 4-5

grams is generally considered a benchmark for premium-quality grapes, some Repora grapes reportedly reach around 12.5 grams.

Among the varieties cultivated, Sahibi and Hussaini are particularly popular and fetch good prices in the market.

The tradition of grape cultivation in Repora, according to local growers, dates back to the period of Maharaja Hari Singh.

M Muzaffar Khan, a local grower, said: “Maharaja Hari Singh used to grow grapes on his land in Repora, which is now with the Horticulture Department. Hundreds of kanals of land are utilised for cultivating different varieties of grapes, including Sahibi, Hussaini, Thomson and others.”

Khan said that grape **●P-06**

Declining Chestnut Yield Worries Wular Lake-Dependent Communities



SAJID RAINA

BANDIPORA: The annual water chestnut harvest has begun in Jammu and Kashmir's Wular Lake, bringing hundreds of traditional boatmen and villagers back onto its waters, but shrinking yields are threatening the livelihood of communities that have depended on the lake for generations.

According to the details available, from the early hours of the day, boats can be seen moving across the vast expanse of Wular as extrac-

tors wade through its waters and vegetation in search of water chestnuts, locally known as garand.

For many families living around the lake, the seasonal harvest is more than a traditional occupation, it is an important source of household income.

However, veteran extractors say the bounty that once made the season lucrative has steadily diminished over the years.

"Earlier, I would bring out nearly 50 kg of chestnuts from the **●P-06**

Div Com reviews final Arrangements for Mega Tiranga Yatra at SKICC



Over 20,000 participants expected; cyclists, shikara wallas to be part of rally

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg Tuesday chaired a comprehensive meeting of senior officers to review and finalize arrangements for the successful conduct of the Mega Tiranga Yatra scheduled to be held on August 12.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo, Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation Faz Lul Haseeb, DIG Police, besides senior officers from Floriculture, Culture, School Education, Higher Education, Hospitality & Protocol, Health, Horticulture, Education, I&FC, Information, LCMA, R&B,

Police, CRPF, BSF, Youth Services & Sports, Zila Sainik Welfare, Traffic and Transport departments, among other concerned agencies.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner reviewed final arrangements related to transportation, refreshment distribution, security, frisking and other essential facilities for participants to ensure hassle-free entry.

He directed all participating departments and participants to ensure their arrival at the venue well before the commencement of the programme. He further directed that Tricolour flags and caps be distributed among participants sufficiently in advance of the rally.

The Divisional Commissioner reiterated the importance of strict adherence to the prescribed protocol for the National Flag throughout the event. He also directed the concerned authorities to nominate separate

anchors for the flag-off programme at SKICC and the main event at the Botanical Garden.

More than 20,000 participants are expected to take part in the Mega Tiranga Rally. The rally will also feature cyclists, skaters and shikara wallas, adding vibrancy and visual appeal to the celebrations.

Later, Principal Secretary Culture and Divisional Commissioner Kashmir jointly inspected the venues at the SKICC back lawns and at the Botanical Garden.

The officers conducted extensive inspection at the Botanical Garden, where the Tiranga Yatra will culminate and a series of programmes will also be organized.

The Divisional Commissioner directed all concerned departments to ensure that all arrangements are completed by evening for the successful and dignified conduct of the Mega Tiranga Rally.

Mega Tiranga Bike Rally held in Shopian to mark 'Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign'

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: As part of the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign-2026, a grand Tiranga Bike Rally was held in Shopian Tuesday to celebrate the spirit of patriotism and encourage citizens to proudly display and honour the National Flag.

The rally was flagged off by Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, and SSP Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmad Choudhary, who also joined the rally and rode alongside the participants, leading the patriotic procession through the town.

The event was attended by senior district officers, police officers and officials from various departments.

The rally commenced from District Police Lines (DPL), Shopian, and passed through the designated route covering Batapora Bus Stand, Four Way Chowk, Clock Tower, Hospital Road and Police Station Road, before returning via Batapora Bus Stand and culminating at DPL, Shopian.

The rally was organised jointly by the District and Police administration shopian.

Motorcycles carrying the Tricolour moved through the town, creating a vibrant patriotic atmosphere and conveying the message of national unity, pride and collective participation in the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign-2026.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from officials, youth and other participants, who joined the rally with the Tricolour, reflecting their commitment to the values of unity, patriotism and national pride.

Govt approves ₹5.78 Cr for restoration, preservation of historic Lah Wali Bowli

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Government of Jammu & Kashmir has approved ₹5.78 crore for the comprehensive restoration and preservation of the historic Lah Wali Bowli in Rajouri, marking another significant step towards safeguarding J&K's rich architectural and cultural heritage.

The conservation project will focus on restoring the historic stepwell and its architectural features while preserving its cultural character and historical significance. The initiative is also aimed at enhancing the site's tourism potential and creating a heritage attraction for visitors to the district.

The approval forms part of the Government's broader efforts, under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, to conserve and revitalise historically and culturally significant sites across Jammu & Kashmir.

In recent months, the Government has approved a series of heritage conservation initiatives covering both Jammu and Kashmir divisions. These include the repair and renovation of the historic Rattan Garh Fort in Bhaderwah, Doda; restoration and renovation of Ziyarat Sharief Khiram; repair and renovation of the historic Shiv Mandir at Thajiwara, Bijbehara; and restoration and revival of the historic heritage site of Purnamdal in Samba.

Other approved initiatives include the conservation and upgradation of the historic Imambara Zadibal in Srinagar, development of the revered holy spring of Khoo Sahib at Yarwan in Pulwama, restoration of the historic Jamia Masjid Sharief in Shopian, and restoration of the revered Saravdhar Chaumanda Mata Mandir in Ramban.

Gurezi chairs Committee on Estimates meet

Reviews key issues on forest conservation

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Committee on Estimates of Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Tuesday met under the chairmanship of Chairman, Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurezi), to examine the Action Taken report submitted by Forest, Ecology & Environment Department on key issues related to forest conservation, community rights and infrastructure in J&K.

The meeting was attended by Members of Estimates Committee including Balwant Singh Mankotia, Ali Mohammad Dar, Javid Hassan Baig, Mushtaq Guroo, Irshad Rasool Kar, Sajad Shaheen and Pyare Lal Sharma.

After reviewing the department's replies, Chairman said "For us, forests are not just trees. They are the lungs of J&K, the livelihood of our people, and the legacy we leave for our children. We cannot afford to treat this as routine file work."

The Chairman directed the department to expedite the re-plantation drive on land diverted for National Highways, PMGSY, PWD and NHAI projects. He stressed that a massive plantation drive



must also be launched in all deforested areas across J&K. Taking serious note of tree felling leading to soil erosion and landslides during rains, he asked the department to undertake scientific afforestation on vulnerable slopes to safeguard lives and property.

Expressing serious concern over the menace of Russian Poplar Gurezi said it is damaging local biodiversity and causing health issues for people. He directed that Russian Poplar be phased out in a time-bound manner and replaced with indigenous species like Chinar, Deodar and Kail.

Reiterating community rights, the Chairman stated that "J&K's timber and forest wealth belongs to the people of J&K. He directed the department to ensure sustainable utili-

zation of forest resources, stop illegal smuggling of poplar, deodar and pine, and ensure that benefits reach local communities and tribal families under the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

The Committee also reviewed the condition of deteriorated trees in major tourist destinations like Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg and Yumarg and directed the department for immediate re-plantation. It further asked for strengthened measures to contain poaching and man-animal conflict.

Highlighting the importance of public participation, the Chairman issued directions for holding of Gram Sabhas in all constituencies across J&K. He asked the Commissioner Secretary, Forest, Ecology & Environment to finalize comprehensive

guidelines for conducting Gram Sabhas at the Panchayat level to ensure people's direct involvement in forest conservation, protection and sustainable utilization of resources.

Commissioner Secretary Forest Ecology & Environment, Sheetal Nanda, Commissioner Secretary Tribal Affairs, G. Prasanna Ramaswamy, PCCF HoFF Forest Department, Chairman JK PCC, PCCF Wild life Department, MD JKFDCL, VC LCMA, Chief Engineer R&B South Kashmir, Chief Engineer PHE Jammu, Chief Engineer I&FC Kashmir, CCF Kashmir, SEs of R&B and senior officers from R&B, PMGSY, PWD and PHE Departments besides Secretary JKL A Manoj Kumar Pandita and officers of the Assembly Secretariat were also present in the meeting.

Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign

DC, SSP lead Mega Tiranga Rally at Iconic Vibrant Village Teetwal



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: A grand Tiranga Rally was organised Tuesday at the iconic Vibrant Village Teetwal, Karnah, as part of the nationwide Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign being observed from 9th to 17th August 2026, aimed at reinforcing patriotic fervour and public participation in the celebration of the National Flag.

The rally was flagged off by Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse and SSP Kupwara, Tahir Gilani from HS Gundi Sharti, culminating at Teetwal ground with enthusiastic participation from students of various schools, ex-servicemen, Lumberdars, officials, and local residents.

A large number of students participated in the rally, carrying the Tricolour and showcasing their patriotism, unity, and respect for the National Flag. The participating clusters were felicitated with Certificates of Appreciation by the District Administration Kupwara for their enthusiastic participation and contribution towards the successful conduct of the event.

Addressing the participants, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the overwhelming response and urged everyone to further strengthen the spirit of patriotism by actively participating in the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign and celebrating the pride and honour associated with the National Flag.

He highlighted that the campaign aims to instil a sense of national pride and encourage citizens to hoist the Tricolour at their homes, reaffirming their commitment towards the nation and its vision of a Viksit Bharat @2047.

The Sub-Divisional Administration Karnah has already been conducting a series of events under the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign to promote awareness and public participation. The Mega Tiranga Rally was coordinated under the supervision of Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Karnah, Mohd Raiyaz, who was designated as the Nodal Officer for the event.

The programme concluded with a renewed pledge by all participants to uphold the dignity of the Tricolour and carry forward the message of unity, pride, and patriotism. The event was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Kupwara, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat (ACP) Kupwara, sector officers, and officials from various departments, who actively participated in the celebrations and extended their support for the successful conduct of the rally.

DC Budgam presides over ICMR-SHINE Programme at MRHRU Khag

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Tuesday presided over ICMR-SHINE Programme held at the Model Rural Health Research Unit (MRHRU), Khag, Budgam, in collaboration with ICMR-NICHR, New Delhi, Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Family



Welfare. The two-day programme, held from today, brought together health officials, researchers, doctors, academicians and community members for discussions on health awareness, community engagement, evidence-based practices and strengthening rural healthcare.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the efforts of MRHRU Khag and its partner institutions for promoting health research and community-focused healthcare initiatives.

He stressed the need to better connect health research with on-ground implementation, saying that evidence-based research should lead to real improvements in healthcare delivery and health outcomes, especially in rural and underserved areas.

He also highlighted the importance of community participation in public health efforts, noting that lasting improvements in

healthcare require teamwork between health institutions, researchers, frontline workers, the district administration and the community.

An informative session was also delivered by Dr. Mohd Caser, Scientist-C (Medical) and In-charge, MRHRU Khag, ICMR-NICHR, New Delhi, who spoke about the objectives of the ICMR-SHINE Programme and how research

DC Sgr inspects renovation work of Khankah-e-Naqshband Sahib Shrine

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo Tuesday visited Khankah-e-Naqshband Sahib (RA) at Khwaja Bazar, Nowhatta to review and finalize arrangements for the upcoming Urs.

He also conducted an on-site inspection of the ongoing renovation and upgradation works at the shrine being executed under the Heritage Preservation & Conservation Scheme of the Government.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, IAS Probationer, Alfred Thomas, Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Qureshi, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer, R&B, Circle North, Shabir Ahmad, Tehsildar Khan-yar, Syed Shahid, Executive Engineers of R&B, PHE, PDD, Officers of Archives & Archaeology, Fire & Emergency and other concerned Departments.

On the occasion, the DC also held a joint interactive meeting with members of the Shrine Management and Officers of the District Administration present on the occasion. He took stock of the facilities and arrangements required for



devotees expected to visit the shrine during the Urs and directed the concerned Officers to ensure that all necessary arrangements are put in place well in advance.

The DC emphasized coordinated efforts by all line department to ensure better facilities for the devotees during Urs days including uninterrupted power and water supply, sanitation measures, transportation parking facilities.

During the visit, the DC also inspected the progress of the ongoing revival, restoration and conservation works being carried out at the shrine under heritage conservation project.

On the occasion, the DC directed the concerned Officers to further accelerate the pace of work and ensure the time-bound completion of the project while maintaining the prescribed quality standards and adhering to the conservation norms. He was informed that the project encompasses comprehen-

sive structural conservation while retaining the original exterior character of the shrine, restoration of its traditional wooden architecture and intricate ornamentation, conservation of wooden elements on the exterior façade, besides installation of a traditional Khatamband ceiling with exquisite papier-mache work in the Central Hall.

The DC was further apprised that more than 65 percent of the conservation works have already been completed, while the remaining works are scheduled to be completed by the end of September this year.

Underscoring the immense heritage significance of the project, the DC said that the conservation initiative is aimed at preserving, restoring and safeguarding the original architectural character and aesthetic grandeur of the centuries-old spiritual shrine, which holds immense religious and historical significance.

FDA continues Enforcement Drive across UT

190 inspections conducted, 181 Food Samples lifted for testing

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Continuing its enforcement activities across the Union Territory to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, Food Safety Officers of the Food & Drugs Administration (FDA), J&K conducted inspections of food establishments across the various districts of J&K.

During the enforcement drive, 190 inspections were conducted across all districts and 181 food samples were lifted for quality and safety testing. The samples included 47 samples of Ice Cream, 53 samples of Food Grains and Pluses, 35 samples of Fruit Beverages, 23 samples of Dairy Products, 21 samples of Meat Products and two samples of Bread. The food samples lifted

during the drive have been forwarded to the concerned Food Testing Laboratories for analysis as per the prescribed standards.

The inspections were carried out at food establishments to check compliance with the prescribed requirements relating to food safety, quality, hygiene and sanitation.

The Food & Drugs Administration, J&K, will

continue inspections, sampling and other enforcement measures under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, to ensure compliance with the prescribed food safety standards.

Consumers have been requested to report suspected cases of unsafe or adulterated food through the Toll-Free Helpline No. 104 or by email at cfsjandk.fnd@jk.gov.in.

Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign gains momentum in Budgam

DC, SSP flag off mega Bike, Bicycle rallies

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: As part of the ongoing Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign, Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan along with SSP Budgam, Hariprasad KK Tuesday flagged off two major Bike and Bicycle Rallies from Sports Stadium Budgam, witnessing enthusiastic participation of hundreds of bikers and cyclists from across the district.

Organised to promote patriotism, national unity and respect for the National Flag, the rallies passed through District Hospital Road and Old Bus Adda before culminating at the Clock Tower near New Bus Stand, Budgam. Students, youth groups, government



employees and citizens from different walks of life participated in the rallies, proudly carrying the Tricolour and raising patriotic slogans along the route.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign has evoked an overwhelming public response across Budgam, with a wide range of activities being organised in schools, Gram Pan-

chayats, blocks, tehsils and at the district level.

He particularly appreciated the enthusiastic participation of youth, noting that the Bike Rally by local youth and the Bicycle Rally by school students reflected a strong sense of patriotism and collective ownership of the campaign.

The Deputy Commissioner said the massive participation of people across the district is a

matter of pride and urged citizens, particularly the youth, to continue their active involvement and sustain the patriotic fervour till the culmination of the campaign on August 17.

Among others present on the occasion were ADDC Budgam Vivek Agarwal, Joint Director Planning, Chief Education Officer, DYSSO and other senior officers and officials.

Pertinently, the District Administration Budgam is organising a series of programmes across the district under the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign, adding vibrancy to the celebrations while reinforcing the message of unity, patriotism and respect for the National Flag.

Centre allocates ₹980 crore to J&K under PMGSY for 2026-27

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory has received significant financial support under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), with the Centre allocating Rs 980 crore for the current financial year 2026-27, the Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday.

Minister of State for Rural Development Kamlesh Paswan gave the information in reply to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3839, raised by June Malliah and Shafi Parambil, who sought details of roads sanctioned, completed and under construction under PMGSY, funds allocated, released and utilised, reasons for delays and measures taken to ensure timely completion of pending projects.

As per the reply, J&K had an indicative allocation of Rs 948 crore in 2021-22, against which Rs 1,328.34 crore was released and Rs 1,485.28 crore utilised, including the Union Territory's share.



FILE PIC

In 2022-23, the indicative allocation for J&K stood at Rs 1,450 crore, with Rs 717 crore released and Rs 1,114.78 crore utilised. In 2023-24, Rs 1,450 crore was allocated, Rs 1,304.17 crore released and Rs 1,256.96 crore utilised. During 2024-25, J&K had an indicative allocation of Rs 1,400 crore, while Rs 1,028.25 crore was released and Rs 1,070.65 crore utilised.

In 2025-26, the indicative allocation stood at Rs 998 crore, against which Rs 261.87 crore was released and Rs 420.50 crore utilised.

For 2026-27, the indicative allocation for J&K is Rs 980 crore. As on August 6, 2026, Rs 214.01 crore had been released, while

expenditure stood at Rs 237.79 crore.

At the national level, the Ministry said that from 2021-22 till August 6, 2026, a total of 18,807 road works covering 98,505 km and 3,661 bridges had been sanctioned under various PMGSY verticals.

During the same period, 23,247 road works covering 1,34,751 km and 5,287 bridges were completed, while 12,447 road works covering 41,368 km and 1,775 bridges were at various stages of construction as on August 6, 2026.

The Ministry clarified that PMGSY funds are released to States and UTs as a whole and not district-wise. Funds are released based on works in hand, progress

achieved and submission of necessary documents through the SNA SPARSH system.

The government said implementation of PMGSY is monitored through regular review meetings at State, regional and national levels, besides the Online Management, Monitoring and Accounting System (OMMAS), geo-tagged photographs and GIS-based inspections.

A three-tier quality management mechanism comprising Programme Implementation Units, State Quality Monitors and National Quality Monitors has also been put in place to ensure adherence to prescribed technical specifications.

The Ministry further said the Electronic Maintenance of PMGSY Roads (e-MARG) platform has been implemented in all States and UTs to monitor maintenance of PMGSY roads for five years after completion, with contractor payments linked to road quality under a performance-based contract management system—(KNO)

SVAMITVA SCHEME

81,305 property cards prepared, distributed in J&K; 18,788 in Ladakh

RAJA SYED

SRINAGAR: The Centre on Tuesday informed the Lok Sabha that 81,305 property cards have been prepared and distributed in Jammu and Kashmir under the SVAMITVA Scheme, while 18,788 property cards have been prepared and 15,623 distributed in Ladakh.

The information was given by Union Minister of Panchayati Raj Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh in reply to a starred question raised by Lok Sabha member Tangella Uday Srinivas regarding the potential of the SVAMITVA Scheme to enhance own-source revenue and property tax collection of Gram Panchayats.

According to the government data, drone surveys have been completed in 4,497 villages in Jammu and Kashmir, while property cards have been prepared for 2,130 villages. A total of 81,305 property cards have been prepared and the same number distributed to property owners in J&K.

In Ladakh, drone surveys have been completed in all 232 notified villages. Property cards have been prepared for 225 villages, with 18,788 cards prepared and 15,623 distributed to property owners.

The minister said the main objective of the SVAMITVA Scheme is to

provide Record of Rights to property owners in rural inhabited areas. Rural inhabited land is demarcated using drone surveys and Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) technology to create high-accuracy maps of village abadi areas.

The government said an impact evaluation of the scheme was conducted through IIM Ahmedabad to assess its impact on bank loan uptake. The study found a substantial increase in bank loan amounts availed against property cards issued under the scheme.

As per the information available with the Ministry, 11,147 loans worth Rs 1,713 crore have been disbursed against SVAMITVA property cards across the country. In Jammu and Kashmir, 29 loans amounting to Rs 397.21 lakh (about Rs 3.97 crore) have been disbursed, while in Ladakh nine loans worth Rs 161.18 lakh (about Rs 1.61 crore) have been availed.

On the question of whether the scheme has enhanced Panchayat own-source revenue or property tax collection, the Minister said the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has not conducted any study on the impact of SVAMITVA on Panchayat own-source revenue or Gram Panchayat property tax, as the matter

falls under the domain of State Governments.

The Centre also clarified that it does not maintain State/UT-wise data on own-source revenue and property tax collected by Panchayats, as Panchayats are a subject under the State List and States are empowered to authorise Panchayats to levy and collect taxes, duties, tolls and fees.

On whether SVAMITVA records are being used for property tax assessment and collection, the Minister said the Ministry does not maintain data on the number of Gram Panchayats using the records for this purpose, as assessment and collection of property tax are functions of the respective State Governments and Gram Panchayats.

The minister further said that the Ministry has not issued separate guidelines for integration of SVAMITVA records with Panchayat property tax administration, nor does it have a separate proposal to expand the use of SVAMITVA data for strengthening Panchayat own-source revenue.

However, he said the geo-spatial data and property records generated under the SVAMITVA Scheme can be utilised by respective State Governments and Gram Panchayats to strengthen their revenue sources—(KNO)

Young woman dies in overnight accident at Nishat



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: A young woman died while another person was injured after the vehicle they were travelling in met with an accident near Kral Sangari in Nishat area of Srinagar during the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday, officials said.

An official said that the accident occurred around 1:00 am when the vehicle bearing (No. JK01AR-0071) hit a road divider and overturned, leaving both occupants injured.

He said the duo was shifted to a hospital, where the woman succumbed to her injuries. She was identified as Tabiya Ayoub (25), a resident of Barabar Shah, Srinagar.

The body was subsequently handed over to the police and later to the family after completion of all necessary formalities.

Police have taken cognisance of the incident and further proceedings are underway—(KNO)

Div Com inspects preparations for I-Day Celebrations at Bakshi Stadium



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Tuesday visited Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar, to inspect the ongoing preparations for the Independence Day celebrations at the venue.

During the inspection, the Divisional Commissioner took stock of various arrangements, including seating arrangements, functioning of the Public Address System, overhead covering of the stands and adherence to protocol during the signing of the National Song followed by the National Anthem.

The Div Com directed the concerned officers to ensure complete preparedness of contingents from schools, colleges and the Sports Council, besides ensuring their enthusiastic participation in the ceremonial proceedings.

In view of the possibility of rainfall, the Divisional Commissioner directed the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), to ensure that an effective dewatering mechanism is put in place and that the Fire & Emergency dewatering pump remains operational at the venue.

He further directed

the concerned agencies to ensure proper floral decoration of the podium and operational readiness of all seven LED screens installed at the stadium.

The Divisional Commissioner stressed upon all concerned departments to maintain close coordination and ensure that all arrangements are completed well in advance for the smooth and successful conduct of the Independence Day celebrations.

The Div Com was accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Commissioner SMC, ADC Srinagar, Joint Director Information and senior officers from various departments, including R&B, PHE, School Education, Higher Education, Fire & Emergency, Hospitality & Protocol, KPDC, UEED, YSS and other concerned departments.

Besides, IGP Kashmir and other senior officers of Police & Security agencies were also present on the occasion.

Proposed Bhera Tribal Tourism Village to reflect region's rich tribal heritage: Rana



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a significant initiative aimed at promoting tribal tourism and inclusive development in the border areas, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Tuesday chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review establishment of a Tribal Tourism Village at Bhera in Mendhar subdivision of Poonch district.

The meeting focused on various aspects of the proposed project, including infrastructure development, tourism facilities, promotion of tribal culture and creation of livelihood opportunities for local communities.

The meeting was attended by Engineer in Chief, Public Works

(R&B) Department, Director Tribal Affairs, Deputy Director, Tribal Research Institute, Deputy Director, Planning, Tourism Department and Executive Engineer, Public Works (R&B) Division, Mendhar.

Rana directed the concerned department to engage a consultant for preparation of a comprehensive Detailed Project Report (DPR) covering all aspects of the project. He stressed that the DPR should provide a holistic roadmap for development of the Tribal Tourism Village, incorporating the requisite infrastructure, tourism facilities, cultural components and other necessary interventions.

The Minister emphasised that the proposed Tribal Tourism Village should serve as a platform to showcase the rich cul-

tural heritage, traditions, crafts, cuisine and lifestyle of the tribal communities. It should provide the visitors with an authentic cultural experience besides creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for the local residents.

He said the project should be planned in a manner that encourages community participation and local economic activity, including opportunities for homestays, handicrafts, cultural activities, eco-tourism and other sustainable tourism ventures.

Rana called for close coordination among the concerned departments and directed the officers to identify all requisite interventions and incorporate them comprehensively in the DPR so that the project can be taken forward in a planned and timely manner.

Rana reviews water supply, irrigation issues of Khanyar, Hazratbal

Announces Rs 1 cr for water reservoir at Sulaiman Teng, Dalgate



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a move aimed at addressing the constituency-specific issues and strengthening coordination among the key departments, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Tuesday convened a meeting to take up issues related to water supply, irrigation, environment, forests and tribal affairs in Khanyar and Hazratbal Assembly constituencies.

Besides MLA Khanyar, Ali Muhammad Sagar, MLA Hazratbal Salman Ali Sagar, the meeting was attended by Chief Conservator of Forests, Kashmir; Director Tribal Affairs, J&K; Chief Engineers of Jal Shakti/Irrigation & Flood Control, Kashmir; Superintendent Engineer, Hydraulic, Srinagar; Wildlife Warden, Central Srinagar; Divisional Forest Officer, SMC/Social Forestry, Srinagar; Executive Engineers, Ground Water/Master Plan/Jal Shakti, Srinagar/Ganderbal and

Executive Engineers, Irrigation & Flood Control, Srinagar/Ganderbal.

The meeting took stock of water supply, irrigation, source augmentation, distribution networks and groundwater management, with focus on resolving bottlenecks affecting the ongoing and proposed projects in the two constituencies.

During the meeting, the Minister announced an allocation of Rs 1 crore for upgrading the existing water supply infrastructure through construction of an additional water reservoir at Sulaiman Teng, Dalgate, aimed at augmenting the water supply network and meeting the requirements of the adjoining areas.

Emphasising the need to strengthen water infrastructure in densely populated areas, Rana directed the Jal Shakti Department to work out the necessary modalities and take up the project on priority.

Reviewing the Tulpathri Water Supply Scheme, the Minister called for early resolution of pending issues with the Forest

Department to facilitate further progress. He also took up matters concerning the Sindh Extension (SE) and Mawas Canals, directing necessary measures for its restoration and improvement to ensure uninterrupted water and irrigation supply.

Rana stressed the need for comprehensive dredging and desilting of canals facing heavy siltation and reduced carrying capacity, to improve water flow and irrigation potential. He called for timely availability of irrigation water for paddy fields in Hazratbal, with vulnerable areas to be identified in advance to pre-empt shortages during the cultivation season.

The meeting also took up Master Plan-related bottlenecks, CAPEX planning, and expansion of the water distribution network in underserved areas besides formulation of new water supply, drainage and irrigation projects for deficit pockets, particularly Phaaik.

The Minister sought a review of water allocation from the Alusteng and Ringal 5 MGD Water Treatment Plants, seeking clarity on existing allocation and scope for enhancing the share for Hazratbal.

Other issues discussed included a dedicated water supply line along 90 Feet Road, water and irrigation supply at Syedpora Hamchi, the proposed Tail-bank OHT and distribution line, and interventions by the Ground Water Wing.

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates new GDC Katra building, assures enhanced facilities



GMK NEWS NETWORK

REASI: Minister for Health & Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, Tuesday inaugurated the newly constructed building of Government Degree College Katra at Kakryal, marking a significant step towards strengthening the higher education infrastructure.

The college building was constructed by the J&K Housing Board at a cost of ₹12.92 lakh.

MLA Katra Baldev Raj Sharma, Director Colleges Dr. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Director Health Services Jammu, Principal of the college, faculty members, students and local residents were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister congratulated the students, faculty members and people of Katra on completion of the new college building. She said that the new facility would provide better infrastructure and quality education to students who were earlier studying in a makeshift arrangement. She credited Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for releasing the necessary funds for the project and appreciated the efforts of the executing

agencies, engineers and all other stakeholders involved in completing the building.

Sakeena Itoo announced that a college bus would be sanctioned soon to facilitate the students commuting from distant areas. She also assured that the Commerce stream would be introduced at the college, subject to sufficient student demand. Addressing other demands, she directed the Director Health Services to initiate the process for relocation of Katra Hospital to the Irrigation Department's land and building, subject to the requisite NOC, and assured efforts to provide a fully equipped 108 ambulance for the area.

The Minister highlighted the government's focus on introducing demand-driven courses in higher educational institutions. She informed that the students belonging to BPL and AAY categories are eligible for fee-waiver benefits for higher education. She urged the local representatives, community leaders, parents and students to encourage greater enrolment in colleges and reiterated the government's commitment to ensure that no student in Jammu and Kashmir is deprived of higher education opportunities.

Over 3,300 Non-Gazetted GMC staff await recruitment rules, promotions

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: More than 3,300 non-gazetted employees serving in the five Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) established in Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 are facing prolonged career stagnation as the Service Recruitment Rules (SRRs) governing their posts remain pending, with the All India Registered Nurses Federation (AIRNF), J&K UT Committee, warning of an indefinite strike from August 17 if the matter is not addressed.

The affected workforce includes nursing, paramedical, clerical, and mul-

titasking staff who have been serving the newly established medical institutions for several years.

Employees say that despite their continued contribution to patient care and the functioning of the colleges, they have not been provided a clear mechanism for promotion or career progression.

AIRNF J&K UT Committee State President Vishav Sharma said employees had joined the new medical colleges with the expectation that they would receive service benefits and promotional opportunities similar to those available to their counterparts in established GMCs.

"During recruitment, we were expecting that there would be similar rules as we have in the existing GMC Jammu and GMC Srinagar. But after two years of recruitment, we came to know that the government was planning different rules," Sharma said.

He questioned how different Government Medical Colleges within the same Union Territory could have substantially different service conditions for employees performing similar duties. "One can question how, in one UT, there can be different rules for different GMCs," he said.

According to Sharma,

the prolonged delay in finalising the SRRs has resulted in employees remaining on the same posts for years without access to regular promotional processes. He said the problem had become more serious as new units, laboratories, and other healthcare services were being introduced at the medical colleges without a corresponding increase in manpower.

Employees have particularly raised concerns about the absence of Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs), saying that many who have completed several years of service have not seen a single promo-

tion exercise. The federation has also pointed to an alleged disparity between employees of the new GMCs and their counterparts in established institutions, in which eligible employees become entitled to promotion after completing the prescribed period of regular service.

Sharma said employees had made repeated efforts to resolve the matter through representations and meetings but had not received a concrete solution. "We have made strenuous efforts to solve this issue, but failed. We are now going for an indefinite strike from August 17 to press for our demands," he said.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Maternity Leave Cannot Become A Financial Penalty

The demand raised by the Indian Medical Association Junior Doctors Network (IMA JDN) J&K over the withholding of salaries and allowances of resident doctors who availed maternity leave is not merely an administrative issue. It is a question of fairness, dignity and the credibility of the healthcare system itself. Resident doctors work under some of the most demanding conditions in government hospitals. Long shifts, emergency duties, night calls and enormous patient loads are part of their professional routine. When a woman doctor takes maternity leave, she is not seeking a favour from the system. She is exercising a legitimate entitlement. The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has already addressed the matter in the case of Dr Sonakshi Gupta and others, setting aside the denial of pay and allowances during maternity leave. The Court's observation that treating doctors as being "out of assignment" and withholding their financial benefits effectively penalised them for motherhood should leave little room for bureaucratic ambiguity. Yet, if salaries continue to be withheld or delayed in some Government Medical Colleges despite the judicial directions, it raises a troubling question: why should a doctor have to repeatedly fight the system to receive what the law has already recognised as her right? The issue becomes even more serious when viewed in the context of women in medicine. The government wants more women to enter and remain in the medical profession, but policies and practices that financially penalise doctors for taking maternity leave send precisely the opposite message. A maternity leave policy is meaningful only when it is accompanied by financial security. A woman should not have to choose between motherhood and economic stability, particularly after years of education, training and service in public healthcare. The Health and Medical Education Department must therefore move beyond individual representations and ensure a uniform policy across all Government Medical Colleges in Jammu and Kashmir. Pending salaries and allowances of eligible resident doctors should be released without further delay, and clear instructions should be issued so that the same dispute does not arise again. This is also an opportunity for the department to examine whether there are institutional gaps in implementing maternity-related entitlements. If different medical colleges are interpreting the rules differently, the answer is not more correspondence and prolonged file movement. It is a clear, binding and uniform order. The intervention sought from Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo should be used to bring the matter to a decisive conclusion. Doctors should not have to seek judicial intervention to protect an entitlement as fundamental as maternity leave. And once the High Court has spoken, the responsibility of the administration is even clearer: implement the judgment, release the dues and ensure that no woman doctor is financially penalised for becoming a mother. A healthcare system that expects compassion from its doctors must also demonstrate compassion and fairness towards its own doctors.

■ When The Portal Falters

The Deadline Should Not Become A Burden

AgriStack Assignment In J&K Needs Administrative Sensitivity, Technical Stability And Adequate Time

MOHD AMIN MIR

The AgriStack assignment in Jammu and Kashmir is undoubtedly an important initiative aimed at strengthening agricultural data, improving service delivery and creating a more integrated digital ecosystem for farmers and government departments. The field functionaries entrusted with this responsibility, particularly Patwaris, understand the importance of the exercise and are working with commitment to accomplish the task. But there is a serious issue that deserves the immediate attention of the higher authorities. How can a time-bound digital assignment be completed accurately when the portal itself remains unreliable? This is not a question of unwillingness to work. It is a question of practicality, fairness and administrative understanding. Patwaris across Jammu and Kashmir are working under considerable pressure to complete the AgriStack assignment within the prescribed timeframe. At the same time, the portal has reportedly been experiencing intermittent technical difficulties. Pages may take considerable time to load, the system may become slow or inaccessible, and entries may sometimes require repeated attempts. Every minute lost because of a technical problem ultimately reduces the time available to the field official for completing the assignment. Yet, when the deadline approaches, the pressure naturally falls on the Patwari. This needs serious reconsideration. A Portal Problem Cannot Become a Patwari's Problem The administration cannot reasonably expect field officials to compensate indefinitely for shortcomings in the digital infrastructure. If an employee is unable to complete an online task because the server is unavailable, the loss of productive working time cannot simply be treated as an individual's failure. A simple principle should apply: If the system loses working hours, those hours should be considered while assessing the deadline. Patwaris can enter data only when the portal permits them to do so. They cannot repair server problems, increase bandwidth or restore a failed application



from their field offices. They can only wait, retry and continue working once the system becomes functional. This creates enormous pressure, particularly when the assignment involves thousands of land parcels, farmers and ownership details. AgriStack is not an ordinary data-entry exercise. Agricultural and land-related information has long-term administrative significance. The information entered today may be used tomorrow for planning, verification, government schemes and delivery of benefits. Therefore, accuracy should never be sacrificed merely to achieve a numerical target before a particular date. A Patwari working under extreme pressure may naturally be tempted to complete entries as quickly as possible. But speed without adequate verification can result in mistakes. And correcting a wrong entry later may be far more difficult than making the correct entry in the first instance. The administration should therefore measure success not merely by the percentage of data uploaded, but by the quality and accuracy of the data uploaded. The AgriStack assignment has come at a time when Patwaris are already performing numerous statutory and administrative duties. They are responsible for maintaining and updating revenue records, dealing with public grievances, assisting in field verification and responding to various assignments entrusted to the Revenue Department. The digital transformation of land records has itself brought additional

responsibilities. The field staff have nevertheless accepted the challenge. They are working beyond normal hours in many places and making every possible effort to meet the expectations of the administration. The request for additional time, therefore, should not be interpreted as an excuse for delay. It is a request for reasonable working conditions to ensure accurate completion. Administrative dashboards can show percentages. They can show how many records have been entered and how much work remains. But a dashboard cannot always show the difficulties faced by the person sitting in a remote office, repeatedly refreshing a page because the portal is not responding. Nor can it fully reflect the time spent resolving technical errors, waiting for servers or re-entering information after failed submissions. The officers monitoring the assignment should regularly seek feedback from Patwaris regarding portal performance, technical problems and the realistic amount of work that can be completed each day. A deadline should be an administrative target, not a source of unreasonable pressure. If the portal performs satisfactorily and sufficient manpower and infrastructure are available, a deadline can be achieved. But if the portal remains unstable, the same deadline may become unrealistic. The authorities should therefore consider a fresh assessment of the deadline based on actual portal performance and ground realities. A reasonable extension,

wherever required, would not undermine the AgriStack initiative. On the contrary, it would protect the quality of the exercise. If the administration wants the assignment completed quickly, it must ensure that the technological platform works quickly. If it wants the data to be accurate, it must provide sufficient time for verification. If it wants accountability, it must ensure that the field officials are given the tools necessary to discharge that accountability. Responsibility must be accompanied by resources. The Patwari fraternity of Jammu and Kashmir has demonstrated its willingness to contribute to the digital transformation of the Revenue Department. They are not asking for the assignment to be abandoned. They are not asking to be relieved of responsibility. They are simply asking that the realities of the field be acknowledged. If the portal remains unreliable, the deadline deserves reconsideration. If the assignment requires detailed verification, sufficient time should be provided. If accuracy is the objective, speed should not become the only criterion. The higher authorities may therefore kindly consider the genuine difficulties being faced by Patwaris and provide a reasonable extension wherever required. The ultimate purpose of AgriStack is to create reliable and useful agricultural data. That objective cannot be achieved merely by completing a percentage on a dashboard. It will be achieved when the data entered is accurate, verified and dependable. The Patwari is the field-level link between the government database and the realities on the ground. That link must be strengthened, not overwhelmed. A little additional time today can prevent many errors tomorrow. The administration has the authority to set deadlines. It also has the wisdom to revise them when ground realities demand it. Therefore, the message from the field is simple: give Patwaris a stable portal. Give them technical support. Give them sufficient time, and they will deliver accurate results. AgriStack deserves nothing less than a successful and error-free implementation.

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Bridging The Gap

Transforming Youth Energy Into Nation-Building



LALIT GARGG



Youth is not merely a stage of life defined by age; it is the embodiment of energy, courage, imagination, transformation and the spirit of creation. A society whose young people are awakened, sensitive and creative can script a new chapter of change. But when youthful energy becomes directionless, that very power can turn into a source of violence, addiction, extremism, crime, frustration and destruction. Therefore, the greatest question before the world today is not merely what young people are doing, but how their immense energy is being channelled. It is with this larger concern in mind that the United Nations observes International Youth Day every year on August 12. The observance began in 2000. The theme for this year is "Different Circumstances, Shared Aspirations". This theme captures the reality of today's youth with remarkable depth. Young people around the world live in very different circumstances. Some face poverty and unemployment; others live amid war and insecurity. Many struggles with limited access to education, while others confront technological inequality and the growing environmental crisis. Yet, beneath these differences, their aspirations are strikingly similar. They seek a dignified life, quality education, meaningful employment, security, mental well-being, participation in decision-making and a better future. Governments across the world must understand that young people are not merely voters remembered during elections. They are active stakeholders in the process of policy-making and nation-building. The extent to which young people's voices are incorporated into decisions that directly affect their lives is also an important measure

of the quality of democracy. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 recognises young people as important partners in peacebuilding and the prevention of violence. This recognition reinforces a fundamental truth: young people are not the problem; they are a powerful part of the solution. Every country therefore needs effective mechanisms through which students, entrepreneurs, farmers, scientists, artists, sportspersons and social workers can directly engage with policymakers. It is not enough to make policies for young people; policies must be created with young people. India's young population is among its greatest strengths. Indian youth have repeatedly demonstrated that they aspire not merely to find employment but also to create, innovate and build something new. From science, sports, technology, entrepreneurship, art and literature to social service, young Indians are making their mark in numerous fields. Swami Vivekananda regarded youth as a vital force in India's reconstruction. He firmly believed that awakened, character-driven and determined young people could change the destiny of a nation. Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, too, connected the dreams of young people with the future of India. His central message was simple yet profound: dream big, acquire knowledge and transform those dreams into action. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, India's development discourse has also

placed considerable emphasis on youth power, innovation, skill development, entrepreneurship and self-reliance. But the next stage must go beyond this. Young people must not remain mere beneficiaries of development programmes; they must become co-creators of development. The true significance of Youth Day will emerge only when young people's lives experience positive change beyond August 12. Why not organise "Youth Dream Dialogues" in every city this year, where young people can articulate how they want to see their country ten years from now? Their dreams should not remain confined to paper. Governments, industries, educational institutions and social organisations should work together to transform the most practical of these aspirations into tangible initiatives. Every young person should be encouraged to learn at least one useful skill and accept at least one responsibility towards society. Every district could establish Youth Innovation Centres, where young minds can use their talent and creativity to find solutions to local problems. Among the most serious challenges confronting today's youth are substance abuse, digital addiction, violent tendencies, mental stress, unemployment and a lack of purpose. The expanding web of addiction does not merely destroy individuals; it weakens families and erodes the productive strength of the nation. It is not enough to tell young people, "Do not take drugs." We must give them such a meaningful purpose in life that

they do not feel the need to escape into addiction. Young people must be connected with sports, yoga, meditation, art, literature, social service, entrepreneurship and constructive community activities. Transforming idle time into creative time can become one of the most effective social strategies for building an addiction-free generation. Another growing challenge is the widening communication gap between the younger and older generations. The elderly represent experience, while the young represent energy. Experience without energy can become stagnant, while energy without experience can become directionless. What is needed, therefore, is meaningful intergenerational dialogue. Families, institutions and governments must create an environment in which young people can present new ideas while the older generation guides them through the wisdom of experience. This harmonious combination of experience and energy can become a formidable force for nation-building. Across the world, youth movements are emerging. Young people are making their voices heard by governments and institutions. India, too, has witnessed youth movements from time to time, expressing both aspirations and discontent. But the greatest success of a youth movement will come when it moves beyond being merely a voice of protest and becomes a voice of possibility and solutions. The young should be able to say, "We do not merely want to complain; we want to provide solutions. We do not merely want jobs; we want the capacity to create jobs. We do not merely want rights; we are ready to fulfil our responsibilities. We have not come merely to change governments; we have come to improve the system." This could well become the new definition of youth-led social transformation. Youth by itself is not an achievement. True youthfulness is a state of consciousness. If the face is young but the mind is trapped in rigidity, youth remains incomplete. Energy without direction can become a crisis. That is why today's young generation needs two things above all: passion and wisdom—"Josh and

Hosh". Passion gives young people the courage to fly high; wisdom gives them the right direction. Passion inspires dreams; discernment turns those dreams into reality. Passion teaches them to struggle; compassion teaches them to remain connected with humanity. The youth of today should strive to bring together the inspiration of Swami Vivekananda, the questioning spirit of Socrates, the compassion of Mahatma Gandhi and the visionary dreams of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. It is easy to tell young people around the world to dream big. But simply encouraging them to dream is not enough. We must also create the opportunities, institutions and enabling environment through which those dreams can become reality. The theme of International Youth Day 2026 reminds us of a profound truth: our circumstances may be different, but our aspirations are shared. Young people in India seek opportunity. Young people in Africa seek education and employment. Young people in conflict zones seek peace. Young people in island nations seek a secure and sustainable environment. Young people in the technology-driven world seek equal opportunities. In other words, the world's young people may speak different languages and live within different cultures, but the language of their dreams has much in common. Therefore, the world today needs to do more than control or manage youth power; it needs to trust it. On this International Youth Day, let us not merely congratulate young people. Let us give them opportunities, opportunities to speak, to demonstrate their talent, to participate in decision-making and to play an active role in nation-building. Let governments listen to young people. Let families understand their dreams. Let educational institutions recognise their potential. Let society give them the freedom to experiment and innovate. And let young people themselves recognise the immense strength within them. Because the future of a nation is not written only in parliaments, government offices or policy files; it is written in the dreams that live in the eyes of its young people.

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■ Beyond The Border

How Spain's Governance Model Is Shaping European Politics



NAVEED QAZI

Few European democracies have relied on political accommodation as consistently as Spain. Since the restoration of democracy in 1978 following decades of fascist rule, successive governments have sought to manage territorial, cultural and religious diversity through decentralisation, dialogue and institutional compromise.

Under Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, this tradition has reached its most ambitious expression in recent decades. His government's amnesty for Catalan separatists, negotiations over greater fiscal autonomy, relatively liberal migration policies, and structured engagement with religious minorities all reflect a central assumption that negotiated consensus offers a more durable foundation for democratic stability than political confrontation. Whether this strategy strengthens Spain's democracy or merely exposes deeper structural tensions is now one of Spain's defining political questions that is provoking European politics.

The clearest test of this philosophy remains Catalonia. The 2024 Amnesty Law, which removed criminal liability for hundreds involved in the 2017 independence bid, was among the most controversial constitutional measures in Spain's recent history. Constitutional scholars such as Luis Lopez Guerra argue that amnesties can be legitimate democratic instruments when they promote institutional reconciliation within constitutional limits, rather than serve narrow partisan interests. More broadly, scholarship on amnesties and the rule of law suggests that such measures can be compatible with constitutional democracy when they are adopted transparently, pursue legitimate public objectives, and respect fundamental, universal legal principles. Although Spain's Constitutional Court has upheld the amnesty law and the Court of Justice of the European Union has largely found it compatible with EU law, its implementation and political legiti-

macy remain subjects of continuing legal and constitutional debate.

Yet reconciliation should not be mistaken for resolution. Research on secessionist movements by Michael Keating and John McGarry shows that constitutional concessions rarely extinguish nationalist aspirations. Instead, they tend to alter the manner in which those aspirations are pursued. Catalonia illustrates this dynamic. Although support for immediate independence has declined since the 2017 referendum and separatist parties no longer dominate regional politics, demands for greater sovereignty remain central to both Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya and Junts. For many supporters, the amnesty represents not the conclusion of the conflict but the starting point for renewed constitutional negotiations. The confrontation has therefore shifted from the courts to the political arena without fundamentally disappearing.

This evolution also shapes Spain's broader constitutional posture, including its long-standing claim over Gibraltar. International law clearly distinguishes Gibraltar, a British Overseas Territory, from Catalonia, an autonomous community within Spain. Nevertheless, constitutional scholars have observed that Spain's increasingly 'asymmetrical system of territorial autonomy' has generated tensions within its constitutional framework, particularly concerning the balance between regional self-government and the principle of national unity. Although Madrid's legal position on Gibraltar has remained unchanged, constitutional scholars have observed that Spain's evolving system of 'asymmetric territorial autonomy' inevitably shapes wider discussions about constitutional coherence.

While Gibraltar's legal status under international law remains distinct from Catalonia's domestic constitutional position, observers may nevertheless consider the consistency of Spain's internal constitutional arrangements when assessing broader questions of territorial governance. This complexity became particularly evident after Spain and the United Kingdom signed the landmark EU-UK agreement in July 2026, removing the 118-year-old border fence while permitting free movement for cross-border workers and introducing joint Spanish-led Schengen checks at Gibraltar's port and airport.

Migration presents another significant test of Spain's accommodationist model. Unlike several European governments that have increasingly prioritised deterrence and restrictive asylum policies, Sanchez's administration argues that demographic decline



and persistent labour shortages require managed immigration alongside effective border control. Andrea Fontana and Monica Rosina observe that Spain has sought to reconcile humanitarian commitments with labour market needs through a combination of managed immigration and integration policies. Comparative migration research consequently identifies Spain as one of the European Union's relatively more open migration regimes, even allowing systemic legal migration for illegals lately, reflecting that Spain's approach continues to evolve in response to changing political and economic pressures.

The political opposition views these policies differently. The Partido Popular and Vox contend that regularisation programmes and expanded legal migration pathways may encourage irregular migration while placing additional pressure on housing, healthcare and other public services and increasing crime. Their position reflects a wider European trend, prevalent mostly among the right wing tent, in which migration has become a defining axis of political competition. Although Spain has not experienced the same scale of anti-immigration mobilisation seen elsewhere on the continent, public concern has risen steadily, increasing pressure on the government to demonstrate firmer control over its external borders.

These domestic debates increasingly intersect with broader European politics. Recent disagreements between Spain and Italy over migration policy illustrate a widening strategic divide within the European Union.

Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has advocated stricter border enforcement and offshore processing arrangements, whereas Sanchez has emphasised burden-sharing, humanitarian obligations and regulated legal migration. Research published in Mediterranean Politics and Social Sciences suggests that the European Union increasingly confront both migration as a challenge and governance as a challenge, as member states continue to pursue divergent policy models despite sharing common external borders and common legal obligations.

Another area of growing political contention concerns Spain's engagement with organised political Islam. Public debate is often highly polarised, yet the academic literature presents a considerably more nuanced picture. Elena Arigita traces the origins of Muslim Brotherhood-inspired networks in Spain to Syrian political exiles who arrived during the late Franco era and the democratic transition. These networks developed primarily through religious, educational and charitable institutions rather than formal political organisations.

More recent research by Lorenzo Vidino and Sergio Altuna likewise concludes that Brotherhood-linked actors operate within parts of Spanish Muslim civil society, particularly in major urban centres, but do not constitute a unified national movement. Both scholars further emphasise that their influence is considerably more limited than political rhetoric frequently suggests.

Importantly, the available evidence does not support claims that successive Socialist

governments have sponsored or actively promoted political Islam in Spain. Neither Arigita nor Vidino argues that Spanish authorities have sought to advance Islamist ideology. However, Spain's political support for the Palestinian cause, including positions adopted by the Socialist-led government and the Spanish legislature, should likewise not be conflated with support for political Islam, but likely as a human rights position. Legally, Spain's constitutional framework has prioritised religious freedom and institutional engagement with Muslim communities, particularly following the 1978 Constitution and the 1992 Cooperation Agreements. Critics, particularly on the political right, argue that this accommodative approach may have enabled organisations with ideological affiliations to gain greater political influence within parts of civil society. While such interpretations may warrant careful introspection, the prevailing scholarly consensus draws a clear distinction between engagement with religious communities and endorsement of an Islamist ideology.

Taken together, these policy areas illustrate both the strengths and the limitations of Spain's accommodationist model. Across all three areas of political concessions, pragmatic openness and religious affairs, there is a ongoing conclusion that accommodation has managed conflict more effectively than it has resolved it.

The broader European lesson is equally instructive. Democratic stability cannot depend exclusively on either constitutional rigidity or political accommodation. Excessive centralisation risks deepening alienation, while excessive flexibility risks turning fundamental constitutional questions into matters of perpetual negotiation. A balance in this scenario wins.

The resilience of Spain's democratic institutions will ultimately depend on whether citizens continue to believe that political compromise serves the long-term national interest rather than short-term partisan survival. Or will they negative all this? That question will remain.

Hence, enduring democratic stability depends not merely on agreements between governments and their opponents, but on a shared constitutional understanding capable of commanding broad and lasting legitimacy within an increasingly diverse and politically fragmented Spanish society.

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■ From Rio

Lessons From The Hill Of Pleasures



SHOBHA SHUKLA

Some of the most important lessons from the recently concluded AIDS 2026 Conference were learnt not inside the conference halls, but on the steep hillsides of dangerous favelas (urban slums) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Favelas in Rio de Janeiro are dense, informal urban communities where over a million people live across more than 1,000 such settlements. Quite a few of them are considered dangerous, some heavily controlled by armed drug-trafficking factions and sites of violent police operations. I could visit one such favela: Morro dos Prazeres in Santa Teresa neighbourhood.

I was fortunate to be part of an educational tour organised by the conference with two local organisations that serve people in this favela: CEDAPS (Centro de Promoção da Saúde or Centre for Health Promotion) and its partner organisation, Instituto Evolux.

Morro dos Prazeres favela became quite popular globally after it was a location of a 2008 movie Elite Squad (Tropa de Elite) as well as for hosting MTV's celebrity football tournament Rockgol in 2011.

Perched 275 metres above sea level, Morro dos Prazeres (which translates to 'Hill of Pleasures') offers breathtaking panoramic views of Guanabara Bay (Bosom of the sea) and the sprawling city below. But behind this picturesque landscape lies a very different reality. Residents continue to face daily barriers to healthcare, education, sanitation and other basic services that directly influence their health outcomes.

The visit showcased how CEDAPS strengthens community participation and advances health equity in vulnerable urban territories through participatory methodologies and community-led approaches addressing HIV, TB, and broader social wellbeing.

Communities co-creating their own solutions

What quickly became evident during our visit was that these communities are not waiting for solutions to arrive from outside.



They are creating their own and making HIV prevention meaningful. During our visit we met community leaders, artists, journalists, youth advocates and health workers who are finding innovative ways to communicate about HIV prevention in a language that is simple, culturally relevant and rooted in everyday life.

One of the most memorable demonstrations came from Aparecida Maria, a member of a women's collective, who introduced us to what she calls the 'Umbrella of Prevention.'

The colourful umbrella is decorated with water-drop shaped cards, each carrying a number. A box kept under the umbrella has numbered paper chits with some message written on each of them. Participants are invited to pick a numbered drop, after which the corresponding message is drawn from the box and read aloud to the group.

Transforming health lecture into community conversation

The messages cover practical health information in an engaging and interactive manner. One such message explains proper cough etiquette to reduce the spread of TB: 'When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth with the crook of your elbow.' Do not use your hands. Because then the bacteria will be lodged in it. And when touching people or objects you can spread the disease... Or else use a disposable tissue and avoid close contact with other people.'

Another reminds participants that 'irregular treatment can complicate disease and reduce the chances of recovery.' The exercise transforms health education into a community conversation rather than a lecture, making complex information easier to understand, particularly for young people.

Art as a Tool for Health Education
Artist Carla Felizardo has chosen a different medium. Through paintings and creative expression, she raises awareness not only about HIV but also about broader issues affecting health and wellbeing. Her artwork serves as a bridge between science and community, encouraging dialogue among adults, adolescents and children alike. For Carla, art becomes an accessible language capable of reaching people who may never attend a formal health education session.

Storytelling That Reflects Reality

Karen, a community journalist, uses audiovisual storytelling to communicate health information in a direct and accessible way. Working collaboratively across different favelas in Rio de Janeiro, he shares locally produced content that amplifies community voices while increasing the reach of health messages. But for Karen, discussing HIV cannot happen in isolation. "We do not talk just about the lack of healthcare," he explained. "We also talk about the lack of basic sanitation, the lack of education, and how this impacts the health of residents."

His words reflected one of the strongest messages from the visit—that health inequities are inseparable from broader social inequities.

Working in Brazil's largest favela

CEDAPS also works extensively in Rocinha - Brazil's largest favela - which is home to approximately 72,000 people. Despite being one of Rio de Janeiro's well-known tourist destinations, Rocinha continues to experience complex social challenges, including territorial disputes between armed groups that can erupt into sudden violence. Yet even within these dif-

ficult environments, community-led health programmes continue to flourish.

Young people leading the response

One of the most inspiring conversations of the day was with the coordinator of CEDAPS' Youth Network, a collective of young people living with HIV that has worked since 2009 as Brazil's national partner of the global YouthBuild initiative. She spoke candidly about the multiple vulnerabilities facing young people living in Brazil's favelas. "The people who die most in the country are young Black people who live in the favelas and marginalised territories," she said.

TB remains especially common among these communities, where access to information and healthcare is often limited. "We have been exploring strategies on how to effectively communicate with our peers living with HIV that TB is a reality that has killed many young people," she explained. One innovative initiative involves specially designed T-shirts displaying an illustration of the lungs to highlight the increased burden of TB among people living with HIV.

The reverse side of each shirt explains the Brazilian Unified Health System (SUS), reminding young people that universal healthcare - including HIV services - is their legal right. Anyone diagnosed with HIV is entitled to comprehensive care, treatment and follow-up. The Youth Network also transformed Festa Junina - Brazil's traditional June festival - into an opportunity for health promotion. As part of the celebrations they organised a Care Festival for which they made colourful decorative flags carrying messages about HIV and TB prevention, like:

By embedding health information into cultural celebrations, the messages reached people in ways that felt natural rather than intimidating. The coordinator ended with a powerful reminder that lingered with me long after our conversation had ended: "It is possible to live with HIV. But it is not possible to live with the stigma we still carry."

Comprehensive care for LGBTQIA+ communities

Members of Community Service Centre of the Rainbow Group, were also present and psychologist Rick described the organisation's work supporting LGBTQIA+ communities. The Rainbow Group advocates for LGBTQIA+ rights by combating discrimination, promoting diversity and advancing social inclusion. It works closely with Rio Sem LGBTFobia, Rio de Janeiro's public programme to combat discrimination and violence against LGBTQIA+ people. The organisation is also famous for

coordinating Rio's annual Pride Parade along Copacabana Beach and for hosting the city's largest LGBTQIA+ choir that performs at major cultural venues in Rio.

Rick explained that the Community Service Centre provides much more than HIV testing. Its multidisciplinary team of psychologists, lawyers and social workers offers free rapid testing for HIV, syphilis, viral hepatitis and other sexually transmitted infections, while also providing counselling, referrals and community-based support for both Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP). For many clients, however, the greatest need extends beyond medical care.

People often arrive carrying significant psychosocial distress, requiring comprehensive support that addresses mental health, discrimination, legal challenges and social isolation alongside HIV prevention and treatment.

Communities at the heart of the response

Perhaps the most important lesson from Morro dos Prazeres was that community health workers remain the true gateway to healthcare. They serve everyone who seeks help, regardless of social or economic status, linking residents to public health services while building trust within communities. We also learnt that Brazil's health system places strong emphasis on protecting the rights and confidentiality of people living with HIV. Health information, including viral load results, is safeguarded under data protection legislation, ensuring that only the treating physician has access to sensitive clinical information. Confidentiality, dignity and respect are not optional extras - they are fundamental to effective HIV care.

As the global HIV response embraces the AIDS 2026 theme, "Rethink - Rebuild - Rise," the visit to Morro dos Prazeres offered a powerful reminder that lasting progress begins within communities themselves. Whether through an umbrella decorated with messages, paintings that spark conversations, colourful festival flags, community journalism or peer-led youth networks, the people of Rio's favelas are demonstrating that the most effective health interventions are those created by communities, for communities.

Their work is not only improving access to HIV and TB services - it is redefining what community-led health equity looks like.

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Security Forces

remain fully alert and are prepared to respond swiftly to any infiltration attempt or ceasefire violation,” the official added.

The forces have also deployed a range of modern surveillance and mobility equipment in difficult terrain, including drones and quadcopters fitted with high-resolution cameras and night-vision capabilities, he said.

Smart fencing and other electronic surveillance systems have been installed at vulnerable points to strengthen the existing physical barriers and improve the ability of troops to detect movement along the border.

In addition, rapid response teams and specialised units have been kept ready to move quickly to sensitive locations, while bulletproof and all-terrain vehicles are being used to facilitate troop movement in mountainous and difficult terrain.

The security forces have also been conducting exercises to sharpen their response to possible infiltration attempts and attacks on forward positions, officials said.

Recently, troops in the Sunderbani sector carried out drills simulating infiltration and attacks on fortified positions, testing coordination, firepower and rapid-response capabilities.

“Continuous surveillance and area domination are being maintained to ensure the security of border areas and the safety of civilians living close to the LoC,” another official said.

The heightened security measures come ahead of the August 15 celebrations, when security agencies across Jammu and Kashmir have been placed on high alert to ensure peaceful and incident-free functions.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police have also intensified checking and surveillance in border areas, besides strengthening security at key entry and exit points, officials said.

Security agencies are maintaining close coordination and sharing inputs to prevent any attempt to exploit the heightened movement and security activity associated with Independence Day celebrations, they added—(KNO)

Multi-Tier Security

arrangements are in place not only at the venues but also around the city and in all districts of the Valley.”

He said preparations for the main Independence Day function in Srinagar were underway, including full-dress rehearsals and other arrangements to ensure the event is conducted smoothly.

The IGP also appealed to people to participate in the celebrations in large numbers, saying the Independence Day function was ultimately an occasion for the people.

“The function is for the people. The police work as an organiser. Since it is the function of the people, we ask people to participate in this function in large numbers so that it can be carried on successfully,” he said.

On the recent terror attacks in South Kashmir and whether investigators had made any breakthrough, IGP Birdi said, “The matter is under investigation. I don’t think it is appropriate to talk about it at this time. Whenever there is something that can be shared with you, we will share it at an appropriate time.”

Pertinently, security arrangements across Kashmir are being intensified ahead of the August 15 Independence Day celebrations, with special focus on major venues, Srinagar city and other parts of the Valley. Preparations for the main function in Srinagar are also underway, with full-dress rehearsals being held ahead of the main event on August 15—(KNO)

174 Textile MSMEs

and utilised. The Ministry said the SITP was implemented to help the Indian textile industry become globally competitive through environmentally friendly processing standards and technology. The scheme has now been subsumed under the Textile Cluster Development Scheme for completion of ongoing projects.

The Ministry said India's exports of textiles and apparel, including handicrafts, increased from Rs 2,49,250 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 3,25,339 crore in 2025-26, registering a compound annual growth rate of about 4.5 per cent during the period.

It said textile and ready-made garments, including handicrafts, were exported from 548 districts across the country during 2025-26.

The government has taken several measures to support the sector, includ-

ing temporary exemption from customs duty on cotton imports from June 1 to October 31, 2026, exemption from customs duties on key inputs in the man-made fibre value chain and rationalisation of GST rates in the MMF value chain.

The Ministry further said various schemes, including PM MITRA Parks, Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Textiles, National Technical Textiles Mission and SAMARTH, are being implemented to strengthen the competitiveness of the textile and apparel sector and support MSMEs—(KNO)

Drug Seizures In J&K

and a conviction rate of 53 per cent. In 2024, the number of cases declined to 1,550, while convictions increased to 227, with the conviction rate standing at 51.2 per cent.

The Centre said the latest NCRB data pertains to 2024 and covers State/UT-wise drug seizures, cases registered, convictions and conviction rates under the NDPS Act for the period 2022-24. The data is collected from States and UTs and duly validated and certified by the concerned authorities before publication.

The figures show that while the quantity of drugs seized in J&K declined considerably over the three-year period, the number of convictions increased from 99 in 2022 to 227 in 2024, according to the NCRB data.

The reply also shows that 4,977.21 kg of drugs were seized in J&K in 2024 along with 552.800 litres of drug-related substances.

The information was furnished by the Ministry of Home Affairs in response to the Lok Sabha question concerning anti-narcotics campaigns and drives—(KNO)

J&K Proposes Over

120 additional postgraduate seats have been created across Government Medical Colleges, including those located in remote districts. In addition, 286 postgraduate students are presently undergoing training in the seven newly established Government Medical Colleges and are contributing to specialist healthcare services in these locations,” reads the report—(KNO)

Apple Scab Threat

generally considered beneficial for fruit development, excessive and uninterrupted precipitation can have the opposite effect by increasing disease pressure, affecting foliage and damaging the appearance of the fruit.

“Rain is important for maintaining moisture and supporting fruit development, but when it continues for days together, the conditions become favourable for fungal diseases. The situation now requires close monitoring,” said an Nisar Ahmad an apple grower from Shopian.

According to growers, the problem is being noticed across both lower and higher elevations, indicating that the prolonged wet spell has affected orchards across a wide geographical area.

Apart from scab, waterlogging has emerged as another major concern. In several orchards, farmers said the soil has remained saturated for prolonged periods, leaving standing water in some areas.

They fear that continued waterlogging could affect the root systems of apple trees and eventually lead to root rot and other soil-borne problems. Such damage, growers said, may not always become visible immediately but could weaken trees and affect their productivity in the longer term.

Another grower said that his orchard had developed symptoms resembling necrotic leaf blotch following the prolonged wet conditions.

“Scab is not the only issue. We are also noticing leaf-related problems. Continuous moisture is creating conditions for multiple diseases, and growers will have to remain extremely cautious,” he said.

It’s in place to mention here that Apple scab is a fungal disease considered among the major threats to apple cultivation in Kashmir. Secondary infections can develop during the growing season when favourable weather conditions persist after the initial infection.

Extended periods of rainfall, high humidity and prolonged leaf wetness provide suitable conditions for the fungus to multiply and spread from one part of an orchard to another.

The disease commonly appears as dark or velvety lesions on leaves and fruit. Severe infection can affect the appearance and marketability of apples

and may also increase expenditure on orchard protection and disease management.

Farmers, however, said rainfall is not entirely detrimental to the crop. Adequate moisture can support fruit growth and, under suitable conditions, contribute to better fruit size and colour.

The problem arises when rainfall becomes excessive and the soil and foliage remain wet for prolonged periods.

Weather data cited in the report showed that Jammu and Kashmir received around 35 per cent more rainfall than normal during July.

Farmers said they are keeping a close watch on orchards and urged the Horticulture Department to intensify field-level guidance, particularly regarding disease identification, orchard drainage and timely management measures.

They said that they are under fear as weather department has predicted more rains in coming days.

With the apple harvest approaching, growers fear that a combination of fungal diseases, fruit cracking and waterlogging could affect both the quality and market returns of the crop if the wet spell continues.

They said timely technical intervention and regular field inspections would be important to prevent the situation from worsening and to protect the season's crop from avoidable losses—(KNO)

J&K Gets Rs 261.87

monitored through eMARG (Electronic Maintenance of Rural Roads) on performance-based maintenance principles. The government said maintenance payments are linked to performance evaluation, and where the performance score is below 80 per cent, payment is not released.

The reply also stated that a Post-DLP module of eMARG has been introduced to monitor maintenance beyond the initial five-year period, with provisions for performance-based maintenance, performance security and recovery or penalties in cases where contractors fail to undertake stipulated maintenance.

The details were furnished in response to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3730, answered on August 11, 2026—(KNO)

Heavy rain likely in

thundershowers possible at scattered places between August 20 and 22, according to the forecast.

The MeT office cautioned that torrential rain and brief intense showers could trigger flash floods, landslides and mudslides, particularly in vulnerable and hilly areas.

SRINAGAR RECORDS 33 C, JAMMU 31.2 C

Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 33 degrees Celsius on Monday, three degrees above the normal for this time of the year. Its minimum temperature was 21.6 degrees Celsius, also three degrees above normal.

Among other stations, Qazigund recorded a maximum of 30.6 degrees Celsius, Kupwara 33.3, Pahalgam 25.5, Kokernag 29.2 and Gulmarg 24.5 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu region, Jammu recorded a maximum temperature of 31.2 degrees Celsius, nearly two degrees below normal, while its minimum temperature was 22 degrees Celsius, more than three degrees below normal.

Katra received 71.1 mm of rain during the 24-hour period ending Tuesday morning, while Jammu recorded 79 mm during the same period.

The Met department has advised people, particularly those living in landslide- and flood-prone areas, to remain alert during periods of intense rainfall—(KNO)

Repora Emerges As

cultivation has become a major contributor to the local economy. “Almost every household in the village is involved in grape cultivation. It is the major contributor to the livelihood of people here and helps hundreds of families earn their livelihood,” he added.

Jahangir Ahmad Khan, another farmer, said the Horticulture Department is considering the establishment of small-scale grape processing units to add value to the crop, strengthen the local economy and generate employment opportunities.

Growers said production has remained encouraging this season, attributing the improvement to favourable climatic conditions and technical guidance provided by the Horticulture

Department.

They, however, urged the government to strengthen marketing and transportation facilities for grapes so that the produce can reach markets outside Jammu and Kashmir more efficiently.

“Just as support is provided for marketing other horticultural crops, our grapes should also be taken outside J&K through proper marketing channels. At present, growers often have to sell the produce themselves,” the growers said.

Repora has also acquired a cultural and spiritual significance among locals, who attribute the flourishing of grape cultivation in the area to the blessings of Sufi saint Mir Syed Shah Sadiq Qalandar (RA), who they believe lived in the area.

“This golden blessing, planted by saint Mir Syed Shah Sadiq Qalandar, is a priceless gem,” said Abdul Rahman, a local resident, while harvesting grapes from a vineyard.

A Horticulture Department official said that production has been better compared to the previous year and assured growers of continued technical assistance. “As compared to last year, the production has been very good, and we provide any technical support needed from our side,” he said.

The department has undertaken several initiatives to promote scientific grape cultivation and improve productivity in the area, the official said.

“A grape orchard has been developed by the department on government land, while a hi-tech facility spread over around 20 kanals has also been established, featuring mother blocks and a modern bower system aimed at promoting improved cultivation practices and quality planting material,” he said—(KNO)

Declining Chestnut

lake in a day. Now, even getting 20 kg is difficult,” said Mohammad Ramzan Pinchoo, who has been engaged in chestnut extraction for nearly five decades.

Several villages, including Kulhama, Lankreshipora, Suderkoot, Kanibath, Keema and Zurimanz, are among the major suppliers of water chestnuts from Wular to markets across Kashmir and outside the Valley.

Ramzan said the decline has become increasingly noticeable, with extractors having to spend longer hours on the lake for considerably smaller quantities.

Another elderly extractor, Abdul Aziz of Lankreshipora, recalled a time when a boat could be filled with 50-60 kg of chestnuts within half a day. “Those days are gone. A harvest of that size has become almost unimaginable,” he said.

Aziz attributed the declining yield to a combination of factors, including encroachment around the lake, siltation and increasing pollution.

For the communities living along Wular's shores, the problem extends beyond chestnuts.

“People here depend on the lake either directly or indirectly. For the last several years, we have seen a major decline in both fishing and water chestnut production,” said fisherman Gulam Nabi.

He said the falling harvest could have a direct impact on families that rely on the seasonal income generated from chestnut extraction.

“Water chestnuts are an important source of income for many families here. If the production continues to fall, their earnings will also be affected,” Nabi said.

Wular, one of the largest freshwater lakes in Asia, has traditionally supported a diverse local economy based on fishing, chestnut extraction and other lake-related activities.

Official data cited in the report says the lake has historically produced around four metric tonnes of water chestnuts annually, besides supporting an estimated 5,000 tonnes of fish belonging to 11 species each year.

Environmental degradation, however, has increasingly raised concerns over the lake's ecological health and its ability to sustain traditional livelihoods.

A survey conducted during 2017-18 found that pollution was contributing to a decline in native fish species as well as affecting the production of exotic fish in the lake.

For the chestnut extractors returning to Wular this season, the changing harvest is a visible reminder of the pressure on the lake.

While the boats continue to move across Wular during the harvest season, the communities living along its banks are hoping that efforts to restore the lake's ecological health will also revive the livelihoods that have long been tied to its waters—(KNO)

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Sakeena Itoo inaugurates 128-slice CT Scan machine at GMC Udhampur

GMK NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR: Minister for Health & Medical Education, Education and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo, Tuesday conducted an extensive visit to Government Medical College and Associated Hospital, Udhampur and inaugurated a 128-Slice CT Scan machine.

Member Legislative Assembly, Udhampur West, Pawan Kumar Gupta, DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range, Shiv Kumar Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa, Director Social Welfare Jammu, Ranjeet Singh, Director Health Services Jammu, Poonam Sethi, PO Poshan Subash Dogra, Principal GMC Udhampur, Dr. Pramod Kalsotra; Medical Superintendent, Dr. Sanjeev Gupta and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that installation of the advanced CT Scan facility marks a significant step towards strengthening the healthcare infrastructure and diagnostic services at Associated Hospital, GMC Udhampur.

The 128-Slice CT Scan



machine has been installed at a cost of Rs 8.30 crore. The advanced technology will facilitate faster and more accurate diagnosis of various medical conditions, particularly benefiting the patients requiring emergency, trauma, neurological, cardiac and other specialized investigations.

Sakeena Itoo added that the facility will also enable advanced diagnostic procedures such as CT Angiography, Cardiac CT and Triple-Phase Imaging, further enhancing the hospital diagnostic capabilities. She said the government is committed to provide accessible, affordable and quality healthcare services to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, with special focus on strengthening Government Medical Colleges and

their associated hospitals.

The Minister observed that GMC Udhampur has emerged as an important healthcare and academic institution serving the people of Udhampur and adjoining areas. She said the addition of modern diagnostic equipment like the 128-Slice CT Scan machine would help the institution meet the growing healthcare needs of the population and reduce referrals to other healthcare institutions.

After the inauguration, the Minister chaired a detailed review meeting with the GMC administration to assess the overall functioning of the Associated Hospital. She enquired about the staff strength, OPD services, infrastructure, availability of medi-

cines and diagnostic facilities, besides reviewing the progress of ongoing works.

Emphasising punctuality and patient-friendly services, Sakeena Itoo directed the hospital administration to ensure timely delivery of healthcare services and maintain proper hygiene and sanitation across the hospital premises.

The Minister also issued on-the-spot directions to the executing agencies to expedite the completion of ongoing projects by deploying additional manpower and increasing the number of working shifts at construction sites.

Sakeena Itoo interacted with the doctors, paramedical staff and other healthcare workers and congratulated them for their dedicated services.

The Minister assured that the issues raised would be examined and appropriate action would be taken as per the established norms.

Later, the Minister handed over a motorized tricycle to a specially abled person under the J&K Rehabilitation council initiative. She also felicitated the mother of a newborn baby girl under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative.

23.83 lakh women representatives trained under revamped RGSA in three years: Centre

RAJA SYED

SRINAGAR: The Centre on Tuesday informed the Lok Sabha that 23,83,765 Women Elected Representatives (WERs) were trained under the revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) during the last three financial years from 2023-24 to 2025-26, with Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh also covered under the capacity-building programme.

The information, was given by Union Minister of Panchayati Raj Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lal Singh in reply to a starred question raised by Lok Sabha members Khagen Murmu and Dr Rajesh Mishra regarding measures taken to strengthen the participation, leadership capacity and effective functioning of women representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

According to the statement laid before the House, 1,75,168 Women Elected Representatives from Jammu and Kashmir were provided training under the revamped RGSA during 2022-23 and 2023-24, with 1,07,089 trained in 2022-23 and 68,072 in 2023-24. The data shows seven representatives trained in 2024-25, while no training figure has been recorded for J&K for 2025-26 and 2026-27 up to July 10, 2026.

For Ladakh, the government data shows that 27 Women Elected Representatives were trained during 2025-26 under the revamped RGSA. No beneficiaries were recorded for Ladakh during 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 or 2026-27 up to July 10, 2026.

The minister said strengthening Panchayati Raj capacity is primarily the responsibility of States and Union Territories as Panchayats are a State sub-

ject. However, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is implementing the revamped RGSA from 2022-23 to support PRIs and provide training to elected representatives, including women representatives, through induction, refresher and theme-based Panchayat Development Plan training.

On funding, the Centre stated that Rs 65 crore was released to Jammu and Kashmir in each of 2023-24 and 2024-25, while Rs 57 crore was released during 2025-26. The corresponding utilisation was Rs 98.61 crore, Rs 57.89 crore and Rs 78.99 crore respectively.

For Ladakh, Rs 1 crore was released in 2023-24, with utilisation of Rs 0.80 crore; no central share was released in 2024-25, while Rs 0.72 crore was released in 2025-26. The utilisation figures for the three years stood at Rs 0.80 crore, Rs 0.58 crore and Rs 0.92 crore respectively.

The government further informed the House that an external evaluation of the overall revamped RGSA was undertaken through the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA). However, no independent review has been conducted specifically on programmes aimed at strengthening the leadership and participation of Women Elected Representatives, as Panchayat is a State subject.

To promote women-led governance, the Ministry launched the Sashakt Panchayat Netri Abhiyan during a national workshop held in New Delhi on March 4-5, 2025. The campaign includes recognition of exemplary women Panchayat leaders and a specialised training module aimed at strengthening leadership skills and empowering women representatives as agents of change in grassroots democracy.

DC G'bal leads Cleanliness Drive under 'Har Ghar Tiranga campaign'

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: As part of the ongoing 'Har Ghar Tiranga' Campaign, the District Administration Ganderbal Tuesday organised 'Swachhata Hi Seva' activities across the district, promoting cleanliness, civic responsibility and public participation.

On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, inaugurated a newly established Public Convenience Facility Block at Mini Secretariat, Ganderbal, and dedicated it for the use of the general public.

The newly established facility is aimed at providing clean, hygienic and accessible sanitation facilities to visitors and members of the public visiting the Mini Secretariat. The facility will provide improved public

amenities and contribute towards maintaining better standards of cleanliness and hygiene in the premises.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of maintaining cleanliness and proper sanitation at public places and directed the concerned officials to ensure regular cleaning, upkeep and maintenance of the facility. He also called upon citizens to use public facilities responsibly and contribute towards keeping public spaces clean.

As part of the Swachhata Hi Seva programme, cleanliness drives were conducted at various locations across the district, including government offices, schools, colleges, public places and other important locations. Officers, employees, students and members of the public participated enthusiastically in the activities.

Secretary Transport inspects MVD Pulwama Sets Nov 2026 deadline for Pampore Automated Fitness Centre

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Secretary, Transport, Avny Lavasa conducted a comprehensive day-long tour of Pulwama district Tuesday to inspect the ongoing construction of the Automated Testing Centre (ATS) at Pampore and review the operational functioning of the Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) Pulwama.

The visit forms part of the UT administration's focused strategy to accelerate the development of critical transport infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir.

Accompanying the Secretary during the field visit were MD SRTC, Abdul Rashid War, ARTO Pulwama Mohammad Shafait, General Manager RTC, Habibullah Reshi, alongside representatives from Rosemerta, the executing agency tasked with the project.

Project officials briefed the Secretary on key structural components, including the Administrative, Testing, and Security blocks. They reported that civil construction is entering its final phase and will be completed within 15 days, paving

the way for the immediate erection of Pre-Engineered Building (PEB) structures.

Furthermore, all essential mechanical testing equipment has already been procured and will be installed as soon as the PEB setup is complete.

During the on-site inspection, the Secretary critically evaluated construction standards, inter-agency coordination, and operational readiness. Expressing strong concern over lingering project delays, she directed the executing agency to eliminate all bottlenecks and

strictly mandated that the automated facility be fully operational by the first week of November 2026.

Later, the Secretary Transport inspected the ARTO Office in Pulwama, reviewing workflows across the Driving License, Permit, Registration, Accounts, and Establishment sections. Interacting with local staff, public delegations, and transport operators, she emphasized that hassle-free, transparent, and time-bound public service delivery must remain the primary mission of the department.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, IRRIGATION & FLOOD CONTROL DIVISION HANDWARA RAJWAR ROAD, HANDWARA - 193221

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER e-NIT No: 09-IFCD/HND/2026-27 Dated: 10/08/2026.

For and on behalf of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory, e-Tenders on percentage basis are invited from approved and eligible contractors registered with Jammu and Kashmir UT Government for the following work:

S. No.	Name of work	Advertised cost in Lacs	Earnest Money	Time of Completion	Class of Contract	Major Head	Cost of Tender document	Tender ID No.
1.	Daganwari Khul -Improvement of Kral Khan near Kenyal by way of construction of lining wall (L-35 Mtrs) and RCC channel (L-15 Mtrs) at RD 6900m	₹6.00/-	₹12000/=	30 Days	CEE/DEE	MH-4701 UT Capex	₹300/-	
2.	Budbugh Minor of Gasji Khul Construction of Flume at RD 450 m	₹9.668 /-	₹19500/=	30 Days	CEE/DEE	MH-4701 UT Capex	₹600/-	
3.	LIS Ujroo - Anti Erosion work By Way of Crate Revetment near Pump Station at Ujroo	₹8.926/-	₹18000/=	30 Days	CEE/DEE	MH-4701 UT Capex	₹600/-	
4.	Grat Khul Construction of Headworks and resectioning of the Canal from Rd 0 m to RD 1824 m	₹9.676/-	₹19500/=	30 Days	CEE/DEE	MH-4701 UT Capex	₹600/-	
5.	Nigar minor of Kani Khul - Construction of lining wall on both sides at RD-1000 m	₹4.33/-	₹8700/=	30 Days	DEE	MH-4701 UT Capex	₹200/-	
6.	Malik Khul - Construction of steel flume (L-30 Mtrs) at RD 3300 m at Tumina	₹24.579/-	₹50000/=	45 Days	BEE/CEE	MH-4701 UT Capex	₹800/-	
7.	Nagerwari Khul Providing and installation of 01 No. gate at RD 9100 mtrs (Jaggerpora)	₹4.45/-	₹9000/=	30 Days	DEE	MH-4701 UT Capex	₹200/-	
8.	Malik Khul - Providing and installation of hydraulic gate at off take point RD 100 of Malik khul at Tumina	₹4.669/-	₹9500/=	30 Days	DEE	MH-4701 UT Capex	₹200/-	

Position of AAA: District Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Kupwara H/Q Handwara Order No. 11/DSE/HH/DB of 2026-27 Dated: 05/08/2026.

Position of T.S.: Sanctioned.

Position of funds: Assured.

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 website www.jktenders.gov.in from:

1	Publishing Date	10-08-2026 1700 Hours
2	Download Date Start	10-08-2026 1800 Hours
3	Tender Submission date Start	10-08-2026 1800 Hours
4	Tender Submission date Ends	21-08-2026 1800 Hours
5	Date of Opening	22-08-2026 1200 Hours

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The Tenders for the works shall remain valid for a period of 90 (Ninety) days from the date of opening of Tenders.
- The Tenders shall be deposited in Electronic format on the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in
- The Tender uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on the schedule date and time or any other date convenient to the tender opening authority in the Office of the Executive Engineer (I&FC) Division Handwara, in presence of the Tenderers who wish to be present. In case of holiday or office happening to be closed on the basis of the opening of the Tender/date of submission of Hard copies, the same will be on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- The earnest money shall be forfeited if:
 - Any Tenderer withdraws his Tenders/tender during the period of Tender validity or makes any modification in terms and conditions of the Tender.
 - Failure of Successful tenderer to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
- The tenderer shall have to execute the agreement within 07-days after fixation of contract.
- Every participating bidder/contractor has to mandatory disclose the bank account Number which is linked with their GST at the time of bid submission. No payment shall be released by the Govt. Deptt./ Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with GST registered number of the successful bidder.
- Instructions to Tenderer regarding E-Tendering process: -
 - Tenderers are advised to download Tender submission manual from the "downloads" option as well as from "Tenderers manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in acquaint Tenders submission process.
 - To participate in tendering process, Tenderers have to get digital signature certificate (DSC) as per information technology act. 2000. Tenderers can get digital certificate from approved vendor.
 - The Tenderer have to submit their Tenders online in electronic format with digital signature. No financial Tender will be accepted in physical form.
 - Tender will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bids must be accompanied with Aadhar Card, PAN Card, Bidder Details, cost of Tender Document in favour of Chief Engineer Kashmir Irrigation & Flood Control under Account No:- 0367010200000608 IFSC Code: JAKAOTANKKE Branch: J&K Bank Ltd Tankipora. The Bid will remain valid for a period of 90 (Ninety) days from the date of opening of bid.
- The Scanned copy of crossed bank cheque wherein the requisite tender document fee (TDF) has been paid into the designated account of the Chief Engineer, Kashmir Irrigation & Flood Control, A/c No.: 0367010200000608, IFS code: JAKAOTANKKE, J&K Bank Ltd. Tankipora Branch shall be uploaded by the prospective bidder.
- The Scanned copy of crossed bank cheque wherein the requisite Earnest Money (EMD) has been paid into the designated account of the Chief Engineer, Kashmir Irrigation & Flood Control, A/c No.: 0367010200000608, IFS code: JAKAOTANKKE, J&K Bank Ltd. Tankipora Branch shall be uploaded by the prospective bidder..

No: IFCD/HND/ Camp/2347-56
Dated: 10/08/2026

DIPK-4403-26
DT: 11/08/2026

Sd/
Executive Engineer
I&FC Division Handwara.

Email address: exenmcdsdmscgr@gmail.comContact No. 0194 3100263

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECH.
CITY DRAINAGE DIVISION SRINAGAR.

ABSTRACT OF E-NIT NO_03_CDM_OF_2026-27
D A T E D :-08 -08-2026

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders are invited in two-Cover system (Technical and financial) on Turnkey basis from Registered, Resourceful, Reputed and Experienced firms/contractors for execution of below mentioned work:-
Accord of Administrative Approval : ORDER No:-196-DDCS OF 2026 Dated:- 30-07-2026, Corrigendum No.DDCS/Dev/District Capex/2026-27/5432-33 Dated:- 31-07-2026 and Commissioner SMC's office endorsement No.SMC/Plg/Est/2026-27/920-921 Dated:-08-08-2026
Head of Account: District Capex Budget 2026-27
Position of Funds : Approved

S. No.	Name of Work	Advt. Cost (Rs in lacs)	Earnest Money	Cost of tender document (Non-refundable)	Time of Completion
1.	Provision for Dewatering Pump Station at Panzinar A.	32.51	Rs.65020.00	Rs.2000.00	03 Months

The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of Quantities (BOQ) , set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

01.	Period of downloading of bidding documents / sale of tender documents.	10-08-2026 from 10.00 A.M			
02.	Bid submission start date	11-08-2026 from 10.00 A.M			
03.	Bid submission end date	28-08-2026 upto 6.00 P.M			
04.	Date & time of opening of Cover Ist (Technical) bids on line.	29-08-2026 at 02.00 P.M OR Any other subsequent date convenient to the opening authority.			
05.	List of Documents to be uploaded:- - Scanned copy of Cost of tender document in the shape of Bank Receipt. The amount should be deposited in the Srinagar Municipal Corporation bank account in J&K Bank, A/C No. CD/0216010200000007, Branch: Balgarden Karanagar Srinagar, IFC Code: JAKAOGARDEN. - Scanned copy of Earnest Money Deposit in shape of Bank Receipt The amount should be deposited in the Srinagar Municipal Corporation bank account in J&K Bank, A/C No. CD/0216010200000007, Branch: Balgarden Karanagar Srinagar, IFC Code: JAKAOGARDEN. - Scanned copy of Valid GST Registration / PAN Card. - Scanned copy of similar nature of work. (Issued by the authority not the blow the rank of Executive Engineer). - Scanned copy of turnover for last 03 financial years. - Scanned copy of acceptance of all technical, commercial terms and conditions as per format Annexure "B".				
07.	Bid Opening Authority	Executive Engineer Mech. City Drainage Division SMC Srinagar.			

Note: The Execution, Supervision and financial aspect of CIVIL PART of the work shall be carried out by the Sewerage & Drainage Division IInd SMC Srinagar and ELECTRO-MECHANICAL COMPONENT PART of the work shall be carried out by the Mech. City Drainage Division SMC Srinagar.

- The bids shall be submitted in electronic format on the website www.jktenders.gov.in upto said bidding schedule with Digital Signature and no bid will be accepted in physical form.
- The Executive Engineer Mech. City Drainage Division SMC Srinagar reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders or any tender in part or whole without assigning any reasons thereof.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of tech. bids.
- Linked bank account with GSTIN: The contractor/bidder shall disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission, no payment shall be released by this division to any other bank account except one linked with the GSTIN registered number of the successful bidder (As per Circular No.01(Adm) FD of 2025 Dated:- 08-07-2025).
- Performance Security: The successful bidder has to deposit an amount equal to 3% of the allotted cost as Performance Security in the shape of bank receipt to be deposited in the Srinagar Municipal Corporation bank account No. CD/0216010200000007, J&K Bank Branch: Balgarden Karanagar Srinagar, IFC Code: JAKAOGARDEN Srinagar before issuance of formal allotment order and the same shall be retained till successful completion of work and checking the performance of the equipments upto expiry of DLP. The performance security shall be released after DLP of three years from the successful completion of the work.
- Additional Performance Security (in case of un-balanced Bid by the Successful bidder L1): - In case of un-balanced bid, the successful bidder L1, shall have to deposit the additional performance security amount in the shape of bank receipt in the Srinagar Municipal Corporation bank account A/C No. CD/0216010200000007, J&K Bank Branch: Balgarden Karanagar Srinagar, IFC Code: JAKAOGARDEN Srinagar as per the Circular issued by J&K Finance Department Dated:-08-08-2025 vide No. FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 before award of contract.
- All other terms and condition shall remain same as laid down in the PWD form No. 25.

For further details, terms and conditions log on www.jktenders.gov.in
NO:CDM/908
DATED :- 08-08 -2026

DIPK-4403-26
DT: 11/08/2026

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MECH. CITY DRAINAGE DIVISION SRINAGAR

CMYK

Golf: Om Prakash Chouhan fires 62 to take lead at PGTI event in Kolkata



IAN S

KOLKATA: Om Prakash Chouhan fired an eight-under 62 to take the opening-round lead at the second edition of the INR 1 crore Coal India Open at Tollygunge Club in Kolkata.

The 40-year-old golfer from Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, put together an eventful round featuring a hole-in-one on the par-three eighth and an eagle on the par-five 13th. He also made six birdies and two bogeys to establish a one-shot lead.

Former Asian Tour winner Ajeetesh Sandhu of Chandigarh returned a seven-under 63 to occupy second place. Starting from the 10th tee, Sandhu made eight birdies and a lone bogey, which came on the par-four first, his 10th hole of the day.

Delhi's Shaurya Bhat-tacharya, ranked 17th on the DP World PGTI Rankings, and Pune's Kshitij Naveed Kaul, currently fifth in the season standings, shared third place after carding matching six-under 64s.

Bangladeshi duo of Jamal Hossain and Badal Hossain, Greater Noida's Arjun Sharma, and 16-year-old Kartik Singh of Gurugram, one of the youngest professionals on the tour, were tied for fifth following

rounds of five-under 65.

Chouhan, who is based at Kalhaar Blues & Greens in Ahmedabad, topped the PGTI Order of Merit in 2023 and is also a former Hotel-Planner Tour winner. His familiarity with Tollygunge Club played an important role in his strong start.

"The conditions at Tollygunge Club suit my game, and I enjoy playing this course," said Chouhan. "I have performed well here in the past, having won the last DP World PGTI event staged here in February this year, so I followed a similar game-plan today."

Chouhan also highlighted his eagle on the 13th. He found the fairway with a three-wood before using his preferred rescue club for his approach and converting the putt from around 15 to 20 feet. "I struck the ball well for most of the round and am very happy with where my game is," he said.

Sandhu, who is ranked 18th this season, credited his putting and the progress made since last week's J&K Open for his opening 63.

"I had a very good day on the greens," said Sandhu. "There were some encouraging signs last week, although I was still a little rusty. I built on that during the Pro-Am and practice round this week, so I'm

happy that everything came together today."

The change from Srinagar's altitude to Kolkata's humid conditions required Sandhu to adjust his yardages. He said he adjusted well and accurately assessed how far the ball was travelling in the contrasting conditions.

Sandhu's standout birdie came on the 14th after he missed the fairway to the right. He played a low recovery shot through the trees from the rough, hit it to within 15 feet and converted the putt.

"That birdie was particularly satisfying," he said. Sandhu has made six appearances on the DP World PGTI this season. He also led Rajasthan.

Regals to victory in the inaugural edition of the DP World PGTI's '72 The League'.

Bengaluru's Khalin Joshi, who celebrated his 34th birthday on Tuesday, carried the momentum from last week's nine-shot victory at the JK Open into the new week. His opening four-under 66 placed him tied ninth.

PGTI Rankings leader Saptak Talwar carded a three-under 67 to end the day in tied 14th. In a field of 132 players, 40 shot even-par or better on the par-70 course.

India better prepared than Sri Lanka for the Tests despite vulnerability against spinners, says Maharoo

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Former Sri Lanka fast bowler Farveez Maharoo feels that despite India's batting vulnerabilities in facing spinners, the Shubman Gill-led side enters the upcoming two-game Test series far better prepared than the hosts.

The two-match Test series between India and Sri Lanka kicks off in Galle on Saturday, with 24 crucial World Test Championship (WTC) points on the line for both teams to boost their chances of entering the final in June 2027. India arrive on the back of beating Sri Lanka Cricket XI in a three-day warm-up game at the NCC Ground, where all squad members got decent bowling and batting time.

"The vulnerability of the Indian batting order and the negativity going around with it, with losing to South Africa at home especially, this is where Sri Lanka can really bounce on if they bring the A game. My concern is that some of the players have not played after the West Indies series because of the LPL straight away and then this Test series.

"So, maybe some of the bowlers will be slightly undercooked when it comes to the workload. I mean, they had at least a couple of weeks to get their workload high and train for a while. But it's nothing like a practice game in my opinion. As far as I know, Sri Lanka has not played a practice game because of simply no time, whereas



India just played a three-day game," Maharoo told IANS in an online interaction facilitated by Sony Sports Network on Tuesday.

He also praised the Indian team management for their tactical foresight in reducing the warm-up game timing from four to three days. "Also, they were smart in not wanting to play the warm-up game on the fourth day. They wanted to play a three-day game, and on the fourth day, on the same pitch, they went and trained out there simply because they wanted their batters to play against the spinners bowling to the rough, which is going to be the challenge come the third or fourth day.

"If the Test match goes to the fifth day, up in Galle, as well as the SSC, I think preparation-wise, Indians are much more equipped than the Sri Lankans, if you ask me. This is where the edge can be won. Also, on paper, the numbers speak for themselves. I

think India, with the likes of Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja, as well as Mohammad Siraj, is quite formidable as the leader of the bowling pack," stated Maharoo.

Comparing the bowling line-ups, Maharoo noted that Sri Lanka's attack faces multiple uncertainties, especially around their secondary spin options after left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya and pacer Asitha Fernando.

"Sri Lanka will rely heavily on Asitha Fernando and Prabath Jayasuriya because those two have been consistently playing Test cricket and have been performing well. My other concern is second spinner Ramesh Mendis. He has not played Test cricket and red-ball cricket for a while.

"Only last week, in the just-concluded three-day warm-up game, he played a red-ball game. So many ifs and buts and only answers will be given come the 15th- hopefully the Test match goes for five days till the 19th."

135TH DURAND CUP: NorthEast United sail into quarters with comfortable win over FC1

IAN S

GUWAHATI: NorthEast United FC marched into the quarterfinals with a perfect record in the group stages after comfortably defeating FC1 3-1 in their final Group F fixture of the 135th Durand Cup at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Guwahati on Tuesday.

Parthib Gogoi scored in each half, while Alaaeddine Ajaraie added NorthEast United's third goal. Mohamad Ilyas scored the consolation goal for FC1.

The Highlanders completed their group-stage campaign with three wins from three matches to finish as Group F winners. FC1, meanwhile, ended their debut Durand Cup campaign with three points from three matches.

NorthEast United FC head coach Juan Pedro Benali made 10 changes to his starting XI, with Spanish midfielder Antonio Moyano the only player retaining his place from the previous outing. Fellow Spaniards Etyan González Morales and Eneko Satrustegui Plano were also handed their first starts for the club.



Meanwhile, FC1 head coach Khalid Qayoom made two changes to his lineup, bringing in midfielder Mousa Ahmed Quersehi and Ivorian defender Tetty Armando Yoko, both returning after suspensions in place of Kamran Hameed and Aafreen Bashir.

FC1 were awarded a penalty inside the opening seven minutes after NorthEast United defender Robin Yadav handled the ball from a corner kick inside the penalty area. Mousa Ahmed Quersehi stepped up to take the spot-kick but was denied by NorthEast debutant K. Mohanraj,

who produced a fine low diving save to his left to keep the scores level.

NorthEast United FC punished FC1 almost immediately, taking the lead just two minutes later through a well-worked move. Antonio Moyano picked out Jithin M.S., who had made a clever run between two defenders before delivering a low cross across the penalty area. Parthib Sunder Gogoi arrived unmarked at the back post and calmly slotted the ball into the net to give the Highlanders the lead.

FC1 enjoyed the majority of possession during

the opening 25 minutes as NorthEast United FC opted against pressing high to regain the ball. The Jammu & Kashmir side also earned four corner kicks during this period, but their execution in the final third lacked the quality to test Mohanraj in the North-East goal.

With NorthEast United FC maintaining a disciplined mid-block and remaining compact in possession, FC1 struggled to build attacks through the centre of the pitch. The side from Jammu & Kashmir instead looked to exploit the spaces down the right flank and managed to create openings from wide areas, but their lack of numbers inside the box meant they were unable to make the most of the crosses delivered by their wingers as the Highlanders took their one-goal advantage into the half-time break.

The home side doubled their advantage nine minutes after the restart, with Parthib Gogoi scoring his second of the day. Antonio Moyano delivered a dangerous free-kick into the area, and Eneko Satrustegui

directed his header into a crowded area, where Parthib reacted quickly to bring the ball under control before producing a composed finish through a crowd of players and beyond the goalkeeper.

The Highlanders stepped up the intensity of their attacks, and moments later, substitute Lalrinzuala Lalbiaknia came close to adding another. Jithin M.S. delivered an inviting cross into the penalty area, but Lalrinzuala was unable to make the decisive connection, and the ball went out for a goal kick.

Lalrinzuala remained at the heart of the Highlanders' attacking moves, forcing a save from FC1 goalkeeper Aftab Ashraf at the end of a swift counter-attack after being played through by fellow substitute Alaaeddine Ajaraie. Ajaraie then missed a glorious opportunity moments later, failing to find the empty net after Ashraf was unable to gather a cross cleanly. The FC1 goalkeeper made amends in the next attack, producing another save to deny Ajaraie's left-footed effort.

Miller, Allen, Klaasen, Stoinis headline ILT20 Season 5 pre-auction signings

IAN S



IAN S

DUBAI: Top T20 superstars David Miller, Finn Allen, Heinrich Klaasen and Marcus Stoinis will headline the star-studded pre-auction signings for the fifth season of the International League T20 (ILT20), with the six franchises strengthening their squads ahead of the player auction on October 1.

New Zealand opener Finn Allen will join Abu Dhabi Knight Riders, while South African batting duo Miller and Klaasen have been signed by Gulf Giants. Australian all-rounder Stoinis will return to the competition with Dubai Capitals after a three-year gap.

Allen, Miller and Klaasen will make their maiden appearances in the ILT20, while Stoinis returns to the league after previously featuring in its inaugural season.

Several established ILT20 names will also return to their Season 4 franchises. Jason Holder and Sunil Narine will continue with Abu Dhabi Knight Riders, while defending champions Desert Vipers have retained Shimron Hetmyer, along with Andries Gous and Dan Lawrence.

Dubai Capitals have retained Mustafizur Rahman and Rovman Powell, while MI Emirates will once again have the services of Nicholas Pooran, Rashid Khan and Romario Shepherd. Sikan-dar Raza will return to Sharjah Warriorz.

Gulf Giants have retained Afghanistan all-rounder Azmatullah Omar-zai and fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani.

Desert Vipers, meanwhile, have added Afghanistan spinner Mujeeb-ur-Rahman, who played for Dubai Capitals in Season 4. MI Emirates have signed West Indies all-rounder Sherfane Rutherford, while Sharjah Warriorz have brought in Adam Milne, James Vince and Waqar Salamkheil.

India's surge continues at Commonwealth Fencing C'ship with seven-medal haul on Day 2



LAGOS: India's fencing team maintained its impressive run at the Commonwealth Fencing Championship in Lagos, Nigeria, winning seven medals on the second day.

In the Senior Individual events—Women's Sabre, Women's Epee, and Men's Foil—Team India secured one gold, two silver, and four bronze medals, strengthening its position and showcasing the country's depth in the senior circuit.

The Indian team delivered an excellent performance in the Senior Women's Epee event, dominating the podium standings. Tanishka Khatri won the gold medal through an outstanding display, while Khushi Dabhade earned silver.

Prachi Lohan contributed to the medals by sharing

the bronze with Australia's Harrison Asley, resulting in India's impressive three-medal haul in this discipline.

In the Senior Women's Sabre individual category, India showcased a remarkable performance by securing three podium positions. Aakhari earned a well-deserved silver medal after finishing behind England's Brierley, who took gold.

Jefarlin and Shruti Joshi both won bronze medals for India. In the Senior Men's Foil event, Tejas Patil put in a commendable effort against a competitive international field, earning a bronze medal alongside England's David William. The gold was won by Cyprus's Alex Tophalidas, and Silver went to England's Oliver Starange.

The squad's ongoing success is attributed to the Indian coaching and support team, which includes coaches Bharatji Thakor, Shrihari Pise, and Shankar Narayanan, physiotherapist Amruta Balkawade, and team manager Manu Tyagi.

Their guidance, preparation, and support have been crucial in maintaining the athletes' top performance as the tournament in Lagos continues through August 14.

Rajeev Mehta, Secretary General of the Fencing Association of India, praised all the medal-winning athletes, coaches, support staff, and officials for their relentless dedication and exceptional achievements.

The federation expressed complete confidence that the Indian team will sustain its winning streak and continue to perform strongly for the rest of the championship.

INOX

SRINAGAR

Schedule

THE ODYSSEY

A FILM BY CHRISTOPHER NOLAN

SPIDER-MAN

BRAND NEW DAY

WEDNESDAY, 12TH AUGUST

SPIDERMAN:

BRAND NEW DAY – HINDI

(U/A 13+)

03:10 PM

3D

SPIDERMAN:

BRAND NEW DAY – 3D

ENGLISH ATMOS

WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

(U/A 13+)

11:00 AM | 02:05 PM

05:10 PM | 08:15 PM

CC

SPIDERMAN:

BRAND NEW DAY – ENGLISH

WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

(U/A 13+)

12:05 PM | 03:40 PM

06:45 PM

THE ODYSSEY – ENGLISH

WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES (A)

12:15 PM | 06:15 PM

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