

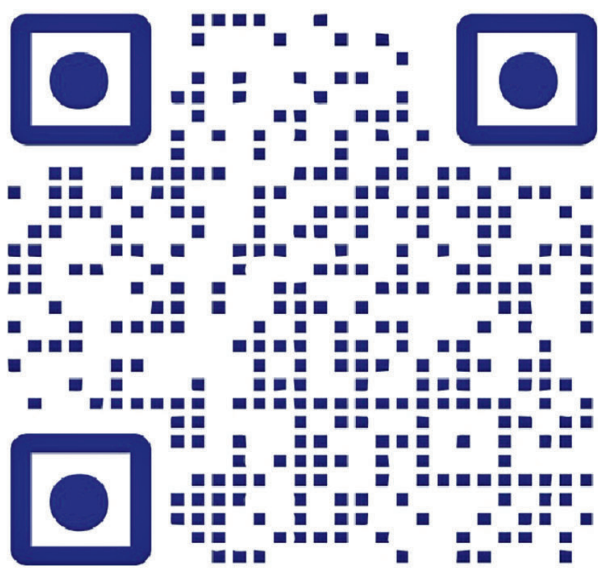


1ST | INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

*Experience an unforgettable inaugural evening
as world cinema comes alive on the
canvas of Jammu and Kashmir*

📅 **September 7-10, 2026**

📍 **Srinagar | Jammu | Gulmarg**



Scan to
Visit: www.iffjk.org



Department of Information & Public Relations, J&K



@informationprjk



Information & PR, J&K



@diprjk



@dipr_jk

DIPK-5377/26 DATED: 06/09/2026

Sakina Itoo to Take Up Medical Interns' Issue at Departmental Level

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Education and Health Minister Sakina Itoo has conveyed her intent to take the lead in resolving the ongoing issue concerning medical interns, as the matter falls directly within her department, sources familiar with the developments told Kashmir News Service on Sunday.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the sources said, has so far opted against intervening directly, allowing Itoo to address the matter at the departmental level.

The development comes amid an ongoing



ing protest by medical interns over their pending demands.

Sources said Itoo has expressed her willingness to engage with the matter and pursue a resolution through discussions

at the departmental level.

The chief minister, while keeping track of the situation, has so far left the issue to the minister concerned to resolve, the sources said.(KNS)

Centre Appoints Chief Justices for Eight High Courts

Justice Dr. Pushpendra Singh Bhati to lead J&K and Ladakh High Court

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: The Union Law Ministry has issued formal notifications appointing Chief Justices to eight High Courts across the country, including the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court.

Justice Dr. Pushpendra Singh Bhati has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court, according to the notification.

The other seven judges appointed as Chief Justices including Justice Valluri Kameswar Rao



(Patna High Court), Justice Ravindra V. Ghuge (Calcutta High Court), Justice Sanjay Kumar Agrawal (Rajasthan High Court), Justice Mahesh Chandra

Tripathi (Bombay High Court), Justice Ashwani Kumar Mishra (Punjab & Haryana High Court), Justice Krushna Ram Mohapatra (Chhattisgarh High Court), and Justice Alpesh Yeshvant Kogje (Madhya Pradesh High Court).

Notably, The appointments have been made in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 217 of the Constitution, read with Article 222, which empowers the President to appoint Chief Justices of High Courts after consultation with the Chief Justice of India.

Referral Judges training held at JKJA under 'Mediation for Nation 3.0'

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A one day training programme for the Referral Judges was conducted Sunday at the Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy, Srinagar, in hybrid mode under the aegis of the Mediation & Conciliation Committee (MCC), High Court of J&K and Ladakh, in compliance with the directions of the Supreme Court in view of the "Mediation for the Nation 3.0" Drive.

In the inaugural address, Mr. Justice Rajnesh Oswal while addressing the participants described the programme as a focused "Judicial Master Class" aimed at equipping the Referral Judges with the practical tools for effective case referral. He emphasized that mediation is relevant across all spheres of life and highlighted the crucial role of Referral Judges as the primary gatekeepers of justice delivery system, responsible for identifying disputes that are better suited for mediation rather than formal adjudication. He stressed that mediation adopts an interest-based approach, offering parties faster, confidential and relationship-preserving solutions, particularly in complex human and commercial disputes.

Mr. Justice Oswal cautioned that Referral Judges must exercise careful judicial screening to ensure that appropriate cases are referred and unsuitable matters are not. He identified the commercial, matrimonial, family, property, neighbourhood and suitable cheque dishonour disputes as having good potential for mediation. He stressed caution in cases involving power imbalances, settled law, serious fraud or urgent intervention. He highlighted



the importance of judicial communication in encouraging the litigants to opt for mediation. He concluded that referring the right case to the right forum at the right time can reduce docket congestion, save litigants' time and costs and enhance the quality of justice.

Earlier, an introductory address was presented by Mr. Naseer Ahmad Dar, Director, J&K Judicial Academy. He emphasised that Mediation is an important instrument for achieving fair, expeditious and cost-effective justice. He said that mediation transforms disputes from adversarial contests into processes of dialogue and mutually acceptable resolution. He underscored the pivotal role of Referral Judges in identifying the suitable cases, making thoughtful and timely referrals, sensitizing litigants and advocates and ensuring meaningful participation in the mediation process.

The technical sessions of the day were conducted by Mr. Justice Bashir A. Kirmani, Former Judge, High Court of J&K. He elaborated on the relevance and importance of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), particularly with reference to Section 89 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 and discussed the various modes of ADR. He explained the basic concept, nature and advantages of mediation, emphasizing its role in facilitating

amicable and mutually acceptable resolution of disputes. He also dwelt upon the different stages of the mediation process and the role of the mediator, highlighting the importance of communication, voluntary participation and a constructive approach towards settlement. These themes corresponded to the first session of the programme, which specifically focused on ADR, Section 89 CPC and the fundamentals of mediation. In the second session, Justice Kirmani focused on the practical role of Referral Judges, stressing the need for judicial officers to exercise proper discretion while deciding when and which cases should be referred to ADR. He dealt with the appropriate stage of referral, consent of the parties, identification of cases suitable for mediation and the importance of avoiding unnecessary delay in trial. He further highlighted the role of the Judge in motivating and preparing lawyers and litigants for mediation, framing appropriate referral orders and understanding the court's responsibilities after the conclusion of mediation proceedings. His deliberations thus provided the participating Judicial Officers with practical guidance for making effective, timely and case-sensitive referrals and for strengthening the use of mediation as an integral part of the justice delivery process.

NHM employees announce 72-hour UT-level strike from Sept 9

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The UT-level Joint Coordination Committee of NHM Employees of Jammu and Kashmir has announced a 72-hour strike from September 9 over their long-pending demands, saying the government failed to provide a concrete response within the stipulated deadline.

The decision was taken during a virtual meeting of the committee held on September 5 and attended by representatives of NHM employees from Jammu and Kashmir divisions, including the RNTCP/NTEP Association and employees working under other schemes of the National Health Mission (NHM).

The committee had earlier issued a final ultimatum to the government and concerned authorities till September 5, seeking concrete measures to address their demands.

However, with the deadline expiring without what the committee termed a "concrete response or tangible



action", it decided to go ahead with the 72-hour strike from September 9.

The strike will be observed across Jammu and Kashmir, with NHM employees at district, block and field levels expected to participate, the committee said.

Addressing a press conference, All JKNHMEA Jammu Division Chief Spokesperson Dr Hamid Parray said the employees had taken the decision

only after repeated representations, discussions and appeals failed to yield a satisfactory resolution.

He said NHM employees had been working in the public healthcare system with dedication despite challenging circumstances.

Parray appealed to NHM employees, including those working under NTEP and other NHM schemes, to remain united, peaceful and disciplined during the strike.

All JKNHMEA Jammu Division president Dr Vikas Sharma said the decision was not taken in haste but became necessary due to the continued non-resolution of their issues despite repeated representations and assurances.

Kashmir Division president Muneer Andrabi said NHM employees had repeatedly demonstrated patience and faith in dialogue, but the lack of concrete action had left them

with no option but to resort to a collective democratic course of action.

UT President of NTEP J&K Musadiq Rafiq Parra said NTEP employees and those working under other NHM schemes stood firmly with the committee in support of their demands.

The committee appealed to district and block-level NHM units and employees across Jammu and Kashmir to extend full support to the strike and maintain peace and discipline.

It also urged employees to rely only on official communications and refrain from acting on unverified information, rumours or unofficial messages.

The committee maintained that the strike was a "last resort" and reiterated its willingness to engage in meaningful dialogue with the government for an amicable resolution of the issues.

"Our demands are genuine, our resolve is united, and our voice shall remain peaceful but firm," the committee said.(KNS)

Govt speaking in two voices on interns stir: Ruhullah to Sakina Itoo

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lok Sabha MP from Srinagar, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, on Sunday came down heavily on the Jammu and Kashmir administration over its handling of the ongoing strike by medical interns, accusing it of resorting to "coercive tactics" even as it publicly acknowledged their demand for stipend revision as "genuine."

In a series of letters to Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo and Principals of Government Medical Colleges, MP Mehdi questioned the government's "change in method" and sought to know whether the warnings issued to striking interns were on official instructions or individual initiative.

"Something has changed in the last few days, and I would like to know from you what it is. For a week this was a dispute conducted in the open. The interns stated their case, you accepted it as genuine, the Chief Minister's Advisor gave a date. Now I am told that Principals of our medical colleges have begun warning interns of consequences if they do not return to duty. That is not a change in the Government's position. It is a change in its method," Mehdi wrote to Minister Itoo.

The MP warned that the government's dual approach would not go unnoticed. "A government that has publicly called a demand genuine, and privately set its institutional heads to pressuring the people making it, is speaking in two voices. That will be noticed, and it will cost more than the stipend ever would," he said.



In a separate communication to the Principals, MP Mehdi reminded them of their role as teachers first. "These are your own students. They came to you at eighteen, you have taught them for nine years, and they are now asking to be paid what interns are paid everywhere else in this country — a demand the Health Minister has called genuine, the Chief Minister has endorsed, and a committee of this Government recommended in 2023," he wrote.

The strike by MBBS and BDS interns demanding a hike in monthly stipend from Rs 12,300 to Rs 30,000 entered its second week on this weekend, impacting routine services at major government hospitals across the Union Territory. The Health Minister has acknowledged the demand as "genuine" and a government committee had recommended an increase in

2023, but no formal order has been issued yet.

MP Mehdi urged the Minister to intervene immediately. "Whatever is being said to them in the corridors of these colleges should stop, and you are the one who can stop it," he said, adding that the interns' peaceful protest was their constitutional right and they did not forfeit it by wearing a white coat.

He also demanded a clear written order specifying the revised stipend amount and the date of effect, with an assurance that no intern would be penalised for having protested. "These young doctors have been given assurances before and watched them dissolve. That, and nothing else, is why they are still sitting outside," he said.

The MP's intervention comes amid growing political support for the agitating interns, with the PDP and Congress having already extended their backing. The interns have warned of intensifying their protest if a formal order on stipend revision is not issued soon. (KNS)

Public Advisory issued for Kailash Yatra-2026 in Bhaderwah

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BHADERWAH: Additional District Magistrate Bhaderwah Sunil Kumar Bhutyal has issued a Public Advisory for the safe and smooth conduct of the Kailash Yatra-2026, scheduled to be held from September 8 to September 10, 2026.

The advisory highlights the challenging nature of the pilgrimage to Kailash Kund, situated at an altitude of around 14,500 feet and urges devotees to undertake the Yatra with adequate preparation, caution and strict adherence to the instructions of the Yatra Administration.

Devotees have been advised to ensure their physical fitness, carry valid identity proof, begin the journey early, maintain a slow and steady pace, take adequate rest and stay properly hydrated. Pilgrims have also been advised to follow weather advisories issued by the IMD and District Administration and carry essential items including warm and waterproof clothing, rain gear, suitable footwear, torch, medicines, food items and other necessary supplies.

The advisory further stresses that pilgrims experiencing symptoms of high-altitude illness should immediately descend to a lower elevation and seek medical

assistance.

As part of the precautionary measures, persons above 70 years, children below 14 years, persons suffering from serious illnesses, pregnant women and lactating mothers with their babies have been advised not to undertake the Yatra beyond the specified points, keeping in view the difficult terrain and high-altitude conditions.

The administration has strictly prohibited intoxicants, narcotic drugs, alcohol, caffeinated drinks and tobacco products, with violators liable to action under relevant laws. Pilgrims have also been directed to use only designated tracks, avoid shortcuts and refrain from activities causing pollution or damage to the local ecology, flora and fauna. Single-use plastics are strictly banned in the Yatra area.

The administration has urged all devotees to cooperate with the authorities and follow the prescribed safety and environmental guidelines for a safe, disciplined and spiritually fulfilling Kailash Yatra-2026.

For emergencies, pilgrims can contact the designated Tentsildars, Police, Block Development Officers, Medical Officer, Forest officials and Station House Officer, Bhaderwah.

VC SKUAST-K chairs 20th SAC meeting of KVK Bandipora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: The 20th Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Bandipora, SKUAST-Kashmir, was held Sunday under the chairmanship of Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST-Kashmir, with a focus on strengthening farmer-centric extension, promoting agricultural diversification and expanding technology-led interventions in the district.

Indu Kanwal Chib, Deputy Commissioner, Bandipora, attended the meeting as Guest of Honour, while Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-Kashmir, participated in the deliberations.

The meeting began with a presentation on the Annual Progress Report 2025-26, highlighting the major activities and achievements of KVK Bandipora during the year. Dr. Tariq Sultan, Programme Coordinator, KVK Bandipora, subsequently presented the Action Plan for the forthcoming period and outlined the KVK's proposed thrust areas, including crop diversification, aquatic agriculture, horticulture, protected cultivation, value addition, technology demonstrations, farmer training and capacity building.



Dr. Sultan also apprised the Committee of the ongoing initiatives and proposed programmes aimed at addressing the emerging production and livelihood needs of farmers in the district.

In his address, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai appreciated the efforts of KVK Bandipora in implementing farmer-oriented extension programmes and stressed the need for stronger technology dissemination, adoption of innovative

and climate-resilient agricultural practices, and interventions focused on enhancing farm income and improving farmers' livelihoods.

Indu Kanwal Chib appreciated the KVK's contribution towards agricultural development in Bandipora and called for continued coordination between KVK Bandipora and the district administration to strengthen farmer-oriented initiatives.

Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth emphasised the importance of need-based extension programmes, field demonstrations, capacity building and effective farmer-scientist interaction.

Progressive farmers participating in the meeting shared their field-level experiences, observations and suggestions on agricultural production and emerging challenges in the district.

The SAC members held detailed discussions on the Annual Progress Report and Action Plan and offered suggestions for further strengthening the activities of KVK Bandipora.

The meeting concluded with an emphasis on strengthening farmer-centric extension, promoting innovative agricultural technologies, diversifying farming systems and addressing the priority needs of the farming community in Bandipora.

Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
Year Of Publication

GMK

Srinagar • Monday 07, September 2026 • Vol: 17 • Issue No: 213 • Pages: 08 • Price: ₹ 2/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

India Backs UN Map Resolution

Warns Against Inaccurate Depiction Of J&K, Ladakh



GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: India on Sunday said any proposed global map initiated by the United Nations should depict Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in accordance with India's official map, asserting that any "incorrect" or "misleading" representation of these territories would be unacceptable.

The clarification came after the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution titled "Correct the Map: Rebalancing Global Cartographic Representation and Promoting Equitable Representation of the World's Regions, Particularly Africa" on September 4. The resolution encourages the use of equal-area map projections that preserve the relative sizes of continental landmasses.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India voted in favour of the resolution and also made an explanation of the vote, stressing the principle of

promoting equal-area cartographic representation.

"The resolution neither adopts nor authenticates any particular world map, nor does it address political cartography, including international boundaries, disputed territories or place names," Jaiswal said.

Responding to a media query, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India's position on its sovereignty and territorial integrity was "clear, consistent and non-negotiable".

"The depiction of India's sovereign territory, including the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, should be as per India's official map," Jaiswal said.

India also made its position on the depiction of its territory clear, saying its sovereign territory, including the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, must be shown in accordance with India's official map. **●P-06**

Eminent Jury Of Acclaimed Filmmakers, Cinema Pros Set For IFFJK 2026

Filmmakers Vidhu Vinod Chopra, Ramesh Sippy To Join As Special Guests

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The 1st International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK)-2026 is set to witness the coming together of an exceptional panel of filmmakers, cinematographers, sound designers, curators, producers and educators from India and abroad, reflecting the festival's commitment to showcasing cinema of the highest artistic and creative standards.

The festival will also bring together Padma Shri awardee Director and Producer, Ramesh Sippy, known for blockbuster movie Sholay as well as son of the soil, director, producer, screenwriter and editor, Vidhu Vinod Chopra, known for films like 3 Idiots, PK, Mission Kashmir, as special guests.

The maiden edition of IFFJK has brought an eminent jury comprising Santosh Sivan, Dorothee Wenner, Keiko Bang and Himansu Sekhar Khatua together, professionals whose distinguished careers span Indian and international cinema, documentary filmmaking, film curation, production,



cinematography, sound design and film education.

The composition of the jury brings together diverse cinematic perspectives and considerable international experience, adding prestige and credibility to the first edition of the festival.

Santosh Sivan: An acclaimed Indian cinematographer, filmmaker, producer and actor, Santosh Sivan is a founding member of the Indian Society of Cinematographers (ISC). An FTII alumnus and among the most awarded Directors of Photography in India, he became the first cinematographer from

the Asia-Pacific region to join the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC).

His celebrated body of work includes The Terrorist, for which he received international recognition, and his contribution to world cinema was further acknowledged with the Pierre Angénieux Tribute at the Cannes Film Festival in 2024.

Sivan has also served in several prestigious international jury capacities, including as Chairperson of the Best Debut Director of Indian Panorama Jury at IFFI 2024, besides serving on the International Jury of the Chennai Film Festival

and the New Currents Jury at the Busan International Film Festival.

Dorothee Wenner: Adding a strong international and cross-cultural dimension to the jury is Dorothee Wenner, a German filmmaker, curator, writer and journalist renowned for her contribution to international cinema and cultural exchange.

Associated with the Berlin International Film Festival since 1990, Wenner has served as a programmer and delegate for India and Sub-Saharan Africa. She was also associated with the Berlinale Talent Campus, serving as its Director for the 2006 and 2008 editions.

A founding jury member of the Africa Movie Academy Awards and an experienced international film curator, Wenner has worked extensively with feature films and filmmakers from India, Africa and Germany. Her filmmaking and curatorial work includes Peace Mission, Drama Consult and Kinshasa Collection. She is widely recognised for building cross-cultural collaborations and championing **●P-06**

Bihar Gov Meets CM Omar In Srinagar



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Governor of Bihar, Lieutenant General (Retd) Syed Ata Hasnain, Sunday called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at the latter's residence in Srinagar.

The two exchanged views on a range of issues of mutual interest during the meeting.

Former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Dr Farooq Abdullah and First Lady of Bihar were also present on the occasion.

Treasury Fraud Crime Branch Files Supplementary Chargesheet

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Crime Branch Jammu has filed a supplementary chargesheet in a case involving the alleged misappropriation and diversion of government funds amounting to Rs 1.38 crore from the Sub-Treasury Dharmari in Reasi.

The chargesheet was filed before the Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM), Reasi, in connection with FIR No. **●P-06**

IGP Reviews Security, Counter-Terror Operations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Zone Sujit Kumar conducted extensive security and operational review visits to District Pulwama and Police District Awantipora Sunday. Accompanied by Deputy Inspector General of Police, South Kashmir Range, Anantnag Javed Iqbal Mattoo, IGP Kashmir chaired high-level review meetings to assess the prevailing security apparatus, ongoing counter-terror operations, crime disposal, and the general law-and-order scenario across both jurisdictions. TravelGuides & Travelogues

During the respective meetings, the concerned Senior Superintendents of Police alongside Additional SPs, Sub-Divisional Police Officers and DySPs of the Special Operations Group briefed the visiting officer on operational readiness, local



crime dynamics, and strategic deployments.

During the review IGP Kashmir evaluated the overall security matrix and passed directions for dedicated focus on kinetic and non-kinetic counter-terror operations. Officers were instructed to maintain seamless inter-agency coordination, scale up intelligence-led operations, and aggressively clamp down on anti-national elements to **●P-06**

PM's Leadership Has Transformed India's Healthcare Landscape: VP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan Sunday urged graduating healthcare professionals to uphold compassion, ethics and scientific excellence, and dedicate their knowledge and skills to the service of humanity, while addressing the convocation ceremony of Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences (SSUHS), Guwahati. He also presented the Dr. John Berry White Award for the years 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Addressing the convocation, he said that the University, named after Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva, has emerged as an important institution for health sciences education, research and public health. He appreciated its efforts to promote medical knowledge in local languages, including the publica-



tion of an Anglo-Assamese Dictionary of Medical Science and medical textbooks in Assamese.

The Vice President highlighted the transformation of India's healthcare sector under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, referring to initiatives such as Ayushman Bharat. He noted that more than 44 crore Ayushman cards

have been issued and recalled that the scheme has helped poor and middle-class families save an estimated Rs. 2 lakh crore in medical expenses.

Highlighting Assam's healthcare progress, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan said that the number of medical colleges in the State has more than doubled from seven in 2021 to 15, with another nine under construction. He also highlighted AIIMS Guwahati, the first AIIMS in the Northeast, and Assam's three-tier cancer-care network, including the State's first Proton Beam Therapy Centre.

The Vice President congratulated Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma and the Government of Assam for strengthening healthcare infrastructure and said that the changing healthcare landscape is enabling patients from outside Assam to increasingly seek advanced **●P-06**

Kashmir To See Light Showers This Week



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness scattered rain and thunderstorms in the Jammu division and isolated light rain or thunderstorms in Kashmir during the next 24 hours, according to the Meteorological Centre Srinagar.

The weather department, in its bulletin issued at 11 am on Sunday, said isolated light rain or thunderstorms are also likely to continue over Jammu and Kashmir during the subsequent two days.

During the past 24 hours

till 8:30 am, maximum temperatures remained 0-1°C near normal at many places in Kashmir division, while they were 1-2°C above normal at many places in Jammu division.

Qazigund recorded the highest maximum temperature in Kashmir at 27.2°C, while Jammu recorded the highest in Jammu division at 32.7°C.

Night temperatures remained below normal across the region. The minimum temperature was 1-2°C below normal at many places in Kashmir and 1-3°C below normal at many places in Jammu division. **●P-06**

J&K Has Moved On Development Path Since Article-370 Abrogation: Amit Shah

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Union Home Minister Amit Shah Sunday said that Jammu and Kashmir UT has been experiencing significant developmental strides following the repeal of Article 370. He asserted that the once-prevalent separatist inclinations within the Union Territory have markedly subsided.

During his remarks, Shah highlighted a notable transformation in the region's security dynamics since 2019, adding that the central administration has successfully narrowed the perceived psychological disconnect between Jammu & Kashmir and the broader national mainstream. "Since the nullification of Article 370, separatist attitudes have diminished



substantially. Terror-related statistics are consistently declining and trending toward zero, while the region continues to forge ahead on its developmental journey," he stated.

These comments were delivered within the broader context of the government's overall achievements in internal security and its ongoing

war against illegal narcotics.

Shah further detailed the government's intensified crackdown on absconders who have fled the country to evade justice. He reported that between 2019 and July 2026, a total of 274 fugitives—spanning economic offenders, terrorists, drug lords, and gangsters—were successfully

extradited from 36 different nations. Additionally, over the past three years, authorities have circulated 401 Red Corner Notices, with 182 of those issued up to July of this year. Simultaneously, assets worth an estimated Rs 17,874 crore, belonging to these wanted individuals, were either sealed or confiscated during the 2019-2026 period.

Turning specifically to the narcotics menace, the Home Minister underscored that the government has elevated the anti-drug campaign to a matter of national security. He reiterated the firm objective of establishing a "Drug-free India" by 2029. To realize this goal, a detailed three-year action plan covering July 2026 to July 2029 has been rolled out. This strategy is anchored on four key pillars: **●P-06**

IFFJK Inauguration Traffic Restrictions Announced In Sgr



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Traffic Police has announced restrictions and diversions in parts of Srinagar on Monday ahead of the inauguration of the first International Film Festival of Jammu Kashmir (IFFJK) at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), with increased traffic movement towards the venue expected after 4 pm.

SSP Traffic City Srinagar Aijaz Ahmad Bhat said Gupkar Road would remain restricted to general traffic from 4 pm to 7 pm. Entry during the period will be permitted only to invitees, festival participants, VVIPs and event staff. **●P-06**

Chaya-Backed Consortium Wins Sangarmal Land Auction For Rs 421.75 Crore



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A consortium backed by hotelier Mushtaq Ahmad Chaya has won the online auction for around 45 kanal of land at Sangarmal in Srinagar for Rs 421.75 crore.

The auction was conducted by the Srinagar Development Authority (SDA).

Chaya said he had decided to participate in the auction before the land was put up for bidding.

"When the Srinagar Development Authority decided to put around 45 kanal of land at Sangarmal up for online

auction, I had already made up my mind to bid for it," Chaya said.

He said he was prepared to continue bidding irrespective of the amount.

"Come what may, I had made up my mind that I would bid for it. I was ready to go for the bid at any cost," he said.

The consortium emerged as the successful bidder after the online bidding process conducted by the SDA.

The auction involved around 45 kanal of land at Sangarmal, a commercial area in Srinagar.(KNS) **●P-06**

Good Morning Kashmir

Kashmir Takes Centre Stage In The World Of Cinema

The first International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK)–2026 is more than the arrival of another cultural event on the calendar. It is a significant moment for Jammu and Kashmir, a moment when the region opens its doors to the world of cinema and places itself on an international cultural platform. The coming together of an exceptional panel of filmmakers, cinematographers, sound designers, curators, producers and educators from India and abroad reflects the ambition behind IFFJK. The festival promises to celebrate cinema not merely as entertainment, but as an art form capable of connecting cultures, inspiring societies and creating conversations across borders. The presence of Padma Shri awardee Ramesh Sippy, the legendary director and producer of Sholay, gives the inaugural edition an added aura. Equally significant is the participation of Vidhu Vinod Chopra, a son of the soil and one of India’s most celebrated filmmakers, known for landmark films such as 3 Idiots, PK and Mission Kashmir. Their presence in Srinagar is a matter of pride for the people of Jammu and Kashmir and an acknowledgment of the region’s growing importance on the cultural map. The festival’s eminent jury further strengthens its stature. Santosh Sivan, Dorothee Wenner, Keiko Bang and Himansu Sekhar Khataua bring together remarkable professional experience spanning Indian and international cinema, documentary filmmaking, film curation, production, cinematography, sound design and film education. Such a diverse jury is not merely a mark of prestige. It brings varied cinematic traditions and perspectives to Jammu and Kashmir, offering local filmmakers and aspiring artists an opportunity to engage with professionals who have shaped and influenced contemporary cinema. For Jammu and Kashmir, the real promise of IFFJK lies beyond the four walls of a cinema hall. A festival of this magnitude can inspire a new generation of filmmakers, actors, writers, technicians and storytellers. It can encourage young talent to believe that their stories, their landscapes and their experiences have a place on the global screen. It also provides Jammu and Kashmir with an opportunity to tell its own story through creativity rather than conventional narratives. Kashmir has always possessed an extraordinary visual landscape and a rich cultural heritage. Now, with an international film festival, it can aspire to become not only a destination for filmmakers but also a meeting point for the global film fraternity. The successful hosting of IFFJK can generate a cultural ripple effect, strengthening creative industries, promoting tourism, creating professional opportunities and encouraging international collaborations. More importantly, it can establish a tradition in which cinema becomes a bridge between Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the world. The administration, Raj Bhawan and everyone associated with bringing this ambitious festival to Srinagar deserve appreciation. Organising an international film festival is a challenging undertaking, and the participation of such distinguished names in its inaugural edition demonstrates the confidence that the festival has already generated. The first edition is, therefore, not simply a beginning; it is an opportunity to lay the foundation of a lasting cinematic institution in Jammu and Kashmir. The lights are coming on, the cameras are rolling and the world of cinema is arriving in Kashmir. The valley is ready to tell its story, and this time, the world is watching through the lens of cinema.

The Great Screen Retreat

Why India Must Rethink Its Digital Obsession In Classroom

DR. NAWAZ SARIF

Imagine a nation that spent billions placing a digital tablet into the hands of every child, hailing it as the ultimate gateway to the future—only to realize a decade later that it had inadvertently engineered a national literacy crisis. This is no dystopian parable; it is the concrete reality of Sweden. Once the undisputed apostle of one-device-per-child schooling, Sweden has spent the past three years in a systematic retreat—stripping tablets from nursery classrooms, committing funds to reprint paper textbooks, and warning of a silent cognitive collapse. Across Europe, the story repeats: France has extended smartphone bans into high schools, Norwegian research points to screen-induced memory erosion, and Denmark is dismantling digital mandates. For India, currently sprinting toward an ed-tech revolution of smart boards and early digital mandates, this European U-turn is a high-stakes cautionary tale asking a crucial question: In our rush to modernize, are we confusing technological noise with genuine learning?

The Swedish reckoning was triggered not by ideological dogma, but by cold, unyielding numbers. Between 2016 and 2021—the exact window when tablets became mandatory even for toddlers—Sweden’s fourth-grade reading scores suffered a sharp decline on international benchmarks. Simultaneously, global PISA data revealed that nearly one in three students reported chronic, mind-wandering digital distraction during mathematics lessons. Conceding that hyper-digitalization had hollowed out core pedagogy, Stockholm redirected over two billion krona back toward traditional paper, physical workbooks, and teacher training. Brain science explains why paper succeeds where flickering displays fail: when we read on paper, our minds construct a spatial map anchored by tactile page-turning and fixed layouts. On a screen, text becomes fluid and unstable, forcing the brain to expend mental energy simply managing the interface rather than absorbing the idea.

Yet, as Indian policymakers look west, they must avoid the trap of unthinking imitation. India’s domestic story contains its own encouraging plot twist. Data from



the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) revealed a notable post-pandemic jump in foundational reading across rural government schools, driven by targeted initiatives under NIPUN Bharat and the National Education Policy (NEP 2020). Crucially, where technology succeeded in India, it did so as a humble, teacher-supporting scaffolding—using platforms like DIKSHA to train educators and supplement physical play, rather than replacing the human teacher with a piece of glass. Where India achieved genuine literacy gains, technology operated as an empowering catalyst for fundamentals, not a proxy for them.

And here lies a glaring, paradoxical glitch in India’s current educational roadmap. While flagship reading programs rightly champion physical workbooks, NEP 2020 simultaneously mandates introducing coding and computational thinking starting at ages three to eight. At the exact age band where pediatric health experts strictly advocate minimal-to-no screen exposure—and where European schools are actively stripping away hardware—India’s policy framework risks encouraging five-year-

olds to stare at screens to learn abstract algorithms. Expecting a child whose neural pathways for sustained attention are barely formed to absorb logic through a glowing display is an insidiously alluring mistake that a research-literate policy review must urgently reconcile.

Furthermore, we must confront the raw equity reality of Indian homes. For a first-generation learner in a crowded, single-smartphone household, the physical classroom is a sacred sanctuary of focus. To equip that brief window with the same chaotic, attention-shattering digital medium that competes for their mind outside school is a profound pedagogical error. India’s primary vulnerability is not merely digital saturation, but the proliferation of unsupervised, low-quality digital substitution for scarce teaching capacity—an equity gap that a blanket screen ban alone cannot resolve.

India does not need an iconoclastic destruction of its impressive Digital Public Infrastructure. What it needs is a mature, battle-tested framework divided into clear developmental tiers. At the Foundational Stage (ages 3–8), classroom practices must

strictly align with WHO screen limits by keeping digital exposure brief, teacher-mediated, and confined to visual aids, while shifting early coding to offline, tactile logic games. Across the Preparatory and Middle Stages (ages 8–14), physical textbooks and longhand writing must remain the core of instruction, with computers used selectively for research and data literacy. By the Secondary Stage (ages 14+), advanced digital and AI competencies can scale aggressively, provided they are anchored upon deep reading comprehension and guarded by strict bans on personal smartphones during school hours.

Sweden needed years of declining literacy metrics to reach a simple truth: a screen is merely an auxiliary instrument, never a substitute for a printed book, a pencil, and the irreplaceable magic of sustained human focus. Before India allocates further public capital toward device-heavy mandates for its youngest classrooms, it must reconcile the friction within its own vision and heed the sobering lessons of global experience.

Author is Assistant Professor, School of Education, Adamas University

Are We Still Human?

A Reflection On Humanity, Progress And Conscience



SHOIAB MOHAMMAD BHAT

In an age when technology is advancing faster than ever, a simple question can sometimes be more powerful than a complicated answer: Are we still human?

Firdous Javid Beig’s Are We Still Human? takes this question as its starting point and turns it into a wider reflection on human nature, morality, violence, empathy, civilisation and the meaning of progress. Spread across 104 pages, the book encourages readers to pause and look beyond modern society’s visible achievements. It asks us to consider not only what humanity has built, but also what humanity may be losing along the way.

The book’s central idea is both simple and uncomfortable. Humans have achieved remarkable progress in science, technology, communication and infrastructure. Yet, alongside this progress, the world continues to witness violence, suffering, inequality, environmental destruction and indifference. This contradiction forms an important part of the book’s reflection.

Are technological achievements enough to call ourselves truly advanced? Or does real progress also require empathy, compassion, conscience and responsibility? These are some of the questions that Are We Still Human? places before its readers.

One of the book’s most interesting aspects is its attempt to question our conventional understanding of progress. Modern civilisation often measures progress through things that can be easily counted: new technologies, faster communication, bigger buildings, economic growth and scientific discoveries. But the author encourages us to look at another side of the picture. What happens when intelligence develops without empathy? What happens when power grows without

compassion? And what happens when progress comes without responsibility?

These questions give the book its philosophical character. The author does not appear interested in presenting humanity as completely good or completely bad. Instead, the book explores our contradictions. The same human being who can show extraordinary kindness can also become indifferent to another person’s suffering. The same society that celebrates civilisation can sometimes tolerate cruelty. This contrast makes the title more than a rhetorical question. It becomes a question directed at every reader.

Perhaps one of the strongest themes running through the book is our relationship with suffering. Today, a tragedy occurring thousands of kilometres away can reach our mobile phones within seconds. Wars, disasters, poverty and violence appear regularly on our screens. We have access to more information about human suffering than earlier generations could have imagined. But does seeing more necessarily mean feeling more?

This is where the book raises an important concern. Constant exposure to suffering can sometimes produce indifference. What once shocked us may gradually become another piece of news that we scroll past.

The question, therefore, is not simply whether we see suffering. It is whether we still respond to it as human beings. That idea gives the book considerable relevance in the present age.

Another quality that makes the book interesting is that its questions are not limited to governments, institutions or society at large. The discussion repeatedly comes back to the individual. It is easy to blame someone else for the problems around us. It is much harder to ask what role we ourselves play. Do we show compassion in our everyday lives? Do we stand up when someone is treated unfairly? Are we responsible in the way we use technology? How do we treat nature? Have we become so accustomed to certain forms of suffering that we no longer question



them? Rather than allowing the reader to remain a distant observer, Are We Still Human? encourages self-reflection. The reader is not simply asked to judge the world but to examine his or her own choices and attitudes.

The book also draws attention to the relationship between human advancement and the natural world. Human beings have transformed their surroundings on an enormous scale. We have developed cities, industries and technologies that have changed the way we live. Yet development can also come with consequences when responsibility is ignored. This raises another important question: Can we call ourselves progressive if our progress comes at the cost of the environment on which life depends? The question does not demand an easy answer. Instead, it encourages readers to think about the balance between development and responsibility.

The writing of Are We Still Human? is best understood as an invitation to think. Its strength lies less in providing ready-made answers and more in raising

questions that stay with the reader. The book deals with large ideas, but its underlying message can be connected to ordinary human behavior; how we treat others, how we respond to suffering, how we use power and knowledge, and how we define success. Some readers may agree with the author’s arguments, while others may question or challenge certain ideas. That is not necessarily a weakness. In fact, a book dealing with such a broad subject should encourage discussion.

For an honest reading experience, there may also be particular arguments or themes that individual readers feel could have been explored further. Such limitations are natural in a relatively short book of 104 pages. What matters is that the book succeeds in opening a conversation.

The book is particularly relevant for young readers and students growing up in a rapidly changing world. Young people today are surrounded by technology and information. They are connected to the world in ways previous generations were not. But with that connection comes responsibility.

Understanding humanity cannot be limited to academic knowledge or technological skills. It also involves developing empathy, critical thinking, moral responsibility, and respect for others.

In this sense, Are We Still Human? can serve as a useful reflective read for students, writers, thinkers and anyone interested in society, morality, philosophy and modern civilisation.

About the Author: Firdous Javid Beig is a student, writer, speaker, author and digital media professional. His interests revolve around storytelling, ideas and positive change. Are We Still Human? reflects this interest by bringing together questions about society, human behaviour and the values that shape our collective future.

Are We Still Human? is not simply a book about the problems of the modern world. At its heart, it is a question about ourselves. Perhaps humanity’s greatest challenge is not a lack of intelligence. We have demonstrated extraordinary intelligence throughout history. The greater challenge may be whether our conscience, empathy and compassion can keep pace with our capabilities. We can build faster machines, communicate across continents and achieve things once considered impossible. But none of these achievements automatically makes us more humane.

That is what makes the title so powerful. Perhaps the greatest strength of Are We Still Human? is that it does not answer its own question for us. It leaves the reader with a responsibility to look at the world, look within, and decide what being human truly means.

Book Review
Book: Are We Still Human?
Author: Firdous Javid Beig
Pages: 104
Genre: Reflection, philosophy and social commentary

The Author is a writer, social educator and researcher from Baramulla, holds a master’s in Gender Studies and a BED. shoaibhat2018@gmail.com

■ The Silence We Keep

Confronting A Rising Tide Of Self-Destruction



SAJID ILLAHI GANAI

Every few months, a headline crosses our screens and vanishes within a day. A student in an examination town takes his own life. A young woman in a metropolitan apartment is found by a flatmate. A well-regarded professional, admired by colleagues who insist they “never saw it coming,” ends a career and a life in the same afternoon. We register these stories with the reflexive sorrow reserved for events that feel both catastrophic and, somehow, unsurprising. Then we move on, because the alternative, sitting with the question of why this keeps happening and happening more, is uncomfortable in a way that few other public issues are. It implicates families, institutions, economic systems, and, uncomfortably, ourselves.

It is time we stopped treating suicide as an unfortunate footnote to modern life and started treating it as what the evidence says it actually is: a slow-moving public health emergency, unevenly distributed, driven by forces we mostly understand and have mostly declined to address. The World Health Organization estimates that around seven hundred and twenty-seven thousand people take their own lives every year, making it the third leading cause of death among people between fifteen and twenty-nine years of age worldwide.

Three-quarters of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries, where the topic is often wrapped in a silence so complete that many families do not use the word at all. Global rates have fallen gradually since the turn of the century, which ought to be good news, except that among adolescents in several wealthy nations, including some with excellent healthcare systems, the trend has begun moving in the opposite direction. In the United Kingdom, suicide rates among young men have climbed by roughly two and a half percent a year since the mid-2000s, and among young women by an alarming eight and a half percent a year since 2012. A crisis that was supposed to be receding has, among the young, started to accelerate. That reversal deserves far more attention than it has received,



suicide is simply weakness, society owes the person nothing but judgment. If it is simply illness, society owes the person only a referral to a clinician, as if depression descended from nowhere rather than growing, in a great many cases, out of conditions we built and continue to tolerate: precarious work, crushing academic pressure, the disappearance of extended family and community life, the quiet brutality of comparison culture online, and, in a great many low-income households, the plain absence of any pathway out of poverty at all.

The nineteenth-century sociologist Émile Durkheim made an observation that newsrooms and policymakers alike would do well to revisit: suicide, for all its appearance of pure privacy, tracks social conditions with an almost mechanical regularity. Durkheim identified suicide that follows from a person cut loose from family, faith, and community, left without any shared framework of meaning to hold onto. He identified a second and rarer kind that follows from the opposite excess, an individual so completely absorbed into a cause or a group that self-preservation becomes secondary. He identified a third kind, arising not from steady deprivation but from sudden disruption of the rules by which people had learned to measure their own success, a disruption

that can strike just as forcefully during an economic boom as during a crash, because both events destroy the shared expectations that had previously kept ambition and reality roughly aligned. And he identified a fourth kind, rarer still today, produced by lives so tightly regulated that death comes to seem preferable to continued confinement. What is striking, reading Durkheim more than a century later, is how precisely his diagnosis of social breakdown maps onto conditions we now treat as simply “modern life”: the collapse of extended households into isolated nuclear ones, the replacement of stable careers with gig work and short-term contracts, the erosion of neighborhood and congregational life that once absorbed loneliness before it could harden into crisis. We have built, in other words, exactly the conditions Durkheim warned about, and we act surprised when

the numbers move the way he predicted they would. Philosophers have never been shy about this question, even when the rest of us prefer to avoid it. Albert Camus opened one of the twentieth century’s most influential essays with the claim that suicide is the one truly serious philosophical problem, because the question of whether life is worth living precedes every other question a person might ask. His answer, worked out across the myth of Sisyphus condemned eternally to push a boulder uphill, was a refusal: life offers no guaranteed meaning, the universe answers none of our deepest questions, and the honest response to that absurdity is not escape but a kind of defiant persistence, a decision to keep pushing the boulder anyway.

Arthur Schopenhauer, gloomier by disposition and by metaphysics, took the opposite view of the argument’s seriousness, insisting that suicide deserved to be discussed as a rational response to suffering rather than dismissed through inherited taboo, even as he concluded, in his own peculiar logic, that the act does not actually solve the underlying problem it is meant to solve, since it destroys one suffering individual without touching the deeper current of striving and dissatisfaction that produced the suffering in the first

East and raise the subject, and you will find a far more fractured set of instincts at work than any philosopher’s neat framework suggests. Older relatives frequently reach first for the language of faith and family honor, describing a relative’s death through euphemism rather than naming it plainly, partly out of grief and partly out of a very real fear of social judgment. Younger relatives, fluent in the vocabulary of global mental health discourse absorbed from university lecture halls and

If it is simply illness, society owes the person only a referral to a clinician, as if depression descended from nowhere rather than growing, in a great many cases, out of conditions we built and continue to tolerate: precarious work, crushing academic pressure, the disappearance of extended family and community life, the quiet brutality of comparison culture online, and, in a great many low-income households, the plain absence of any pathway out of poverty at all.

social media alike, increasingly use clinical terms, depression, anxiety, burnout, that their parents’ generation never had cause to reach for.

This is not merely a difference of vocabulary. It is a difference in what each generation believes is even permissible to say out loud, and it shapes, more than any single government policy, whether a struggling young person in that household feels they have anywhere to turn before a crisis

becomes irreversible. A newspaper that wants to do more than report the aftermath of these tragedies has some responsibility to close that gap in language, because silence is not neutral. Silence is itself a policy.

If the twentieth century’s suicide crisis was substantially a story of industrialization, migration, and the collapse of traditional community, the twenty-first century’s is being written by forces of our own recent invention. The reshaping of adolescent life by smartphones and social media stands near the top of nearly every serious researcher’s list, and for good reason: platforms built to maximize engagement have, as a side effect, replaced unsupervised play and face-to-face social feedback with a mode of adolescence organized around constant comparison and curated self-presentation, with a young person’s worth measured in likes and followers rather than in the more forgiving currency of a schoolyard friendship.

The timing of the decline in adolescent mental health across several wealthy nations tracks the spread of these platforms closely enough that it would be irresponsible for policymakers, and for newspapers, to keep treating the matter as an open question requiring further study before any action is taken. A second accelerant is economic: a generation facing housing costs, unstable employment, and diminished prospects relative to their parents, conditions that produce precisely the anomic disorientation Durkheim described, the gap between what a society teaches its young to want and what it can actually deliver to them. A third, quieter accelerant is the simple disappearance of unstructured communal life, the extended household, the neighborhood association, the religious congregation attended out of habit rather than crisis, institutions that once absorbed everyday loneliness in small, unremarkable doses before it had the chance to concentrate into something dangerous.

I do not write this to alarm readers or to suggest that every difficult season in a person’s life is a crisis in waiting; most human suffering does not end this way, and treating every low mood as a five-alarm emergency serves no one. I write it because the pattern is real, because the young are increasingly its victims, and because the causes, unlike many public health problems, are not mysterious. They are social, economic, and cultural, which means they are addressable, which means the silence surrounding them is a choice rather than a necessity.

A society that wants its suicide rate to fall rather than rise will need to do several unglamorous things at once: restrict easy access to the means by which most suicides are carried out, since the evidence from countries that have tightened access to pesticides, firearms, and certain medications shows measurable reductions in death that have nothing to do with treating anyone’s underlying distress and everything to do with removing the opportunity for an impulsive, often reversible crisis to become a permanent outcome. It will need media outlets, this one included, to report on suicide responsibly, without sensationalizing method or detail, because the evidence on contagion effects following poorly handled coverage is not in dispute. It will need schools and workplaces to treat mental health support as core infrastructure rather than an optional benefit trimmed at the first budget review. And it will need something harder to legislate: a willingness, at the level of the individual household, to let the old moral vocabulary of shame give way to a plainer, kinder one, so that a struggling relative does not have to calculate, in the middle of a crisis, whether naming their pain will be met with help or with judgment.

The scholars I have cited here, sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, and theologians alike, disagree about almost everything except one point, which is that suicide is never purely a private failure of character. It is always, in some measure, a verdict on the society that surrounded the person who died, on the bonds that held or did not hold, on the doors that opened or stayed shut. That is an uncomfortable thing for any community to hear about itself, which is precisely why it needs saying in a place people are likely to read it, rather than in a report that circulates only among specialists.

The author can be mailed at rajas-ajid1819rs@gmail.com



and it is the reason this problem belongs on the front pages, not buried in an annual health ministry report that nobody reads.

Public conversation about suicide tends to circle two extremes and rarely lands anywhere useful between them. On one side is a moralized vocabulary inherited from religious and legal traditions that once criminalized the act outright, a vocabulary of weakness, selfishness, and failed willpower that survives in casual speech long after most societies have officially abandoned it. On the other is a purely medicalized vocabulary, borrowed from psychiatry, that treats every suicide as the terminal event of an illness, full stop, as though the social and economic conditions surrounding a person were incidental to the outcome rather than central to it. Both framings let the rest of us off the hook rather too easily. If

tion that can strike just as forcefully during an economic boom as during a crash, because both events destroy the shared expectations that had previously kept ambition and reality roughly aligned. And he identified a fourth kind, rarer still today, produced by lives so tightly regulated that death comes to seem preferable to continued confinement. What is striking, reading Durkheim more than a century later, is how precisely his diagnosis of social breakdown maps onto conditions we now treat as simply “modern life”: the collapse of extended households into isolated nuclear ones, the replacement of stable careers with gig work and short-term contracts, the erosion of neighborhood and congregational life that once absorbed loneliness before it could harden into crisis. We have built, in other words, exactly the conditions Durkheim warned about, and we act surprised when

place. Religious traditions have generally taken a third position altogether, treating the question as already settled rather than open: in the Islamic tradition, human life is understood as a trust rather than private property, which is why classical scholars condemned the act while devoting enormous attention to sabr, or patient endurance, as the proper response to affliction, a response that neither denies suffering nor escapes it but insists that meaning can be found inside it. Christian natural-law thinking arrived at a broadly similar destination by a different route, treating suicide as a wrong against community and self alike.

None of this philosophical inheritance, however, is what most families actually reach for in the moment it matters. Walk into almost any tea shop, waiting room, or family gathering in South Asia or the Middle

Warns Against

“Any inaccurate or misleading depiction is unacceptable,” Jaiswal said, adding that India’s position on its sovereignty and territorial integrity was “clear, consistent and non-negotiable.”

The UN resolution seeks to encourage the wider use of equal-area projections, which show continents and countries in proportion to their actual surface areas. It does not ban the widely used Mercator projection or legally compel countries, schools, publishers or technology companies to adopt a different map.

His remarks came two days after India voted in favour of a UN General Assembly resolution aimed at promoting a more accurate and balanced representation of continental land areas on world maps.

Explaining India’s vote, Jaiswal said the resolution did not endorse any particular map, cartographic projection or specific depiction of national borders.

He said the resolution encouraged the use of equal-area map projections so that the relative sizes of continental land masses could be preserved more accurately.

The MEA spokesperson also clarified that the resolution neither adopted nor authenticated any specific world map.

It also did not address issues relating to political cartography, international boundaries, disputed territories or the naming of geographical locations, he said.

However, Jaiswal reiterated India’s position on sovereignty and territorial integrity, maintaining that India’s sovereign territories, including Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, must be represented in accordance with the country’s official map.

"Any incorrect or misleading cartographic depiction would be unacceptable," he said.

Eminent Jury Of

emerging voices in world cinema. Keiko Bang: Keiko Bang, a Japanese media entrepreneur, documentary filmmaker, producer and international curator, brings more than three decades of experience in the global media industry to IFFJK.

As founder and CEO of Bang Singapore Pte. Ltd., she has produced more than 50 award-winning documentaries, including Zheng He: Emperor of the Seas, Guge: The Lost Kingdom of Tibet and Secrets of the Samurai.

A leading advocate of international co-productions across Asia, Bang has worked with governments, broadcasters and media organisations in more than 25 countries. Her extensive experience in documentary production, international programming and film curation has seen her serve on juries and selection committees of major international film festivals.

She served as a Jury Member at MIFF 2024 and was appointed to the Institutional National Selection Committee at MIFF 2026. She has also served as a primary coordinator and selection leader for the premier factual programming forum of Asian Side of Doc.

Sriram Raghavan: Sriram Raghavan is an acclaimed Indian filmmaker and screenwriter known for his distinctive neo-noir style and gripping action thrillers. Born on 22 June 1963, he has directed critically acclaimed films including Ek Hasina Thi, Johnny Gaddaar, Agent Vinod, Badlapur and Andhadhun. Renowned for his sharp storytelling, atmospheric visuals and complex characters, Raghavan is regarded as one of the leading auteurs of contemporary Hindi cinema.

Himansu Sekhar Khatua: Completing the distinguished panel is Himansu Sekhar Khatua, a National Film Award-winning filmmaker, director, educator and journalist with a strong record of contribution to Indian cinema and film education.

An alumnus of FTII, Pune, Khatua has directed acclaimed films including Shunya Swaropa and Ishanu, besides several award-winning regional productions. He has also served as faculty member and mentor, influencing successive generations of filmmakers through teaching and practical engagement.

Khatua has served as Director of Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI) and has previously been associated with prestigious film juries, including the Indian Panorama Feature Films Jury at IFFI 2024 and the Kautik International Film Festival 2021, where he served on the Features Award Jury.

The eminent Jury of acclaimed filmmakers and cinema professionals reflects the global spirit of 1st IFFJK. The diversity and stature of the proposed jury underline the vision behind the first International Film Festival of

Jammu and Kashmir, which seeks to create a meaningful platform for cinematic excellence, cultural dialogue and international exchange.

With expertise ranging from cinematography and sound design to documentary filmmaking, film curation, production, direction and education, the jury represents multiple dimensions of contemporary cinema. Their collective experience across prestigious film festivals and international institutions is expected to bring nuanced, independent and globally informed perspectives to the evaluation of films at IFFJK.

The presence of such distinguished cinematic personalities is also expected to strengthen Jammu and Kashmir’s emergence as a vibrant destination for filmmakers, artists, storytellers and cinephiles from across India and the world.

The 1st International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK), being organised by the Department of Information and Public Relations, Jammu and Kashmir, is envisioned as a landmark cultural initiative that celebrates the universal language of cinema while providing a platform for established as well as emerging filmmakers to connect, collaborate and share their stories with a wider audience.

With an accomplished jury, a diverse cinematic programme and participation from the wider film community, IFFJK 2026 is poised to mark a significant new chapter in Jammu and Kashmir’s cinematic journey.

Crime Branch Files

19/2024.

According to the Crime Branch, the case involves alleged manipulation of the Treasury-Net system and preparation and use of forged bills and vouchers under pension and National Pension System (NPS) heads, through which government funds were allegedly diverted into personal bank accounts.

The case was initially registered at Police Station Arnas on a written complaint lodged by District Treasury Officer Reasi Qamar Rehman. The investigation was later transferred to the EOW, Crime Branch Jammu, for a detailed probe.

During the investigation, officials examined treasury records, bank transactions, bills and vouchers related to the alleged fraud. The documents were also subjected to forensic examination.

The Crime Branch said the forensic report, along with documentary and oral evidence, indicated that the questioned bills and vouchers were allegedly prepared by the principal accused. The investigation also examined signatures on the documents and their alleged links with the concerned officials.

The agency said offences under Sections 420, 467, 468, 471, 477-A and 120-B of the IPC were established against three principal accused — Ali Hussain Shah, Balbir Singh and Ajeet Kumar.

It said offences under Sections 411 and 120-B IPC were also established against seven additional accused identified as Ashad-e-Azam, Abrar-e-Azam, Mst. Rubeena Kousar, Mohd Rafiq, Shokat Ali, Mohd Ashraf and Nasib Mohammad, in connection with the alleged dishonest receipt and retention of government funds.

The supplementary chargesheet has been submitted for judicial determination, while the investigation remains open under Section 173(8) of the CrPC to trace any further diversion of government funds and ascertain the involvement, if any, of other persons.

The Crime Branch has urged the public to remain vigilant against economic frauds and report such incidents to the EOW, Jammu.

IGP Reviews Security,

sustain regional peace and stability. IGP Kashmir emphasized on proactive & preventive policing.

Directives were issued to step up surveillance, safeguard vital installations, and ensure foolproof security around vulnerable areas and protected persons.

IGP Kashmir also reiterated the department's zero-tolerance stance against narcotics and illicit networks, directing officers to intensify ongoing drives against drug abuse and ensure strict, lawful action against chronic offenders.

Emphasizing community engagement, the IGP called for compassionate, people-friendly policing alongside the prompt redressal of public grievances, reinforcing mutual trust between law enforcement and local citizens.

Concluding the interactions, the IGP lauded the steadfast commitment, alertness, and professionalism of officers and personnel on the ground, urging all ranks

to remain disciplined, mission-oriented, and primed for immediate response to emerging security challenges.

PM's Leadership

treatment in Guwahati.

Calling upon youth to lead healthy and disciplined lives, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan urged them to stay away from substance abuse and contribute towards building a Nasha Mukta Bharat. He also advised students to use social media constructively and not allow it to consume excessive time.

The Vice President said that young healthcare professionals have a crucial role in advancing the vision of a Viksit and Swasth Bharat, and wished the graduating students success in their future endeavours.

The convocation was attended by Governor of Assam Shri Lakshman Prasad Acharya; Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma; Minister of Medical Education & Research Shri Ashok Singhal; Education Minister Dr. Ranoj Pegu; Chief Secretary Dr. Ravi Kota; Vice-Chancellor of SSUHS Dr. Anup Kumar Barman, besides faculty members, researchers, students and parents.

Kashmir To See

Gulmarg was the coldest recorded station in Kashmir with a minimum temperature of 8.0°C, while Banihal recorded the lowest minimum temperature in Jammu division at 12.6°C.

The highest precipitation during the past 24 hours was recorded at Kathua-Burmal, which received 19.5 mm of rainfall.

The IMD forecast indicates isolated rainfall activity in Kashmir on September 6, while Jammu is likely to receive scattered rainfall.

From September 7 to September 10, isolated rainfall is forecast for both Kashmir and Jammu divisions. Scattered rainfall activity is likely across both divisions on September 11 and 12.

For Jammu and Kashmir as a whole, the forecast is for scattered rainfall on September 6, followed by isolated activity from September 7 to 10 and scattered activity again on September 11 and 12.

The weather department has issued no weather warning or specific adverse-weather impact for Kashmir division during the seven-day forecast period.

For Jammu division, however, an isolated spell of heavy rain, thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds of 30-40 kmph is possible on September 6.

The bulletin also indicates isolated thunderstorm, lightning and gusty-wind activity of 30-40 kmph during parts of the later forecast period.

The local forecast for September 7 says Srinagar is likely to have a partly cloudy sky, with the maximum temperature around 30°C and minimum around 16°C.

Jammu is also expected to have a partly cloudy sky, with temperatures around 34°C during the day and 25°C at night.

The IMD has classified the expected precipitation distribution using terms including isolated (1-25 per cent of stations reporting precipitation), scattered (26-50 per cent), fairly widespread (51-75 per cent) and widespread (76-100 per cent).

According to the bulletin, sunrise in Srinagar on September 7 is expected at 6:08 am, while sunset on September 6 is at 6:50 pm. In Jammu, sunrise is expected at 6:09 am and sunset at 6:49 pm.

J&K Has Moved

enforcement driven by intelligence and operations, controlling the supply of precursor and synthetic drugs, minimizing demand and harm, and enhancing institutional capacity and inter-agency coordination.

Shah explained that the enforcement approach has evolved away from making isolated, random seizures. Instead, the focus is now on completely uprooting entire narcotics syndicates through comprehensive "Bottom-to-Top" and "Top-to-Bottom" probes, with a special emphasis on tracking financial trails and mapping out drug supply chains.

Providing a statistical comparison, he noted that while drug seizures during 2004-2014 amounted to 26 lakh kilograms valued at roughly Rs 40,000 crore, this figure soared to over 1.19 crore kilograms of narcotics, valued at approximately Rs 1.89 lakh crore, during the subsequent decade from 2014 to 2026.

On the public outreach and rehabilitation front, Shah stated that the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (Drug-Free India Campaign) has successfully reached 25 crore citizens. Through dedicated treatment and rehabilitation programs, about 5.7 lakh individuals have been liberated from substance dependence. The government is actively working to scale up the number of de-addiction centers to 1,751

and intends to integrate educational institutions, the NCC, NSS, and the My Bharat initiative into this nationwide drive.

Finally, the Union Home Minister declared the period from 2026 through 2029 as a "mission mode" phase for the anti-narcotics campaign, which will be strictly governed by predetermined timelines, clearly defined measurable outcomes, and mandatory quarterly performance assessments.

Asserting that the Union government has prepared a roadmap to make India drug-free by 2029, Home Minister Amit Shah said it is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's objective that drug-free youth power will lead to Viksit Bharat in 2047.

The Modi government is committed to making the country drug-free to realise the dream of a developed India, just as it has worked to end the menace of Naxalism and terrorism, Shah said.

The Centre has adopted a coordinated, nationwide strategy to dismantle the entire narcotics network, from drug trafficking and financing to rehabilitation, as part of its goal of 'Drug-Free India' by 2029, he said.

"It is Narendra Modi's objective that drug-free youth power will lead to Viksit Bharat in 2047," Shah said while addressing a press conference after chairing a high level meeting on narcotics that was attended by Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant as well as MHA and state government officials.

"Before 2014, the fight against narcotics was largely conducted in small units and isolation. Agencies were often satisfied catching small time accused. Our government is making the fight national security priority," he said.

In 2019, a four-tier National Coordination Committee for Countering Drug Trafficking (NCORD) mechanism was created at the executive, state and district levels to ensure coordinated action against the drug menace.

"Dedicated Anti-Narcotics Task Forces (ANTFs) have been constituted in all states and Union Territories and local police have been linked with the national strategy," Shah said.

He said a Joint Coordination Committee was also formed in 2019 to enable central agencies and state governments to take joint decisions against major drug networks, their international connections and operational gaps.

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has been strengthened by reorganising its cadre and enhancing its manpower, zonal presence and operational capabilities, Shah said while emphasising that the fight against drugs was not just limited to enforcement.

The government has linked awareness, treatment, counselling, rehabilitation and livelihood opportunities with the anti-narcotics campaign, he pointed out, adding that the 1933 MANAS helpline has been introduced to support persons with drug addiction.

The government is committed to achieving the goal of 'Drug-Free India 2029' through political will, coordinated enforcement and measures aimed at preventing addiction and rehabilitating victims, he said.

The Modi government's three-year roadmap to a drug-free India is based on a four-pillared approach to destroy narcotic networks, Shah said.

"These pillars include intelligence and operation-based enforcement, control on synthetic drugs, demand and harm reduction and creation of capacity and coordination," he explained.

Shah said the Centre has a target to demolish 100 national and international networks by March 2029 and bring back 100 fugitives to the country.

By March 2027, there will be clear end-to-end visibility of the supply chain while at least 75 secret labs would be destroyed in 2026, he said.

He said the government had also adopted a mission-mode approach to bring back fugitives hiding abroad.

Between July 2019 and July 2026, as many as 274 wanted or absconding criminals were brought back to India from 36 countries, he said.

Traffic Restrictions

Traffic approaching SKICC and Nehru Park from Badyari Chowk and Brein Chowk will also be restricted, except for hotel guests and local residents. Other vehicles travelling towards Nishat will be diverted through Gupkar and Hazratbal, Bhat said.

Vehicles approaching from the Nishat and Harwan side will likewise be diverted towards Hazratbal.

The restrictions and diversions will remain in place from 4 pm to 7 pm, or until the inauguration function concludes, whichever is later.

Traffic Police has advised commuters to plan their journeys accordingly and cooperate with personnel deployed in the area to facilitate smooth movement during the event.

ADDRESS:- SADAT MARKET, NEAR PNB, SHADIPORA SUMBAL

+91- 9906230114- 6006600834

DAR MATTING SHOP

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

2 Day Folk Festival Culminates at Sunaseri

GMK NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN: The two-day grand Folk Festival culminated Sunday at the picturesque meadow of Sunaseri (Guglidhar), Pogal Paristan, showcasing the rich folk traditions, cultural heritage and ethnic identity of the Pahari community.

The festival was organized by the locals, in collaboration with the District Administration Ramban, Directorate of Tourism Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture & Languages, with the objective of promoting indigenous culture and strengthening the potential of Sunasari as an emerging rural and eco-tourism destination.

The festival witnessed enthusiastic participation from thousands of locals and visitors, who enjoyed traditional folk music, cultural performances and



local ethnic cuisine, creating a vibrant atmosphere at the scenic destination.

MLA Ramban Arjun Singh Raju and Deputy Commissioner Mohamad Alyas Khan, along with SSP Arun Gupta, SDM Ramssoo Sayed Mazahir Hussain Shah and other functionaries of civil and police administration joined the huge gathering.

On the occasion, the MLA inaugurated newly developed tourism infrastructure and amenities, executed by the Public

Works (R&B) Department at an estimated cost of 2.17 crore. The facilities include eco log huts, viewpoints, benches, improved drainage and connected pathways aimed at enhancing visitor amenities while maintaining the area's natural ecology.

Speaking on the occasion, the MLA appreciated the District Administration and the local community for organizing the festival and preserving the region's rich cultural traditions. He described

Sunaseri as one of the most picturesque yet unexplored destinations of Ramban and expressed his commitment to making the festival an annual feature after the monsoon season to attract more visitors.

In his speech, the Deputy Commissioner lauded the organizers and participants for their overwhelming response, stating that the festival had provided a vibrant platform to showcase the rich Pahari heritage, folk traditions, music, cuisine and cultural diversity of the region.

The two day festival featured colourful Pahari folk and cultural programmes, showcasing traditional music, dance and local art forms; rural sports competitions promoting the region's indigenous sporting traditions; and camping activities that offered visitors an opportunity to experience the natural beauty and rural charm of Sunaseri.

Achieving 98.43 per literacy rate fulfilment of Sher-e-Kashmir's dream: Chowdry Ramzan

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR : The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Additional General Secretary and MP Rajya Sabha Choudhary Muhammad Ramzan Sunday congratulated the people of Jammu and Kashmir on achieving a 98.43% literacy rate under ULLAS-NBSK and becoming a fully literate region, describing the achievement as historic and a matter of immense pride.

In a Statement issued, He said that this achievement is not merely an increase in statistics, but the result of the tireless efforts, commitment and dedication of countless teachers, education officers, volunteers, social workers, students and learners who played their part in taking the light of education to every household and settlement, from the remote mountainous areas of Kashmir to the plains of Jammu.

He said that it is the collective responsibility of all

of us to acknowledge and pay tribute to the services and sacrifices of everyone associated with this remarkable achievement, particularly the teaching community, as teachers play a fundamental role in building an aware and educated society.



Choudhary Muhammad Ramzan said that Jammu and Kashmir becoming a fully literate region today is a fulfilment of the great dream of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, which he had envisioned and pursued decades ago. He said that when Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Moham-

mad Abdullah launched his struggle to spread education in Jammu and Kashmir and make it accessible to every section of society, the literacy rate in the region was extremely low, at around 6 percent, while education remained largely confined

no nation can progress unless every child and every section of society is provided equal opportunities for education.

He said that the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference and the leadership of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah made the promotion of education one of their fundamental priorities. The establishment of schools, expansion of educational opportunities, free access to education for children from poor and disadvantaged sections, and initiatives aimed at creating educational awareness among the people laid the foundation of a society in which education became a right of the common people.

He said that Sher-e-Kashmir's vision was not limited merely to literacy; rather, he aspired to build an empowered, enlightened and self-confident society in which knowledge, education and social justice would serve as the means of progress for every individual.(KNS)

Rahmat-ul-lil-Alameen Conference Held in Pulwama

AKHTAR ABBAS

PULWAMA: A one-day grand "Rahmat-ul-lil-Alameen" Conference was organized Sunday at Jamia Masjid Gangoo, Pulwama, in connection with the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad Mustafa ﷺ. The conference was attended by prominent religious scholars, intellectuals and religious personalities associated with different schools of thought from across the Kashmir Valley.

The conference was presided over by Hujjat-ul-Islam Maulana Sheikh Ghulam Rasool Noori, while Maulana Amjad Ali conducted the proceedings. During the conference, the speakers shed detailed light on the blessed life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his exemplary character and noble conduct, his teachings for humanity, and various aspects of the Seerat of the final Prophet ﷺ. The scholars said that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent as a mercy for all humanity and that his teachings carry a clear message of love, brotherhood, equality, justice and peace.

The scholars also highlighted the blessed life and



valuable scholarly contributions of Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (AS).

Emphasizing the importance of unity and mutual brotherhood among Muslims, the speakers said that in the present era, Muslims need to set aside their differences and remain united on the basis of common Islamic values.

The conference was addressed by prominent religious scholars, including Maulana Sheikh Ghulam Rasool Noori, Maulana Agha Syed Muhammad Hadi, Maulana Bashir Ahmad Butt, Mufti Waiz Hassan Firdousi, and Imam of Jamia

Masjid Pulwama Muhammad Akram Dar, besides other scholars. Muhammad Abbas Johar, a poet of the Ahl-e-Bayt, also enthralled the audience with his poetry.

Hundreds of people attended the conference and benefited from the scholarly addresses. The programme concluded with a special prayer for the peace and security of the country and nation, as well as unity and solidarity among the Muslim Ummah.

Later Moulana Amjad Ali thanked all scholar's and participants who attended the day long conference .

DC Poonch conducts field visit to inspect progress of NH-144A

GMK NEWS NETWORK

POONCH: In a significant initiative to accelerate the ongoing construction of the Akhnoor-Poonch National Highway (NH-144A), Deputy Commissioner Ashok Kumar Sharma undertook an extensive field inspection of the road stretch from Sanjot to Poonch, falling within the jurisdiction of Poonch District.

He was accompanied by the officers from the District Administration and representatives from the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and other concerned agencies.

The comprehensive field visit covered various locations where land acquisition, compensation and other administrative issues were resolved.

The functionaries from BRO briefed the Deputy Commissioner and the district administration regarding the construction status, site constraints and locations where progress was being affected due to pending land acquisition and compensation matters.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the issues at each site and interacted with the affected landown-



ers and other stakeholders. A large number of pending land acquisition and compensation-related cases were resolved on the spot, providing much-needed relief to the concerned landowners and simultaneously facilitating the handing over of obstruction-free stretches to the executing agencies.

The field visit was particularly effective as all concerned administrative officers and field staff came fully prepared with relevant land records, acquisition files, compensation documents and

other supporting records. This enabled the officers to examine the cases at the site itself, verify the available records, address the concerns of stakeholders and take appropriate decisions without unnecessary delay.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all concerned officers to maintain close coordination and adopt a proactive, time-bound approach towards resolving the remaining cases so that no avoidable administrative issue becomes a bottleneck in the construction of NH-144A.



DC Rajouri reviews progress of digital crop survey under AgriStack

GMK NEWS NETWORK

RAJOURI: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma Sunday chaired a meeting to review the progress of the Digital Crop Survey (DCS) being conducted under the AgriStack framework in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed assessment of the progress achieved by the concerned departments and reviewed the status of field-level data collection and other related activities.

The Digital Crop Survey (DCS) is an initiative of the Government of India under the AgriStack framework, aimed at creating a verified and reliable digital database of farm plots, crops sown and farmer-related information. The initiative seeks to facilitate better agricultural planning, improve delivery of farmer-centric services and ensure effective implementation of various government schemes.

The DC stressed upon the concerned officers to ensure accurate, comprehensive and timely collection and updation of data. He directed them to closely monitor the field-level progress, identify and address bottlenecks promptly and ensure achievement of the assigned targets within the stipulated timelines.

He further emphasised the need for close coordination among all stakeholders to ensure smooth and effective implementation of the Digital Crop Survey across the district.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Malikzada Sheraz Ul Haq; ADC Ravi Kumar Sihag; ADC Kala-kote Mohammad Tanvir; ADC Nowshera Pritam Lal Thapa; ADC Sunderbani Ramkesh Sharma; ADC Koteranka Dil Mir; ACR Mohd Jahangir Khan; SDM Thanamandi Abid Hussain Shah; CAO Rajesh Verma; Tehsildars and other concerned officers.

DM Doda orders complete ban on use of VPNs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

DODA: District Magistrate (DM) Doda Krishan Lal has ordered a complete prohibition on the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.

The order has been issued following reports of misuse of VPNs by certain individuals and groups to circumvent lawful cyber restrictions and access prohibited applications, websites and digital content, posing a potential threat to public order, tranquility and national security.

The District Magistrate observed that such activities have the potential to be exploited for unlawful and anti-national purposes, including inciting unrest, disseminating inflammatory material and coordinating activities prejudicial to the maintenance of law and order.

The prohibition shall apply to all individuals, institutions, cyber cafés, business entities and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) operating in the district, except in cases explicitly authorised by the Government through an official order.

Any person found violating the order shall be liable for legal action under the relevant provisions of law. The Senior Superintendent of Police, Doda has been directed to ensure strict enforcement of the order.



'An avoidable tragedy': Congress slams Modi govt over Delhi building collapse

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Sunday attacked the Modi government after a building housing a boys' hostel collapsed in south-west Delhi's Satya Niketan area, with party leader Rahul Gandhi asserting that every student's life is precious and their protection must be ensured under all circumstances.

The five-storey building in a congested bylane in Satya Niketan near Delhi University's South Campus collapsed this afternoon, leaving three students dead and many trapped under the debris, officials said.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the building collapse is deeply distressing and "an avoidable tragedy".

"Every effort must be made to rescue those trapped and ensure the best possible treatment for the injured," Kharge said on X.

NSUI workers and Congress leaders are already on the ground, helping students, victims and their families in every possible way, the Congress chief said, adding that "we stand firmly with them in this difficult hour".

"This tragedy also exposes the unsafe, overcrowded PGs students are forced to live in due to inadequate hostel facilities," he said.

"Students come to Delhi to build their future, not risk their lives for a roof over their heads. Every student's life is precious," Kharge said.



Terming the incident as "extremely heartbreaking and alarming", Rahul Gandhi said reports indicate that several people are trapped under the debris, including many students from Delhi University.

"My appeal is that NDRF, Delhi Fire Service, and all rescue teams reach every single student by making every possible effort, ensuring that the injured receive the best possible immediate treatment, so that no effort is spared in saving anyone," he said in a post on X in Hindi.

"In this hour of difficulty, we all stand with the victims and their families. Students' lives were already filled with struggles, now the situation has turned life-threatening.

"Due to the lack of good hostels in colleges or universities, students are forced to live in PG

accommodations, 40-40 at a time under one roof, in inhumane conditions. Every student's life is precious, and their protection must be ensured under all circumstances," the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra called the incident "shocking".

"I pray for the well-being of all. May God keep everyone safe. I appeal to the administration to expedite relief and rescue operations so that help can reach every victim in time. NSUI and Congress colleagues are providing as much assistance as possible at the scene. Our condolences are with all the victims and their families," she said.

Congress general secretary K C Venugopal said he was shocked at the news of the building collapse endangering the lives of

many students.

"...This is only the latest in a long list of accidents due to the negligence of the authorities," he said.

"Under BJP rule, life has become too cheap, and the regime is clearly insensitive to the perilous conditions under which common citizens lead their everyday lives," Venugopal said.

Senior Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi said just a day ago, PM Modi was at Delhi University's SRCC for a carefully staged spectacle, celebrating the university and speaking of its students and today, at Satya Niketan near South Campus, DU students are trapped under the rubble of an unsafe PG building.

"If the PM truly considers himself a DU student, perhaps he should ask why building safety audits failed the very students who need the Government's protection most," Singhvi said on X.

Congress treasurer Ajay Maken said he stands with the families who have lost someone.

"Just this year, on May 30, the building that collapsed in Saidulajab had students preparing for exams among those who died. Therefore, the Delhi Municipal Corporation must disclose how many of the buildings around both DU campuses running PG accommodations have undergone safety inspections, and what issues were found in which buildings. This list must be made public building by building,"

Maken said in a post in Hindi on X.

A child who has left home to come study has the right to know whether the building in which he is sleeping will still be standing by morning or not, he said.

Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khara said it is both haunting and moving to see the book, 'A Thousand Splendid Suns', recovered from the rubble at Satya Niketan, Delhi.

"It is a heartbreaking story of oppression, endurance, solidarity, love, sacrifice and hope. The novel follows the lives of women in Afghanistan. But its story belongs to the oppressed all over the world," Khara said.

Perhaps most poignantly, it belongs to India's youth - a generation "orphaned by a government that seems to care little for their dignity, safety or future", he alleged.

"May this cruel chapter of indifference and neglect end soon," he said.

Delhi Congress chief Devendra Yadav said the incident raises serious questions about the government's policies.

"Young people come to Delhi from across the country with dreams of a bright future, but is no one responsible for their safety? Prime Minister ji, merely delivering speeches at DU won't suffice; in the country's capital, the lives and safety of our students must be the topmost priority," he said.

Kashmir can produce India's next fast bowler, says Aakash Chopra



GMK SPORTS DESK

SRINAGAR: Former cricketer and commentator Aakash Chopra on Sunday said Kashmir has the talent to produce India's next fast bowler, but players from Jammu and Kashmir need more opportunities and platforms to progress.

Speaking at a press conference in Srinagar, Chopra said he hoped a fast bowler from the region would emerge and go on to represent India.

"I hope that the next fast bowler that we get will also come from here. Till now, we are not able to catch him. But he is here somewhere," Chopra said.

Chopra said the expansion of cricket in Kashmir was a natural progression given the interest in the sport among people in the region.

"We are just hoping that we add another chapter and give Kashmir a representation," he said.

Referring to Jammu and Kashmir's Ranji Trophy triumph, Chopra said the achievement should be followed by creating more opportunities for local players.

"J&K won the Ranji Trophy. I am sure it is a

proud moment for every Kashmiri. It is very difficult to win the Ranji Trophy," he said.

Chopra, who has played against Jammu and Kashmir during his cricket career, said the region had players capable of progressing but lacked opportunities.

"I have played a lot against J&K and I have enjoyed playing against them. There is quality but there are no opportunities. So, that's what we are trying to do. We are trying to bring opportunities," he said.

He also referred to Murad Malik and said there could be more players like him in Jammu and Kashmir.

Chopra said the growth of cricket in the region could also create opportunities outside playing, including for coaches, support staff, logistics personnel and broadcasters.

"There is everything in the ecosystem. There are coaches, support staff, logistics managers. So, there is employment opportunity," he said.

He also mentioned Kashmiri commentator Vivek Rajdhan and said the expansion of cricket could

provide opportunities for local broadcasters.

On Kashmir Willow bats, Chopra said the region already had a connection with cricket through the production of bats, while children and players from Kashmir also take up the sport.

He said the interest shown by people in matches held in Kashmir, including the Kashmir Premier League, demonstrated the scope for further development of the game in the region.

Chopra also offered advice to aspiring broadcasters, saying they should understand the game, develop their own style and avoid simply following others.

"Understand the game. Live the game. And just don't follow anyone. Create your own personality. Your own style," he said.

He said broadcasters should keep the sport at the centre of their work rather than giving greater importance to themselves.

"More than the sport, we start giving importance to ourselves," Chopra said.

He added that the role of a broadcaster was to serve the sport and contribute to its presentation.(KNS)

KASHMIR LEAGUE

'Chance to Play With International Players Is a Big Thing': Shikhar Dhawan

GMK SPORTS DESK

SRINAGAR: Former India cricketer Shikhar Dhawan on Sunday said a cricket league featuring international players in Kashmir would give young cricketers, including those who have played only at the club level, an opportunity to play alongside international players.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Dhawan said youngsters who have not represented Jammu and Kashmir at the state level could benefit from the exposure provided by the league.

"For a youngster who has never played for the state, getting an opportunity to play with an international player is a big thing in itself," Dhawan said.

He said youngsters who have watched international players from the boundary or stadium would now get an opportunity to share the field with them.

"A kid who has a dream, who has been sitting and watching an international player for so many years, but that dream is not being fulfilled anywhere, today because of this league he



will get a chance," he said.

"He will play with an international player, he will laugh, he will create a memory. So, this is a very big thing," Dhawan added.

Dhawan said the league could also generate economic activity for clubs, mentors, hotels and other businesses as players and their families travel to Kashmir.

"When everyone will come here to play, eventually cricket will become a business. A business will be made for the mentors here, a business will be made for the club and a business will be made for the hotels," he said.

He said the arrival

of players could also increase the number of visitors to the region.

"More big players will come. It is a means of entertainment for people. They will come and watch the live match. They will see the players performing live," Dhawan said.

He added that families travelling with players would also contribute to local businesses.

"The players who are coming, families will also come with them. So, that also adds to the business. I am sure it is a win-win situation for everyone," he said.

On local cricket, Dhawan said Jammu

attention across the country.

"Recently, Jammu and Kashmir won the Ranji Trophy. It has become such a big news in the whole of India. It happened for the first time in history," he said.

He also referred to Jammu and Kashmir fast bowler Umran Malik, who represented India and played in the IPL.

Dhawan, however, said players would have to convert opportunities into performances.

"It is necessary for those boys to perform there as well. If you perform there, then no one can say that you are from outside. Your performance should speak for you," he said.

He said the issue of players missing opportunities was not limited to Jammu and Kashmir and could also apply to players from other cricketing centres.

"Whether it is a boy from Delhi or a boy from Mumbai, there will be cases where they should have got a chance, but they did not get a chance. Someone else got it," Dhawan said.

"That is part and parcel of our business," he added.(KNS)

Dominant South Africa claim tri-series title after outclassing Zimbabwe by 48 runs

IANIS

WINDHOEK: A clinical South Africa put up a dominant all-round display to outclass Zimbabwe by 48 runs in the final and claim the T20I tri-series title at the Namibia Cricket Ground here on Sunday.

Riding on a rapid half-century from Jordan Hermann and a 23-ball 32 from Dewald Brevis, South Africa posted a formidable 205/5 in their 20 overs after electing to bat first. In reply, Zimbabwe's top order collapsed under pressure before being bowled out for 157 in 18 overs.

Despite missing opener Lhuan-dre Pretorius due to a niggle, South Africa asserted their authority early. Hermann smashed



a 24-ball fifty, laced with eight fours and a six, while sharing an 84-run opening stand with Connor Esterhuizen (32).

Brevis maintained the momentum in the middle overs by hitting two fours and as many sixes, while Rubin Hermann chipped in with 27 off 16 balls, includ-

ing three fours and a six, to propel the Proteas past the 200-run mark via a 47-run stand for the fifth wicket.

For Zimbabwe, right-arm pacer Brad Evans (2-36) and left-arm fast bowler Newman Nyamhuri (2-51) were standout bowlers. Chasing a daunting target of 206, Zimbabwe

suffered a disastrous start when opener Ben Curran was dismissed for a first-ball duck by Eathan Bosch. Duan Jansen and Bosch made swift inroads into the top order by reducing Zimbabwe to four wickets down inside the powerplay.

Skipper Sikandar Raza survived an early reprieve when a caught-behind dismissal off Bosch was overturned due to a no-ball. But Proteas captain Bjorn Fortuin (3-24) quickly ended his resistance to leave the chase in tatters.

Evans produced a spirited late fightback for Zimbabwe, striking his maiden T20I fifty in a 52-run ninth-wicket partnership with Kundai Matigimu. However, Kwen Maphaka broke the stand before Zimba-

bwe's innings eventually folded in the 18th over.

Jansen finished as the pick of the seamers with 3-38, while Bosch picked up 2-22, as South Africa defeated Zimbabwe for the third time in the last eight days. The tournament served as a crucial warm-up event for 2027 ICC Cricket World Cup co-hosts South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. South Africa will next feature in a three-match bilateral ODI series against hosts Namibia, with Fortuin continuing as captain.

Brief Scores: South Africa 205/5 (Jordan Hermann 53, Connor Esterhuizen 32; Brad Evans 2-36, Newman Nyamhuri 2-51) beat Zimbabwe 157 (Brad Evans 56 not out, Bjorn Fortuin 3-24, Duan Jansen 3-38) by 48 runs

India beat Bangladesh 3-0 to boost qualification hopes for AFC U20 Asian Cup

IANIS

TASHKENT: India on Sunday blanked Bangladesh 3-0 in their final Group B qualifier to boost their hopes for a place in the AFC U20 Asian Cup China 2027.

Danny Meitei Laishram, Vishal Yadav and Md Arbash scored for the Indian side in a strong win at the Do'stlik Stadium in Tashkent, which has kept the Blue Colts very much alive in the race for their first entry into the AFC U20 Asian Cup after 20 years.

India now have six points from their three games in Group B and are placed second. They can be displaced by Syria, who have three points from two games but have a game against the group-toppers Uzbekistan. If Syria lose their game or play a draw, India would end second and be one of the seven best runners-up places across the eight groups.

Danny opened the scoring for India in the 25th minute before Vishal gave the Blue Colts a two-goal cushion with his acrobatic finish on the hour mark. Coming off the bench, Md



Arbash then put India 3-0 up as they ultimately sealed the contest with a powerful strike in the 79th minute.

Danny did a good job for India early when he put Md Abdul Riyad Fahim under pressure, forcing the Bangladesh defender into conceding possession cheaply to Hateem Ali. The India striker displayed excellent awareness and gave a good ball to the unmarked Danny inside the box, who then nailed the finish for an early lead.

Danny himself nearly put India 2-0 up after the half-hour mark when his free-kick headed towards the goal; however, the goalkeeper was quick to make the save.

The second half began in the same fashion, with

the Blue Colts attacking as an opportunity opened up near the hour mark when Rishikanta flicked a long throw in the box to Vishal, who nailed an acrobatic finish for a double lead.

Bangladesh looked for their chances and were aggressive in the last half an hour, but they could not break the Indian defence. India made changes in the 72nd minute, bringing in Md Arbash and Prashan Jajo for Danny and Vishal.

Arbash did wonders soon after coming on the pitch as he hit a fierce one into the top of the net from his left foot for an India 3-0 lead. India oversaw Bangladesh for the remainder of the match to do their work in a bid for the AFC U20 Asian Cup qualification.

Sher-E-Punjab T20: Shubman Gill makes debut as Fazilka Falcons edge Ludhiana Lions by one run

IANIS

MOHALI: The much-anticipated arrival of India captain Shubman Gill lit up the Sher-E-Punjab T20 League on Sunday, as the Fazilka Falcons held their nerve to clinch a thrilling one-run victory over Arshdeep Singh's Ludhiana Lions in Match 15.

Playing his first match of the season for the Falcons, Gill wasted little time in showing the crowd exactly what the hype was about. Opening the innings, the

star batter smashed a scintillating 40 off just 21 balls, striking seven fours and a six to give Fazilka a flying start and send the crowd into a frenzy.

With Ludhiana Lions captain and India pacer Arshdeep Singh leading his side, the contest had plenty of star power from the outset. After Arshdeep won the toss and elected to bowl, Gill took centre stage, producing an explosive knock that set the tone for a high-octane encounter.

However, Ludhiana found a way to fight back through Kartik Chadha, who produced a remarkable spell to derail the Falcons' momentum. Chadha claimed the prized wicket of Gill and finished with outstanding figures of 4/9 in his four overs, putting the brakes on Fazilka's scoring. Despite the setback, important contributions from Prerit Dutta (36 off 23) and Jaiveer Bhinder Singh (21 off 18) helped the Falcons recover and post a competitive 170/9 in 20 overs.



INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF JAMMU & KASHMIR



LIVE the MOVIE SRINAGAR

CINEMA
CULTURE
PEOPLE
CONVERSATIONS
KASHMIR

KASHMIR'S STORIES ON A GLOBAL SCREEN

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to the International Film Festival of Jammu & Kashmir (IFFJK), regular movie screenings will not be available on

7th September

8th September

9th September

NO REGULAR MOVIE SCREENINGS



Bookings are open for 10th September
SEE YOU AT THE MOVIES SOON!

FILMS
PEOPLE
PLACES
IDEAS
KASHMIR

Same Stories A Brighter Tomorrow



Cinema Brings People Together