

Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
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■ 'OPERATION SOHAN'

2 Jaish Terrorists Killed In Udhampur Encounter



YOGESH

UDHAMPUR: Two Pakistani Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorists were killed and a suspected over-ground worker was detained during a joint intelligence-based counter-terrorism operation in the Brattal area of Udhampur district on Thursday.

An official said that the 'Operation Sohan,' was launched jointly by the Army, Jammu & Kashmir Police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in the Brattal-Sohan and Khubban areas of Majalita this morning amid heavy rainfall, difficult mountainous terrain and poor visibility.

He said, "Security forces had been tracking the movement of a suspected terrorist group in the dense forest belt for the past several days. Following fresh intelligence inputs, the area was cordoned off around 9 pm on Wednesday,

after which contact was established with the terrorists. Intermittent firing and explosions were heard after the operation began. Following a lull during the night, the encounter resumed on Thursday morning when the terrorists opened fire while attempting to break the security cordon."

Jammu and Kashmir Police in a post on X said, "You can run but you can't hide!" "The two Pakistani terrorists of Jaish-e-Mohammed outfit have been neutralised during Op Sohan and identified as Saddam and Mustafa," it posted. "An AK Assault Rifle (with 4 magazines); M4 Carbine (with 3 magazines); a Glock Pistol (with 2 magazines) and four grenades have been recovered from them," the post added.

The official said the bodies of both terrorists were subsequently retrieved. **●P-06**

PM Modi's Leadership Brought Major Development To J&K: LG Sinha

Celebrates PM's Birthday With Children At Srinagar's 'Palaash' And 'Pareesha' Homes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed significant development and effective implementation of welfare schemes under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking to reporters on the occasion of Prime Minister Modi's birthday, Sinha said the country has made significant progress in infrastructure, welfare and economic growth over the past several years.

Sinha celebrated the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the children of the 'Palaash' and 'Pareesha' children's homes in Srinagar.

He distributed school bags, sports kits, and sweets, and also reviewed the residential facilities provided to ensure their



well-being. Subsequently, he visited the Children's Hospital at Bemina to spend time with the young patients and wish them a full and speedy recovery.

It is pertinent to mention that the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' begins today, marking a month-long festival of selfless service till 17th October. This campaign celebrates 25 years

of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's public service, transforming India from the "Fragile Five" to the world's top five economies.

Over the next month, 12 programmes will include school competitions on 'Mere Sapno ka Bharat', honouring Anganwadi and ASHA workers, tree plantation, youth activities, and registration camps under Seva

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday called for redefining development models to make them climate-resilient and inclusive, saying climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution are not separate challenges but

three interconnected forms of a deeper crisis.

Addressing the valedictory session of a three-day national conference on Environment, Climate and Sustainability: Science, Policy and Pathways at the University of Kashmir, LG Sinha, said experts from different parts of the country

Setu Abhiyan.

"Until 17 October, a 'Seva Setu Abhiyan' will be run at block and ward level, with 3-4 day camps to register deprived beneficiaries for government schemes. I earnestly appeal that every citizen of Jammu Kashmir participates wholeheartedly in this campaign.

Hon'ble Prime Minister has worked day and night for 140 crore countrymen and has helped build a new, powerful Jammu Kashmir. The GDP growth rate for the first quarter of 2026-27 is 7.8%. If we look at other indicators of welfare and development, 25 crore people have moved above the poverty line and 80 crore people are receiving free ration under the Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also highlighted the unprecedented growth of National Highways, **●P-06**

had come together with different areas of specialisation but were leaving with a common language to understand the climate crisis and work together on its solutions.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor lauded the national-level seminar for creating a shared **●P-06**

Snowfall In Higher Reaches, Rain In Plains Cool Kashmir



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Higher reaches of the Kashmir Valley on Thursday received fresh snowfall as widespread rain lashed parts of the Valley, with heavy showers witnessed in several parts of south Kashmir, bringing down temperatures, officials said.

According to details obtained, Srinagar received 8.2 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours ending 8:30 am, while Qazigund, Pahalgam, Kucernag and Gulmarg recorded 13.4 mm, 13 mm, 14.4 mm and 13.2 mm, respectively.

Kupwara received 4 mm of rainfall, while Banihal and Batote recorded 17.1 mm and 22.4 mm, respectively. Bhabarwah received 11.7 mm.

In the Jammu division, heavy rainfall was recorded at several places, with Jammu receiving 112.9 mm, Udhampur 117.8 mm and Katra 45.2 mm during the period.

Kabul Gali, situated at an altitude of around 4,167 metres, received light to moderate snowfall, covering the high-altitude pass and adjoining **●P-06**

Speaker Chairs All Party Cum BAC Meeting Ahead Of Autumn Session

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly (JKLA), Abdul Rahim Rather, Thursday chaired a meeting of the All Party cum Business Advisory Committee (BAC) ahead of the Autumn Session of the Legislative Assembly, scheduled to commence on September 21, 2026, with a focus on ensuring smooth, orderly and people-oriented functioning of the House.

The meeting was attended by Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma, Ali Mohammad Sagar, Mubarak Gul, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, Nizamuddin Bhat, Sajad Gani Lone, Mir Mohammad Fayaz and Choudhary Mohammad Akram.

The Speaker sought their valuable suggestions for



making the forthcoming Assembly Session more fruitful, meaningful and responsive to public concerns. He emphasised the need to provide adequate opportunities to the elected representatives to raise issues pertaining to their respective constituencies and bring matters of public importance to the floor of the House.

The Speaker called for coordinated efforts by all stakeholders to **●P-06**

If Govt Has No Authority, Omar Abdullah Should Dissolve Assembly: LoP Sharma

UMAISAR GUL

ANANTNAG: Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly and BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Thursday said that if the government has no authority to take decisions, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah should dissolve the Assembly.

Speaking to reporters, Sharma, if the government has no authority and is only taking salaries, it would be better for Omar Abdullah to take a decision and dissolve the Assembly so that everyone can sit peacefully.

He said fresh elections would be required after statehood is restored, as the current constitutional arrangement is that of a Union Territory.

"Whenever statehood is restored, there will be new elections in the state. If statehood comes today, elections will have to be held because the new constitutional arrangement will be that of a state. The elections held under the present arrangement were for a Union Territory," he said.

"If we have to wait for elections, what has Omar Abdullah come for till then? Has he come to enjoy? Have they come to live like kings? Have they come to exercise badshahi? Why is he deceiving the people?" Sharma said.



tutional arrangement will be that of a state. The elections held under the present arrangement were for a Union Territory," he said.

On Article 370, Sharma said the decision was taken by Parliament and not by the BJP alone. "The day the National Conference takes 275 seats to Parliament, tell them to speak about it," he said.

Sharma said the BJP would continue to play the role of the Opposition and raise people's concerns. "As the Opposition, it is our responsibility to become the voice of the people because the government is not listening," he said, adding that the BJP would continue its work irrespective of whether it received votes.

He said he had not come to topple the government or seek votes. "I have not come to topple any government. I have not come to seek votes. People form governments," he said.

Sharma also called for dialogue with protesting daily wagers working in essential departments, including the PDD, PWD and PHC, **●P-06**

Leverage Strengths, Address Challenges For High-Value Handicraft Exports: CS

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Thursday chaired a meeting to review the newly framed Action Plan for Promotion of Export of Handicrafts and Handloom Products, aimed at scaling up the Union Territory's textile and apparel exports from the present base of 800 crore to 2,000 crore by 2030.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce; Director, Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir/Jammu; Managing Director, J&K Handicrafts (S&E) Corporation; Director, Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT); representatives from NIFT and other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary stressed the need for a thorough analysis of the sector's strengths, competitive advantages and challenges before



finalising the implementation framework. He also directed the Department to identify challenges for immediate resolution and dovetail your competitive advantages for boosting exports of high value craft products. He called for a year-wise strategy up to 2030, with clearly defined targets, measurable milestones and timelines to ensure systematic progress towards the **●P-06**

Under PM, India Moved From Condemnation To Decisive Action Against Terrorism: Amit Shah

Says Art-370 Abrogation, Surgical Strikes, Op Sindoor Among Key Anti-Terror Actions

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Stating that India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership has moved beyond diplomatic condemnation to terrorism and security threats, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said that the country's approach towards terror has witnessed a significant shift.

In a post on X, Shah, said the policy of "zero tolerance" towards terrorism had been implemented on the ground during PM Modi's tenure.

"Abrogation of Article 370, the 2016 surgical strikes, the 2019 Balakot air strikes and Operation Sindoor in 2025 demonstrated India's willingness



to respond decisively to terror attacks," he said, adding, "Under the leadership of Modi ji, the country has witnessed for the first time the policy of 'zero tolerance' against terrorism being implemented on the ground."

Pertinently, the Centre revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370 on August 5, 2019,

and subsequently reorganised the erstwhile state into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

India's military responses have also featured prominently in the government's national security narrative. The Army conducted surgical strikes across the Line of Control in September 2016 following the Uri terror attack, while the Indian Air Force carried out an air strike on a Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) camp in Balakot in Pakistan in February 2019 after the Pulwama attack.

Operation Sindoor was launched by India on May 7, 2025, following the Pahalgam terror attack.

Shah also **●P-06**

MoE proposes review of TET exams

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: The Ministry of Education (MoE) has proposed to undertake comprehensive measures pertaining to the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET).

MoE in an office memorandum said that the review is related to TET and proposed legislative review in view of emerging issues concerning teachers and teacher eligibility.

"The Ministry of Education, Government of India, has taken note of various representations and issues being raised by teachers, teacher associations, educational institutions and other stakeholders regarding the implementation of the TET requirement," it reads.

The Ministry further said that it has also taken note of the directions and observations of the Supreme Court concerning the requirement of TET for teachers covered under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009.

"In view of the representations received from various stakeholders and with **●P-06**

Cold Storage Bookings Fill Up Across Kashmir Ahead Of Peak Apple Season



JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Cold storage capacity across Kashmir has been almost entirely booked months before the apple season is set to peak, with growers who failed to reserve space in advance now struggling to find storage for their produce.

The rush follows last season's experience, when growers who stored their crop instead of selling during the peak arrival period secured significantly better prices amid weak market conditions.

Cold storage operators said a major portion of their

capacity was reserved several months ago, shortly after last season's stored produce was cleared, while the remaining space has also been largely booked in recent weeks. Most units are expected to begin receiving fresh produce from next week.

Growers said the early booking of storage space has become a necessity rather than a choice for many farmers. "We have seen what happened last year. During the peak season, rates were under pressure, while prices improved later. This year, growers have therefore booked storage **●P-06**

JKBOSE notifies annual examination dates for class 10, 11, 12

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) has notified the date sheets for classes 10, 11 and 12 for the examination session Annual Regular (Oct-Nov) 2026 for Kashmir Division, winter zone areas of Jammu Division and UT of Ladakh.

As per the date sheet, the Class 10 examinations will commence on October 19 for Mathematics paper and will conclude on November 18 with Computer Science.

The class 12 examinations likewise begin on October 21 and the class 11 on October 29. All examinations will begin at 11:00 AM and conclude at 2 PM.

The exam centres will be reflected on student's Admit Cards, who have been advised to bring these along for identification on each examination day. The practical exam schedules will be issued separately by the respective Joint Secretaries of Examination of JD and KD.

For further details and updates, candidates are encouraged to visit the official website of the Board jkbose.jk.gov.in.



DC Budgam launches 15-Day Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 campaign

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Thursday launched the 15-day Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 campaign at Boys Higher Secondary School, Budgam.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner administered the Swachhata pledge to the participants and initiated a signature campaign to promote cleanliness and sanitation across rural and urban areas of the district.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner said that cleanliness cannot be achieved through a one-time effort and requires continuous participation from everyone. He called upon people to come together and make collective efforts to keep their surroundings, towns, villages, and the district clean.

The DDC said that every individual, family and community has an important role to play in maintaining cleanliness and ensuring a cleaner environment.

Students and other resource persons also addressed the gathering and pledged to contribute towards maintaining cleanliness in their surroundings.

Among others, ADDC Budgam, Vivek Agarwal, ACP Budgam, Principal Boys Higher Secondary School, BDO and other concerned officers and officials attended the programme.



DDC Kulgam chairs meeting to assess progress of JJM

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: District Development Commissioner (DDC), Kulgam, Shahzad Alam Thursday chaired a review meeting at the Mini Secretariat, Kulgam to assess the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the district.

During the meeting, a detailed review of the ongoing works, functionality of completed works, provision of water supplies in quality and quantity as per JJM norms, physical and financial progress of schemes and works was conducted. It was informed that out of 221 sanctioned works, 141 have been completed as on date, while work on 80 works is ongoing.

DDC Kulgam directed the concerned officers of executing departments to expedite the execution of the remaining works with special emphasis on the completion and commissioning of Rapid Sand Filtration Plants (RSFPs) and water supply schemes while targeting the 100% Har Ghar Jal certification in the district at the earliest.

The DDC also reviewed the Action Taken Report (ATR) of last meeting held on the scheme along with the status of mandatory compliances under JJM 2.0 and measures for the protection and strengthening of drinking water sources under JJM 2.0.

The meeting was attended by the Superintending Engineer, Hydraulic Circle Anantnag/Kulgam; Chief Planning Officer Kulgam, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti Kulgam and Qazigund, Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division Kulgam; Chief Agriculture Officer Kulgam, Executive Engineer, Ground Water Division, Srinagar; Nodal Officer, Jal Shakti Abhiyan; AEE Kulgam and Qazigund; DPMU Kulgam team and chemists of Kulgam, Damhal, and Damhal laboratories.



MLA Kulgam lays foundation stone for development of playfield at Mohipora

GMK SPORTS DESK

KULGAM: Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Kulgam, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami Thursday laid the foundation stone for the development of a playfield at Mohidal Panchayat, Mohipora here in the presence of local residents and officials.

The playfield is being developed by the Department of Youth Services & Sports Kulgam at an estimated cost of ₹63 lakh and the project is being executed by the PWD (R&B) Division Kulgam.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Kulgam underscored the importance of providing adequate sports facilities to young people and said that development of playfields at the grassroots level would provide local youth with better opportunities to participate in sports and physical activities.

He stressed the need for quality and timely execution of the project so that the facility can be made available to the local youth at the earliest.

The development of the playfield is expected to provide a dedicated sporting space for the youth of Mohidal Panchayat and adjoining areas, encouraging greater participation in sports and contributing to the promotion of a healthy and active lifestyle.

During the visit, MLA Kulgam interacted with local residents and listened to their grievances, developmental concerns and demands. People from Mohipora and adjoining villages projected various issues related to development and sought timely intervention for their resolution.



Workshop on Interlinking of Budget with SDGs held at Civil Secretariat

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A workshop on “SDG Budget Tagging & Outcome-Oriented Financing Framework” was held Thursday at Civil Secretariat, here with the objective of strengthening the linkage between the public expenditure, budgetary allocations and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The workshop was presided over by the Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Finance, Shailendra Kumar and attended by senior officers including DG Budget, DG Codes, DG Resources, DG Audit & Trainings (A&T), Director SDG, Director DED-II, Directors Planning and Directors Finance of various Administrative Departments, besides resource persons from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The event focused on the need to move from SDG monitoring to SDG financing by linking identified development gaps with appropriate schemes, budgetary allocations and measurable outcomes. It was emphasised that SDG Budget Tagging would not involve creation of a separate SDG budget. It would instead bring an SDG perspective to the existing budgetary framework, enabling better assessment of whether public expenditure is addressing the identified development gaps and delivering intended outcomes.

The participants deliberated on mapping of existing UT Schemes, Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Central Sector Schemes with relevant SDG Goals and Targets to promote convergence, avoid duplication and identify financing gaps. The exercise is aimed at strengthening the linkage between resources, expenditure and development outcomes.

Emphasis was also laid on outcome-oriented planning, with departments to prepare SDG-wise Action Plans covering identified gaps, targets, interventions, beneficiaries, responsibilities, resources, indicators and timelines. These Action Plans are proposed to be aligned with the Annual Budget formulation process, so that SDG priorities become an integral part of the regular planning and budgeting cycle.

The workshop also deliberated on integration of the existing SDG Dashboard with IFMIS for improved tracking of expenditure against SDG priorities, without creating any parallel financial system.

The UNDP Team apprised the participants of its proposal covering three broad pillars including Evidence-to-Action, SDG Financing and Institutional & Capacity Building. The proposal is presently under examination.

The workshop highlighted the important role of Master Trainers in operationalising the SDG Budget Tagging framework at the departmental level. They will facilitate departmental sensitisation, scheme and expenditure mapping, outcome-based budgeting and inter-departmental convergence.

The workshop concluded with a clear roadmap to measure progress, identify gaps, plan interventions, converge resources, finance priorities, implement actions and measure outcomes. The departments will prepare SDG-wise Action Plans aligned with the Annual Budget cycle, along with scheme mapping, sensitisation and integration of the SDG Dashboard with IFMIS.



Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela organised in Ganderbal

DC calls Youth to avail benefits of National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, Thursday participated in the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela (PMNAM) organised at the Multipurpose Hall, Boys Higher Secondary School, Ganderbal, with the objective of creating greater awareness among youth about apprenticeship opportunities and connecting them with participating establishments.

Addressing the students, pass-outs and other participants, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of apprenticeship in providing practical exposure, industry-oriented skills and valuable work experience. He called upon the youth to actively participate in the programme and make full use of the opportunities available under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).

The DC emphasised that apprenticeship provides an important platform for young people to bridge the gap between formal education and employment by gaining hands-on experience in relevant trades and sectors. He urged eligible students and pass outs to register on the NAPS portal, explore available apprenticeship opportunities and take advantage of the scheme for enhancing their employability.

The Deputy Commissioner also called upon participating establishments, departments, PSUs, corporations and other organisations to make greater use of the apprenticeship framework by registering their establishments and offering suitable opportunities to local youth in accordance with their workforce requirements.

He stressed the need for close coordination between educational institutions, government departments, and industries to ensure wider outreach and effective implementation of the scheme in the district.

The DC further directed the concerned officers to continue awareness and facilitation efforts so that maximum eligible youth are registered and connected with suitable apprenticeship opportunities. He emphasised that sustained efforts under NAPS can provide local youth with industry relevant skills and practical experience, thereby strengthening their preparedness for employment and future career opportunities.

The programme witnessed participation of students, pass outs, educational institutions, government departments and representatives of participating establishments.

The event was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, General Manager, DIC Ganderbal; Chief Planning Officer, Ganderbal; Principals of Government Degree College Ganderbal and Government Degree College Kangan; Principal, Government Polytechnic College Ganderbal; Chief Education Officer Ganderbal; Assistant Labour Commissioner; District Information Officer Ganderbal; Principals of ITI Ganderbal and ITI Kangan; representatives of participating establishments and students.



Dir Agri inaugurates One-Day Training Programme under Mission Karmayogi

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, Thursday inaugurated a one-day training programme for the first batch of employees under the Karmayogi Kartavya Karyakram, being organised as part of Mission Karmayogi, at the Directorate of Agriculture Kashmir, Lal Mandi, Srinagar.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director Agriculture stressed the importance of continuous learning, capacity building and professional development in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of public institutions. He said that Mission Karmayogi is an important initiative aimed at nurturing a skilled, responsive and future-ready workforce capable of delivering quality public services.

The Director underscored that the Agriculture Department, being directly connected with the farming community, has a vital responsibility to ensure efficient, transparent and farmer-centric service delivery. He called upon the participating employees to make the best use of the training and incorporate the learning outcomes into their day-to-day functioning.

“Capacity building is a continuous process. Such programmes provide an opportunity to upgrade our knowledge, strengthen professional competencies and develop a service-oriented approach towards our responsibilities,” the Director said.

He further emphasized the need for greater use of technology, improved coordination and adoption of modern administrative practices to enhance institutional efficiency and ensure effective implementation of various departmental programmes and initiatives.

The training programme is aimed at strengthening the professional, functional and behavioural competencies of employees while fostering a culture of continuous learning, accountability and excellence in public service.

During the programme, participants were oriented on various aspects of Mission Karmayogi and its competency-based approach, with emphasis on improving workplace efficiency, professional conduct, communication, teamwork and citizen-centric service delivery.

The programme was attended by officers and officials of the Directorate of Agriculture Kashmir along with the participating employees of the first batch from other districts also.



DIET Shopian conducts CBP on “Life Skill Curriculum”

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: The District Institute of Education and Trainings (DIET) Shopian, successfully conducted a one-day Capacity Building Programme on “Life Skill Curriculum” at DIET Shopian, in collaboration with the Bharti Airtel Foundation.

The programme was conducted under the supervision of the Principal DIET Shopian, Neetu Gandotra with the objective of strengthening the capacity of teachers in understanding and effectively implementing life-skill education among students. A total of 80 teachers from various schools of district Shopian participated in the programme.

The participants engaged in interactive learning sessions and discussions focused on the importance of life skills in the holistic development of students and their integration into the school education process.

The programme was coordinated by Mush-taq Ahmad Dangroo and Yasir-ul-Haq, Senior DIET Faculty, in close coordination with the team from Bharti Airtel Foundation comprising of Mir Atif, Coordinator Bharti Airtel Foundation and Pankaj Munshi, Master Resource person.

The resource team conducted the sessions using participatory and activity-based approaches, enabling the participating teachers to gain practical insights and strategies for incorporating life skills into classroom and school-level activities.

Speaking on the occasion, the Principal DIET Shopian, appreciated the collaborative efforts of the Bharti Airtel Foundation and the SCERT J&K for organizing the capacity-building programme. The Principal emphasized the importance of equipping teachers with appropriate knowledge, skills and approaches to support the holistic, social and emotional development of students.

The participating teachers expressed their appreciation for the initiative and highlighted the relevance of the training in enhancing their professional capacity and facilitating effective life-skill education in schools.

The programme concluded with a commitment to further strengthen such collaborative initiatives aimed at improving the quality of school education and promoting the overall development of learners in district Shopian.

JKEDI kicks off 5th Entrepreneurship, Skill Dev Batch under RAMP Scheme

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Srinagar, Thursday commenced the Four-Week Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP) under the RAMP Scheme at Govt. College for Women (GCW), M.A. Road, Srinagar.

The 5th batch of the programme was inaugurated by Chief Guest Prof. (Dr.) Yasmeen Farooq Khan, Principal, GCW in presence of Dr. Naila Khan-day, Range Officer, Central Kashmir; Shabir Hussain Shah, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Srinagar; Nazia Shafi, Course Coordinator, Miftah, JKEDI; Sajad Sofi, Designated Programme Trainer; Dr. Hilal Ahmad, HOD Biochemistry and Dr. Sheeba Drabu, Convener, Entrepreneurship Development Cell, GCW.

Speaking on the occasion, the dignitaries outlined the key objectives of the RAMP Scheme and emphasized its vital role in nurturing grassroots entrepreneurship across Jammu & Kashmir. They highlighted how such targeted interventions empower aspiring entrepreneurs with essential tools required to build sustainable business ventures.

In his address, the District Nodal Officer Srinagar, briefed participants about the evolving entrepreneurial ecosystem and emerging opportunities in the startup sector. He stressed the critical importance of entrepreneurship in tackling unemployment and fostering a self-reliant economy, urging trainees to become job creators rather than job seekers.

CM Omar inaugurates renovated J&K House in Amritsar

Upgraded facility to provide affordable and comfortable accommodation to J&K residents



GMK NEWS NETWORK

AMRITSAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday inaugurated the renovated Jammu & Kashmir House at Amritsar, Punjab.

The heritage property, located at 2-Court Road, Amritsar has been comprehensively upgraded with modern amenities to provide affordable and comfortable accommodation to residents of Jammu and Kashmir visiting Amritsar, particularly patients and their attendants travelling to the city for medical treatment.

The renovation and upgradation works commenced in October 2025 and were completed at an approximate cost of ₹2.30 crore. The works covered civil and electrical works, interiors, guest amenities, external

development and allied infrastructure.

The upgraded facility comprises four guest rooms with attached dressing areas and washrooms, besides a common sitting lounge, dining area and kitchen.

Located close to major hospitals and other key destinations in the city, the J&K House will serve as an important support facility for patients and their attendants, besides benefiting students, pilgrims and other visitors from Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister inspected the upgraded facilities and directed the concerned officers to maintain high standards of hospitality, cleanliness and upkeep for guests.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said the facility would help ease the difficulties faced by patients and

their families travelling outside Jammu and Kashmir for treatment, while also providing a convenient and affordable place to stay for other visitors from J&K.

The Chief Minister appreciated the efforts of the departments and officers involved in the renovation and upgradation of the property and stressed the importance of maintaining the facility to high standards.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by his Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Resident Commissioner J&K Ramesh Kumar, Secretary Hospitality & Protocol Avny Lavasa, Additional Resident Commissioner Anil Sharma and senior officers of Government of J&K and Government of Punjab.

NHM employees extend strike by another 72 hours; Min appeals to resume duties

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: The ongoing agitation by National Health Mission (NHM) employees across Jammu and Kashmir is set to continue, with the employees' association extending its strike by another 72 hours from September 18 amid continued demands for pay parity, job security, regularisation and social security benefits.

The Jammu and Kashmir National Health Mission Employees Association (JKNHMEA), said the decision to extend the peaceful agitation was taken as its long-pending demands remained unresolved and there was no concrete, time-bound mechanism from the authorities for addressing the issues.

The extension means that the strike, which began across the Union Territory on September 9 and has already been extended several times, will continue as employees maintain their protests at various district, block and institutional levels.

Employees have been seeking a comprehensive employment policy, revision of remuneration on parity with NHM workers in other states, job security and regularisation, and

benefits including EPF, ESI, insurance coverage, and post-retirement support.

The association said the latest extension was not a decision taken abruptly, but followed years of representations, meetings and discussions over their service conditions.

"We have been working in the health sector for years and have continued our duties during difficult situations. Despite this, there is still no clear policy regarding our future. We want the government to frame a proper mechanism that recognises our service and provides us with employment security," an NHM employee said.

Another protesting employee said the issue was not limited to salaries but also involved disparities in service benefits and long-term security. "Our responsibilities are almost the same, but there is a disparity in remuneration and benefits. We are only seeking a fair and dignified wage structure," he said.

A female NHM employee said uncertainty over their employment had become a major concern for workers who had spent several years serving under the mission. "Many of us have devoted a major part of our working



lives to NHM services. We have families and financial responsibilities, but there is still no certainty about our future," she said.

Another employee said social security measures were equally important. "EPF, ESI and insurance are basic forms of social protection. These issues need a concrete response rather than repeated assurances," the employee said.

The protesting employees also said they were conscious of the impact of the prolonged agitation on healthcare services but maintained that their demands had remained pending for years.

"We understand that healthcare is an essential

service. But our demands have also remained unresolved for years. We are ready to sit across the table with the government and discuss every issue if there is a clear and time-bound roadmap," another employee said.

The prolonged absence of NHM personnel has affected several programmes and services supported by the mission, while additional pressure has been placed on regular staff in some health institutions. The Health Department has also directed institutions to ensure adequate regular manpower in critical and patient-care areas.

Meanwhile, Health and Medical Education Minister

Sakeena Itoo has appealed to the protesting employees to call off the strike and resume their duties, assuring them that the government would examine their concerns and make efforts to resolve issues falling within its jurisdiction.

Speaking to reporters in Pampore on Thursday, Itoo said the government had held several rounds of discussions with the employees and that she had also interacted with them earlier.

"They are our own people, and it is their democratic right to raise their concerns. The government has held several discussions with them, and I have also spoken to them," she said.

The minister expressed hope that the employees would understand the situation and return to work, stressing that people place considerable trust in healthcare workers. "I hope they will call off their strike and return to their duties. The government will certainly do whatever it can for them," she said.

The association, however, has maintained that it is ready for dialogue and constructive engagement, but wants a clear and time-bound roadmap for resolving the long-pending issues—(KNO)

Ruhullah joins NHM protest in Budgam, urges Govt to address employees' demands

NAVEED UL HAQ

BUDGAM: Srinagar Lok Sabha Member Parliament and National Conference (NC) leader Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Thursday joined protesting National Health Mission (NHM) employees in Budgam and expressed solidarity with them.

According to the details available, protests of NHM employees in J&K entered into its eighth consecutive day today.

The protesting employees have been seeking resolution of their long-pending service-related issues, including job security, regularisation, pay parity and social security benefits.

The employees have maintained that they want a comprehensive and time-bound mechanism to address their concerns rather than temporary assurances.

Addressing reporters during the protest, Ruhullah also questioned the Jammu and Kashmir government over the delay in addressing the reservation issue, alleging that the matter has remained pending for nearly two years.

"Two years have passed, but the government has



failed to tell the people where the reservation file is. Leave the ego aside and disclose its status and contents," he said.

Ruhullah said that if the government was unable to pursue the matter, it should hand over the responsibility to them, stating that he would accompany students to ascertain the status of the file.

"If the Chief Minister knows where the file is but is unable to bring it forward, let us know. We will go and find it ourselves and inform the students at what stage the matter is pending," he said.

The MP also alleged that the government was not adequately addressing the concerns of various protesting groups, including NHM employees, medical interns and veterinary

interns. He called for dialogue with employees and other sections of society and said that listening to public grievances was essential for a government that had received a mandate from the people.

Referring to the ongoing NHM agitation, Ruhullah said the concerns of employees should be addressed through engagement and a concrete mechanism rather than allowing the protests to continue.

The NHM strike has entered its eighth day amid demands for job security, regularisation, pay parity and social-security provisions. The employees have also reiterated their willingness to engage in dialogue if the government comes forward with a clear and time-bound roadmap—(KNO)

DGP approves property attachment of 2 terrorists in Kupwara

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, Nalin Prabhat, has approved the attachment of properties belonging to two terrorists allegedly operating from Pakistan. According to an order, the properties include 15 kanals and seven marlas of land and two residential houses in Kachama, Kupwara.

The properties belong to Ab Majid Qureshi, son of Ab Rouf Qureshi, and Parvaiz Ahmad Qureshi, son of Mohd Mustafa Qureshi, both residents of Kachama, Kupwara. The attachment has been initiated in connection with FIR No. 276/22 registered at Police Station Kupwara under Sections 120-B, 121, 121-A, 122, 123 IPC and Sections 17, 18, 18-A, 18-B, 20, 38, 39 and 40 of the UAPA—(KNO)

J&K Govt approves ₹10.22 crore Tribal Tourism Village at Behri Qasab, Mendhar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Government of Jammu & Kashmir, led by the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, has accorded administrative approval for the development of a state-of-the-art Tribal Tourism Village at Behri Qasab in Mendhar area of Poonch district.

The project, sanctioned at a cost of ₹10.22 crore under the Capex Budget 2026-27, aims to showcase the rich tribal culture and heritage of the region while strengthening local infrastructure and creating new economic opportunities for local youth.

The Tribal Tourism Village is envisaged as a dedicated destination that will highlight the distinctive cultural traditions and way of life of the tribal communities, while providing an added attraction for visitors to Poonch. The project is also expected to contribute to local employment and livelihood generation, support community participation in tourism-related activities and further integrate Poonch with the broader tourism circuit of Jammu & Kashmir.

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates multiple development projects in Pampore

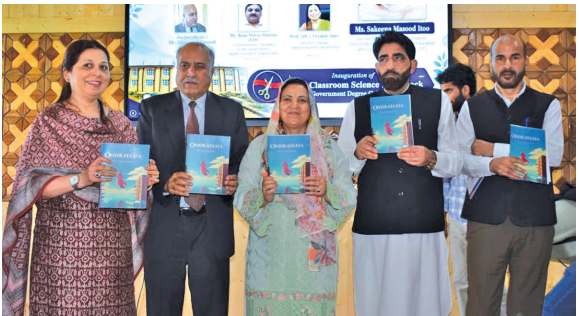
GMK NEWS NETWORK

PAMPORE: Minister for Education, Social Welfare and Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, Thursday visited Pampore Constituency and inaugurated multiple development projects, aimed at strengthening the educational, healthcare and public service infrastructure in the area.

The Minister was accompanied by Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Pampore, Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi; MLA Tral, Rafiq Ahmad Naik; MLA Pulwama, Waheed Ur Rehman Para and MLA Rajpora, Ghulam Mohi Uddin Mir.

Earlier in the day, the Minister inaugurated the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) Pulwama main building at Pampore. The project is expected to provide enhanced facilities for teacher education, training and capacity building.

On the occasion, Sakeena Itoo said that strengthening the institutions dedicated to teacher training is essential for improving the quality of school education and equipping teachers



with the knowledge and skills required to meet the emerging educational needs. She highlighted that government is committed towards modernising the education sector and creating better institutional facilities for students, teachers and other stakeholders. She said that investments in educational infrastructure, coupled with continuous professional development of teachers, are important for building a responsive and future-ready education system.

On the occasion, Minister also distributed regularisation orders among 17 CPWs. She described the step as an important measure towards the welfare and professional security of the concerned workers and highlighted the gov-

ernment's commitment to strengthening social welfare mechanisms and ensuring support to personnel working in this sector.

Later, Sakeena Itoo along with the accompanying MLAs, inaugurated the Science Laboratory Block at Government Degree College (GDC) Pampore.

Addressing the gathering in the auditorium of GDC Pampore, the Minister said that a college is not merely a physical structure but an institution that shapes the intellectual, social and professional growth of young people. She emphasised the need to make higher education more responsive to the changing aspirations of students and the evolving requirements of the employment landscape.

Drivers deserve greater respect, welfare support: DIG Traffic

Calls for CSR assistance for drivers' children; says Traffic Police will play its role

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Drivers deserve greater respect and welfare support for their contribution to society and the economy, DIG Traffic Kashmir Haseeb-ur-Rehman said here on Thursday.

Speaking to reporters in Srinagar on the occasion of a walkathon organised as part of Drivers' Dignity Day, Haseeb-ur-Rehman, said drivers are an essential part of society and the economy and that greater

efforts are needed to ensure their dignity and welfare.

"Throughout the year, efforts will be made to ensure that drivers receive the respect they deserve. Society has an important role to play in this, and the Traffic Police will also fulfil its role," he said.

The DIG called for greater attention to the welfare of departmental and private drivers, particularly after retirement, and urged the corporate sector to support drivers and their families through

corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

He also proposed financial assistance for the children of drivers pursuing Class 12 and college education. "These are the issues we have raised here. I hope these points will reach the concerned quarters and that action will be taken on them," he said. He said it is a matter of pride that Drivers' Dignity Day had been launched from Srinagar and is being observed across the country—(KNO)

DIG North Kashmir calls for people-friendly policing, community vigilance

WARIS FAYAZ

SOPORE: Calling for greater public participation in policing, DIG North Kashmir Range Vinod Kumar on Thursday called for people-friendly policing and community vigilance to maintain peace, prevent crime and tackle drug trafficking.

Addressing a gathering during Thana Diwas at Police District Sopore, DIG Kumar, said Thana Diwas provides an important platform for direct interaction between Police and the public and helps strengthen mutual trust and cooperation.

He called for accessible, responsive and people-friendly policing, saying police stations should function not merely as enforcement units but also as institutions of public service.

The DIG highlighted the role of community cooperation in maintaining peace and preventing crime. He urged citizens to remain vigilant and share timely information about drug trafficking, crime, suspicious activities and other issues affecting society.

Kumar called for the collective responsibility of parents, teachers, religious leaders, civil society and police in protecting young people from drugs and other negative influences—(KNO)

Javid Dar reviews sheep breeding initiatives at Khimber Farm

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Thursday visited the Sheep Breeding Farm at Khimber and reviewed the ongoing breeding programmes and developmental activities.

The Minister stressed the need for transformative and scientific interventions to revolutionise the sheep sector in Jammu and Kashmir, enhancing the productivity towards greater self-sufficiency in mutton production.

Highlighting the government's Embryo Transfer Technology (ETT) programme, he said establishment of ETT laboratories across districts will enable rapid multiplication of superior germplasm and accelerate genetic improvement. He said that the Cabinet has approved establishment of 20 ETT laboratories, one in each district, as a major intervention in this direction.

Javid Dar also stressed the importance of scientifically



utilising high-genetic-merit imported breeds, including Texel and Dorper, for strengthening the local breeding programmes. He said the focus should be on transferring superior genetic traits into locally adapted populations to improve meat productivity and strengthen the domestic mutton sector.

The Minister directed the department to ensure scientific selection, conservation and multiplication of quality germplasm and its wider dissemination among farmers. He also directed that a transparent, scientifically formulated SOP be notified for allocation of breeding sheep to farmers, ensuring objective selection of beneficiaries, proper utilisation of

superior germplasm and wider access to quality breeding stock.

He called for greater participation of youth in modern sheep husbandry, emphasising its potential for entrepreneurship, employment and strengthening rural livelihoods. He directed the department to provide aspiring young farmers with training, technical guidance and handholding support.

The officers informed that Khimber Farm maintains fine-wool and specialised breeds, including imported and Australian lines besides cross-bred varieties such as Kashmir Merino and supports the local breeding programmes through the distribution of quality breeding rams.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

A Policy Must Balance Safety And Livelihoods

Jammu and Kashmir's geographical diversity makes transport planning particularly complex. The requirements of Srinagar and Jammu cannot always be applied identically to remote mountainous and rural areas, where public transport options may already be limited. The administration must ensure that the retirement of older vehicles does not create transport shortages or leave communities without affordable connectivity. Route-wise assessments, phased replacement and adequate availability of alternative vehicles should form part of the implementation strategy. At the same time, transport operators must recognise their responsibility towards passenger safety. Regular maintenance, compliance with fitness requirements and timely replacement of genuinely unsafe vehicles cannot be compromised. The government's responsibility lies in ensuring that enforcement is consistent, transparent and free from arbitrary practices. Fitness testing must be conducted through accountable mechanisms, with clear communication of requirements and accessible grievance-redressal systems. Road safety and economic security should not be treated as competing objectives. A well-designed transport policy can pursue both by removing unsafe vehicles, supporting responsible operators and protecting the travelling public from unnecessary disruption. The 25-year directive should therefore be accompanied by a practical transition plan. The success of the policy will ultimately be measured not only by the number of ageing vehicles removed from the roads, but also by whether Jammu and Kashmir's transport system becomes safer, more reliable and economically sustainable for both operators and passengers.

■ Marriage Assistance Scheme

Restoring Dignity Where Poverty Should Not Decide Daughter's Future

“No Daughter Should Have To Wait For Dignity Until Her Family Can Afford It; Social Justice Begins When Poverty Is Prevented From Becoming A Barrier To A Dignified Life.”



LAILA TU NISA

Marriage is often described as a personal and familial institution, but for economically vulnerable families, it can also become a profound financial challenge. In households already struggling to meet necessities, the expenses associated with a daughter's marriage can feel overwhelming. At this intersection of poverty, gender, and social responsibility, the Marriage Assistance Scheme (MAS) of Jammu and Kashmir assumes particular significance.

Implemented by the Social Welfare Department of Jammu and Kashmir, the Marriage Assistance Scheme is a welfare initiative designed to provide financial assistance to eligible daughters belonging to economically weaker and disadvantaged households. The scheme was launched by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir on 2 December 2015 with a fundamental objective: financial hardship should not prevent a deserving daughter from entering marriage with dignity.

At first glance, 50,000 seems to be only a monetary sum. However, public welfare does not necessarily consist of the sum that is handed out to people. Such monetary aid can be a great help for families facing financial hardships while preparing for marriage. The most important aspect of the scheme is that it acknowledges the fact that some families need help from the State due to unforeseeable circumstances.

The mandate of MAS is therefore not merely to distribute financial assistance. Its larger social purpose is to reduce the economic burden of marriage on low-income families and ensure that poverty does not become an impediment to the dignified marriage of an eligible daughter. In this sense, the scheme forms part of the State's broader welfare responsibility towards vulnerable sections of society.

The constitutional framework gives deeper meaning to such initiatives. Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality before law and equal protection of laws, while Article 15 prohibits discrimination and permits the State to make special provisions for women and children. The constitutional vision of social justice also recognises that genuine equality cannot be achieved merely by treating everyone identically when socio-economic circumstances are profoundly unequal.

In essence, a welfare scheme that targets



families that are economically disadvantaged can be viewed as an aspect of substantive equality since the State can adopt affirmative action where there is disadvantage that affects the equality of opportunities of individuals.

As per MAS, the bride who qualifies for the program will be entitled to get one-time monetary assistance worth 50,000. The process involves DBT, which means that the amount sanctioned will be transferred into the bride's individual bank account. The process is crucial in terms of transparency and accountability in the sense that the assistance goes directly to the right person.

The assistance is released before the marriage date after sanction, thereby enabling the beneficiary to use the support towards the immediate financial requirements associated with the marriage. The objective is not to create dependence but to provide timely institutional support at a stage when a financially vulnerable household may particularly need it.

However, welfare assistance must necessarily operate within defined eligibility criteria to ensure that limited public resources reach those for whom the scheme was designed.

Under these laid-down conditions, the applicant should have attained the age of 18 years old, indicating the legal marriage age of females. The family should have a ration card in terms of Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) or Priority Household (PHH), thus determining households that fall under the categories of poverty.

The condition also stipulates that the applicant should have attained a certain level of education up to Class 8 at least. This condition puts emphasis on a social aspect of the scheme, where the financial assistance is linked to the educational achievement of the recipient.

A very important protection against misuse of the scheme is the no-dual-benefit policy. The applicant

cannot avail herself of the services offered by the SMAS if she is already availing herself of marriage aid under some other government scheme, which includes the Ladli Beti Scheme as well.

The application procedure is also structured around advance submission. The application must be submitted at least 30 days before the proposed marriage date. Applications are submitted online through the Jan Sugam Portal, after which the case undergoes verification by the District Social Welfare Office (DSWO) and the Deputy Commissioner's office before sanction.

Applicants are required to provide essential documents, including the Aadhaar Card of the applicant, AAY/PHH ration card, proof of age or date of birth, Class 8 passing certificate, marriage-related proof or invitation card, and active bank account details required for DBT.

These procedural requirements are not merely formalities. They constitute the administrative framework through which the admin determines eligibility, prevents misuse and directs public funds towards genuine beneficiaries. At the same time, administration must remain accessible. Excessive procedural complexity, lack of awareness or unnecessary delays can undermine the very welfare objective that a scheme seeks to achieve.

This raises perhaps the most important question surrounding MAS: What is the value of a welfare entitlement if the person entitled to it cannot effectively access it?

A scheme may be well-designed on paper, but its real success is determined at the level of implementation. Poor families may lack awareness of government programmes, face difficulties accessing online portals, struggle to obtain documents, or remain uncertain about where and how to apply. Therefore, effective implementation requires more than

administrative notification. It requires public awareness, institutional assistance, timely verification and accountable delivery.

There is also a need to understand SMAS within the broader context of women's dignity. Financial assistance for marriage should never reinforce the idea that a woman's worth is tied to marriage. The purpose of welfare policy should instead be to ensure that economic deprivation does not deprive an eligible woman of choice, dignity or opportunity.

The State Marriage Assistance Scheme should therefore be viewed as one component of a larger social-security framework. Financial assistance must coexist with access to education, healthcare, employment, legal awareness and protection from violence and exploitation. A truly empowered woman is not merely one whose marriage expenses are supported; she possesses the knowledge, economic opportunity and legal capacity to make meaningful decisions about her own life.

The ultimate success of MAS must therefore be measured not simply by the number of applications sanctioned or the amount disbursed. It must be measured by whether the scheme actually reaches the poorest and most vulnerable families, whether eligible daughters receive assistance without unnecessary delay, and whether the administrative system remains transparent and accountable.

The Marriage Assistance Scheme represents an important acknowledgment that poverty should not become a permanent sentence to deprivation. For a financially vulnerable family, 50,000 can provide immediate relief; for the beneficiary, timely assistance can represent institutional recognition that her dignity matters.

But welfare becomes meaningful only when it reaches the person for whom it was created.

The larger lesson of MAS is therefore clear: social justice is not merely about declaring equality, it is about creating conditions in which vulnerable citizens can experience dignity in reality. A daughter's future should never be determined by the depth of her family's poverty. Nor should financial hardship force a family to choose between necessities and an important life event. Government cannot eliminate every economic difficulty faced by its citizens, but through carefully designed welfare interventions, it can ensure that poverty does not become an insurmountable barrier to dignity. MAS, therefore, is not merely a 50,000 assistance scheme. At its best, it is a statement of public responsibility: that where economic vulnerability threatens dignity, the State must step in, not to replace individual agency, but to strengthen it.

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FROM MET TO SOPORE LAW COLLEGE

How Prof. Bacha Institutionalized Hope In Kashmir



IRFAN TILGAMI

There are individuals who merely live through history, and there are rare titans who take history by its reins and reshape its destiny. In the intellectual chronicle of modern Jammu & Kashmir, Professor Ghulam Rasool Bacha belongs incontrovertibly to the latter. Universally hailed by scholars, contemporaries, and the common citizenry as the 'Sir Syed of Kashmir,' Prof. Bacha spent a lifetime waging an uncompromising crusade against ignorance, educational disenfranchisement, and regional insularity. Born on December 23, 1934, amidst the orchards of Sopore, he arrived on the scene when modern, structured education was an out-of-reach privilege reserved for metropolitan capitals.

Endowed with rare intellect and moral fortitude, he pursued his higher studies at the famed Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). There, within its halls of scholarship and reformist traditions, he imbibed Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's foundational creed: that an oppressed or marginalized people cannot attain dignity and self-determination without the armor of modern, scientific, and institutional education. Unlike many contemporaries who settled for prestigious careers in distant cities, Prof. Bacha chose the harder path—he returned home to translate Sir Syed's vision onto Kashmiri soil.

He returned to Sopore not merely as an academic, but as an impassioned reformer on a mission. Sopore, world-renowned for its commerce, timber, and apple trade along the river Jhelum, had long been celebrated as an economic jewel; Prof. Bacha resolved that it must

become an intellectual powerhouse. He understood that genuine emancipation is built stone by stone through classrooms, qualified teachers, well-stocked libraries, and rigorous centers of jurisprudence.

“To educate a child is to preserve a generation; to educate a teacher is to awaken an entire society; and to build an institution of law is to place the shield of justice into the hands of the common citizen.”

—The Institutional Creed of Prof. Ghulam Rasool Bacha (Sir Syed of Kashmir)

December 24, 1968: The Genesis of the Muslim Educational Trust (MET)

Recognizing that isolated philanthropic gestures could never remedy systemic educational neglect, Prof. Bacha took a monumental step on December 24, 1968, by establishing the Muslim Educational Trust (MET). Working with selfless dedication and often against immense logistical and economic odds, he conceived MET not as a commercial entity, but as a public trust dedicated to intellectual upliftment. Through MET, he methodically laid the foundation for an academic network that bridged early childhood schooling with advanced teacher training:

· MET School (Est. 24 December 1968): The flagship institution that raised the regional benchmark for moral, scientific, and holistic primary and secondary education in Sopore, instilling academic discipline in thousands of students who went on to excel across the globe.

· MET Teachers' Training College: A revolutionary intervention born of Prof. Bacha's profound foresight. He realized that modern education could not flourish without trained educators. This institution prepared thousands of competent teachers who became the pedagogical spine of schools throughout the valley.

· Sultan-ul-Aarifeen College of Education (Bandipora): Demonstrating that his vision was not confined to Sopore, he pushed across district boundaries to bring premier teacher education to Bandipora, empowering another vital region of North Kashmir.

· The Alamdar Group of Institutions:



Comprising Alamdar School (Bandipora), Alamdar School (Sopore), and Alamdar College of Education, these centers formed an unbroken chain of value-based learning.

· The Global School (Court Road, Sopore): Conceived to bring progressive 21st-century curricula, modern classrooms, and international academic standards to local youth.

Silent Patron of Global Dreams: Self-Funded Scholarships for Education Abroad

Beyond brick-and-mortar institutions, Prof. Ghulam Rasool Bacha's generosity was defined by a quiet, deeply personal philanthropy that rarely sought public acclaim. Long before foreign scholarships and modern student loan facilities existed in the valley, bright Kashmiri youth from humble backgrounds found their dreams of international higher education cut short by insurmountable financial barriers.

Recognizing extraordinary intellect in young minds who lacked the resources to travel abroad, Prof. Bacha stepped forward as an individual benefactor. Out of his own personal savings and modest financial means, he established self-funded scholarships to sponsor deserving students wishing to pursue higher education abroad. Many of these

beneficiaries—sons and daughters of modest Kashmiri families who traversed oceans to study in premier foreign universities—returned as accomplished scholars, scientists, doctors, and professionals, carrying forward the torch ignited by a silent visionary in Sopore.

Sopore Law College: The Democratic Vanguard of Jurisprudence

Of all his monumental institutional legacies, the establishment of Sopore Law College stands as a supreme act of socio-legal democratization. For generations, the legal profession in Kashmir had been heavily concentrated in Srinagar or accessible only to families who could afford expensive university hostels in Delhi or Aligarh. The common citizen in rural districts was almost always the receiver of legal verdicts, rarely the architect of legal defense.

By establishing Sopore Law College, Prof. Bacha decentralized the law itself. Today, the college has transformed into a prestigious pan-Kashmir magnet. It attracts ambitious, principled students not only from Baramulla, Bandipora, Budgam, Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam, Shopian, and the most distant border reaches of Gurez, Uri, and Karnah.

Because of this institution, sons and daughters of apple growers, agrarian laborers, and local shopkeepers have stepped into the black coat, mastered constitutional law, and entered trial courts, the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and the public administrative services as confident jurists and guardians of civil society.

Carrying the Sacred Torch: Maryam Bacha and Tamkeena Bacha Lead with Distinction

The ultimate hallmark of a great leader is whether their institutions thrive after them. Today, the legacy of the 'Sir Syed of Kashmir' shines brighter than ever under the dedicated leadership of his two accomplished daughters: Maryam Bacha, serving with distinction as Chairperson, and Tamkeena Bacha,

serving as Vice Chairperson. Together, they have safeguarded the founder's ethos while guiding these institutions into the modern digital and clinical era.

· Prof. Ghulam Rasool Bacha Memorial Cricket Tournament: A premier annual athletic championship organized to instill physical endurance, sportsman spirit, camaraderie, and youth vitality among law scholars and regional teams across North Kashmir.

· Merit & Need-Based Memorial Scholarships: A dedicated institutional safety net established in Prof. Bacha's sacred memory, continuing his personal tradition of student funding and ensuring that no bright student abandons their legal education due to financial distress.

· Collegiate Legal Podcasts & Thought Conclaves: Modern digital dialogues, webinars, and symposiums where students and legal practitioners debate constitutional rights, human dignity, legal aid, and socio-economic justice.

An Eternal Tribute to Sopore's Uncredited Benefactor

To look at Sopore today is to see the enduring footprint of Professor Ghulam Rasool Bacha. Just as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan illuminated an era of darkness across the subcontinent, Prof. Bacha earned his timeless title as the 'Sir Syed of Kashmir' by dedicating every breath to the scholastic awakening of his people. Whether through founding premier colleges, building schools, or quietly funding ambitious students to study across international borders, his life was an unreserved sacrifice for the future of Jammu & Kashmir. In every courtroom where a Sopore Law College graduate stands up for justice, in every classroom where an MET-trained teacher inspires a child, and in every home where a graduate breaks the cycle of poverty, the Sir Syed of Kashmir lives on. North Kashmir bows in profound reverence to its master architect of education.

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The Spiritual Legacy Of Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi



UZAIR ASHIQ

Can devotion take a human being beyond the boundaries of the visible world? In Kashmir, there survives the account of a mystic whose stature was such that seekers are said to have been taken into the blessed presence of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and granted the rare fortune of his didar. His name was Maulana Mohammad Amin Owaisi (RA).

Beyond the physical realm of humans lie realities of several kinds, veiled from human eyes by the Divine. Among the realities spoken of in Islamic spiritual tradition are the realms of humans and Jinn, the world of dreams, Arwah, Barzakh, Malaykaat, Malakoot, Jabaroot, and Lahoot. There is a cosmos full of mysteries that exists beyond our knowledge, and there are infinite paths that lead towards different Divine realities. Tasawwuf and spirituality have deep roots in the Valley of Kashmir, and Kashmir is often called Peer Vaer, the Garden of Saints. Between the sky-touching mountains and tall green deodar trees lie thousands of stories. The one who can hear the language of the flowing rivers and the winds descending from the mountains into the meadows may find the stories resting beneath these mountains and within the beautiful margs of the Kashmir Valley.

One may study volumes of books and yet remain empty, while another may simply turn inward and discover a light descending from the heavens. One such path leads its travellers towards an encounter with the Divine and towards the discovery of different truths of the world and beyond. It is Tasawwuf. Tasawwuf is a journey of the soul, where the veil of the self is lifted and the heart learns to behold its true direction. One such story lies within me, as one who has inherited this heritage, and it is this beautiful story that I have come to you to narrate: the story of Maulana Mohammad Amin Owaisi (RA), revered as the Summit of Sainthood.

A boy born in 1910 in the Kis-hanganga Valley of Kashmir was orphaned in his childhood. His mother left him when he was only two, and when he reached the age of seven, his father passed away. He was named Muhammad Amin, inspired by the blessed name of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He left his home while still very young and embarked upon a journey that would eventually make him an Islamic scholar of remarkable depth. His exceptional intellect helped him learn quickly and understand things with remarkable clarity. This made him stand out among his fellow students and deeply impressed his teachers. Some fellow students, unhappy with the attention he received, decided to trick him. One of them took Muhammad Amin with him to a riverside, where he pushed him into the river.

According to the account passed down, the river caused no harm to the young boy; instead, it carried him to another place and gently placed him on the riverbed. After completing his studies at a local madrasa, Muhammad Amin moved to Amroha, in what is now the state of Uttar Pradesh, where he studied the Qur'an, Tafseer, Hadith and other branches of Islamic knowledge. After completing the first level of his studies, known as Chhoti Tehseer, he returned to Kashmir and began serving as the Imam of a mosque, where his knowledge and wisdom soon earned him great respect. Things were going well in his life, and he was preparing to settle there permanently, but the Almighty had other plans. A river can decide its course, but can never decide which sea it will join.

One night, at the time of Tahajjud, when Muhammad Amin arose, an extraordinary encounter unfolded, one that would become a turning point in his life. Two men appeared at the door from nowhere. They came, embraced him and made Muhammad sit on his charpai. They told Muhammad Amin that they had come to him

for a purpose. They discussed his education and then presented him with a mas'ala, asking him to answer it. After thinking carefully, Muhammad Amin gave his answer. The two men exchanged a glance and, smiling, said, "Jawab durust hai, kyun ke zehan durust hai." They then instructed him to return to Moradabad and continue his studies. As they were leaving, Muhammad Amin, filled with excitement and curiosity, asked them about their identities.

According to the account passed down in the tradition, the first man turned back and asked, "Do you know Imam Abu Hanifa?" "Yes," Amin replied. "I am that person," the first man said with a smile. He then indicated the person accompanying him and said, "And the person along with me is none other than Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri (RA)." Muhammad Amin was overcome with astonishment and could only utter, "Subhanallah." According to the account, the two personalities told Amin that they had been sent by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). After saying this, they moved out of the room and disappeared. Perhaps this is what makes this story so close to me: I am not merely recounting a distant past; I am tracing a spiritual heritage that has travelled through generations to reach me.

Amin returned to Madrasa-e-Shahi, which was established by Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi Sahib. He continued his studies in Moradabad and later moved to Amroha, where he studied at the madrasa associated with the Jama Masjid of Amroha. Muhammad Amin is said to have mastered fourteen branches of traditional knowledge, which included Qur'an, 'Ilm al-Tafsir, 'Ilm al-Hadi th, 'Ilm al-Fiqh, Usul al-Fiqh, 'Ilm al-Bay' n, 'Ilm al-Kalim, Falsafa, 'Ilm al-Mani iq, 'Ilm al-i ibb, 'Ilm al-Hay'ah, 'Ilm al-i arf, 'Ilm al-Nai w, and 'Ilm al-'Ari i.

Traditionally, there was no fixed syllabus in the way we understand it today. Teachers continued teaching a student until they considered him competent to attain that degree or spiritual authorization. Throughout these years, thousands of questions arose within Muhammad Amin. His scholarly knowledge continued to grow, yet his inner search had only begun. His connection with that divine thread led him towards a search for inner peace, and during this journey, he was finally guided by two Qutubs of the time to meet a Wali named Noor-ul-Zaman. When Amin Sahib reached the residence of Hazrat Noor-ul-Zaman Shah Sahib, he found many people sitting outside a small hut-like structure surrounded by a large mango forest. This was the spiritual lodge where Noor-ul-Zaman Sahib used to sit. Suddenly, a man came and said, "A man



it felt as though his face was emitting light of its own. He said, "Amin, welcome. A sacred message had already come from the blessed presence of Hazoor Pak (SAW), telling us that you were destined to reach this place." He then told Amin to stay with him. The spiritual journey of Muhammad Amin Sahib and Hazrat Noor-ul-Zaman Shah Sahib had begun.

According to the account of his spiritual tradition, after three years in khalwat, Muhammad Amin encountered Hazrat Uwais al-Qarni (RA), where he was given the task of returning to Kashmir and becoming the successor of the lineage. He was also entrusted with two portions of Durood, one being Durood-e-Khizri and the other Durood-e-Nabi. He was given these words: "Chala ja Kashmiri, wapas Kashmir ki janib; chand Kashmiri tujh se faizyaab honge." Noor-ul-Zaman gave him the spiritual authorization, which was written by Fakhar Zaman, the only son of Hazrat Noor-ul-Zaman. As I came to

mojzaat that have remained alive in the memories of people to this day. One such story lies within me, as one who has inherited this heritage. I have encountered it not merely through the tradition passed down within my family, but also through Noor-ul-Irfan, the biography of Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi (RA), through his own Persian kalam, Manazil-e-Faqr, and through the words and memories preserved by his son, Amin-ud-Din Owaisi Sahib, the present Sajjada Nashin of the Silsila-e-Owaisia.

One may study volumes of books and yet remain empty, while another may simply turn inward and discover a light descending from the heavens. One such path leads its travellers towards an encounter with the Divine and towards the discovery of different truths of the world and beyond. It is Tasawwuf.

Some of these accounts have been passed down through generations, each carrying its own lesson and leaving behind a sense of wonder. One such account is of a Darwesh who had already predicted the date of his own departure from this world. He had also foretold that a Qutbul Aqtab would come to meet him, and that the very person who would arrive would lead his funeral prayer. It is said that when Maulana Muhammad Amin stepped into his house, the Darwesh looked at him, smiled, and departed from this world. Maulana Muhammad Amin then

performed his funeral prayer, fulfilling the Darwesh's earlier prediction.

Another remarkable account is associated with a woman known as Miss Hogen from Austin, USA. According to the oral account preserved in the tradition, she once saw a dream in which a saint appeared before her and guided her towards a place she had never seen. Seeking to understand the meaning of her dream, she came to India and approached Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, describing to him the mountains and trees she had seen. According to the account, the Prime Minister advised her to visit either Himachal or Kashmir. She eventually came to Kashmir and rented a houseboat on Dal Lake, where she narrated her dream to the houseboat owner, Ibrahim Wangnoo. He knew a forest officer named Raja Sakhi Wilayat Khan, who took her to the village of Kashira. When she saw Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi Sahib, she fainted. Upon regaining consciousness, she said, "This is the exact person who came into my dream and gave me a spiritual call." She subsequently undertook a forty-day chilla and embraced Islam. Another story of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi Sahib that surprised me was when he was travelling for the second Hajj of his life. A heavy storm hit the ship, and the sailors and crew lost all hope of survival. They came to Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi Sahib. Hazrat went into muraqaba and, after some moments, said, "Mere murshid ne sadya hai Yemen; fikr na karo." Hours later, the ship found itself near an island. Upon arrival, they came to know that the island was Socotra, in Yemen, traditionally associated with Hazrat Uwais al-Qarni (RA).

The accounts that follow are among those that have remained alive in the tradition I inherited. I share them not merely as stories of wonder, but as fragments of a spiritual legacy that has been passed from one generation to another. For those who recount these stories, they are not merely tales of extraordinary events; they are reminders of a deeper spiritual reality. Perhaps that is why such accounts continue to live, not simply to astonish, but to make us pause, reflect and look beyond what is immediately visible. Those who realise keep diving deeper into this divine sea.

For me, the story does not end with the passing of Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi. I have encountered his legacy in his biography Noor-ul-Irfan, in his own Persian kalam, Manazil-e-Faqr, and, most personally, in the words and memories of my grandfather, Amin-ud-Din Owaisi Sahib. What began with Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi has therefore never felt like a distant history to me; it is a trust that has continued to travel through generations. He lived his life in a village named Kashira, in the district of Kupwara, where thousands of Kashmiris received guidance from him. His core teachings emphasised the purification of the heart, and his mission was to build a chain of Durood Khawans in Kashmir.

Qutbul Aqtab Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi (RA) left this world in 1969. His Khanqah and Dargah are located in that village, surrounded by green forests and mountains. His elder son, Amin-ud-Din Owaisi Sahib, is the Sajjada Nashin and has carried this sacred mission forward for decades. A spiritual guide known for his humility, he has remained largely away from fame and public attention, even as his guidance has reached numerous personalities and communities across Kashmir. Under his stewardship, the Silsila-e-Owaisia has grown from a small circle of seekers into a living spiritual network spread across thousands of devotees and numerous villages throughout the Valley. He continues to preserve and deepen the mission entrusted to him by his father, and for those who seek guidance, the doors of Kashira remain open.

The Silsila, planted nearly a century ago, continues to bear its fruits across the Valley. Perhaps the deepest reason I have chosen to tell this story is that some legacies are not meant merely to be remembered; they are meant to be carried. Kashira remains a hidden treasure of guidance for those who seek to understand Tasawwuf and the Batin.

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named Amin has come; he is a scholar." Amin initially thought it must be someone else, as he had just arrived and no one there knew his name. The man came again and repeated, "A man named Amin has come; he is a scholar and is among the people who eat maize. Peer Sahib is calling him." Now Muhammad Amin was certain that it was him, as he was indeed among the people who ate maize. He went inside and saw a person with a radiant face;

know more about his life, I discovered that his journey was not confined to the pages of scholarship. The same man who mastered the sciences of his age also gave expression to his inner world through Persian poetry, leaving behind his own kalam, entitled Manazil-e-Faqr.

Maulana Muhammad Amin Owaisi (RA) made his way back to Kashmir, and with his return began a chapter filled with stories, experiences and

2 Jaish Terrorists

from an area covered with thick vegetation and difficult hilly terrain.

Meanwhile, security forces also detained a local youth, suspected of being an over-ground worker. “He is being questioned in connection with the operation,” said an official.

In a post on X, the White Knight Corps said, that the operation, code-named “Operation Sohan,” was launched during the intervening night of September 16 and 17 after confirmed inputs about the presence of terrorists in the general area of Brattal.

“Despite hostile weather, difficult terrain and poor visibility, troops of White Knight Corps, Jammu and Kashmir Police and CRPF launched a targeted counter-terrorism operation, resulting in the neutralisation of two terrorists,” it said.

It said the operation is still in progress, with search and surveillance operations underway in the area to track any remaining threat.

Security forces have maintained their deployment in the area and are conducting searches of the surrounding forest and mountainous terrain to rule out the presence of any other terrorists, the official added—(KNO)

PM Modi's

which have increased from 91,000 km to 146,000 km, and the number of airports has risen from 74 to 165.

“Kashmir is now directly connected with the rail network. Discrimination has been eliminated and the UT is witnessing historic transformation. As far as the welfare schemes across the country are concerned, 11 crore toilets, more than 10 crore gas connections and 4 crore PM Awas have been provided, and another 3 crore houses are under construction. Under Hon’ble Prime Minister’s guidance Jammu Kashmir will emerge as an unparalleled example of prosperity and happiness. I urge all citizens of Jammu Kashmir to contribute to this Service Campaign,” Lieutenant Governor said.

Rethink Development

language among diverse disciplines to collectively address the climate crisis. He underscored that climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are not isolated phenomena but interconnected dimensions of the triple planetary crisis. Recognizing the finite and inter-linked nature of Earth’s systems, he emphasised the need for holistic approaches that transcend departmental silos in governance.

“Although government machinery has separate departments. One department formulates water policy, another forest policy, and yet another climate policy. But, I strongly believe such national seminars remind us that there is a deep connection among all these, and acknowledging it is the first step toward solving these problems,” he said.

Highlighting the role of technology, the Lieutenant Governor described Geospatial Intelligence, including GIS, remote sensing, UAVs, as the lifeline connecting science and governance. He stressed that anticipatory governance must replace reactive responses, enabling real-time decisions through tools such as Climate Sensitivity Maps and Spatial Decision Support Systems.

“We must create systems that do not merely record what has already happened to a glacier, forest, or river valley, but can also tell us with full confidence what is going to happen next. And we must be able to deliver that information to those who today need to decide what should be built, where it should be built, and what should be conserved. I believe the role of scientists and environment experts is no longer just to describe change. They must become co-creators of early warning systems. The time when we waited five years for a report on a subject is gone. Now we must make real-time decisions,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor made a strong appeal to bridge the gap between science and policy. He said while data and models are abundant, institutional mechanisms to integrate scientific conclusions into district development plans, water distribution, and disaster management remain inadequate. He called for trust, collaboration, and shared language between scientists and policy-makers to ensure timely and effective action.

“If we can bridge the distance between what science knows and what policy delivers in line with that knowledge, then even the biggest challenges related to climate change can be addressed. Today, we do not lack data on climate change. With the help of Artificial Intelligence, we also do not lack tools and models. What we lack is the institutional system and the institutional arrangements that can take conclusions emerging from a lab or satellite record and deliver them in time to a district’s development plan,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor reminded the researchers and policy-makers that development must be accompanied by responsibility, conservation, and duty. He urged young experts to think beyond disciplinary boundaries and policy-makers to listen to the language of science.

“Development must mean establishing a relationship with the Earth in which use is accompanied by responsibility, progress by conservation, and rights by duties. Another important takeaway you will carry from this conference is that technological skills alone are not enough. We must prepare young research-

ers and scientists who can think beyond disciplinary boundaries, and we need policy makers who can listen to the language of science,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Looking ahead to the vision of a Developed India by 2047, the Lieutenant Governor stressed that development must be climate-resilient and inclusive. He expressed hope that the dialogue initiated during the national seminar would continue beyond its conclusion, permeating laboratories, universities, districts, and policies, ultimately benefiting the people. He reaffirmed India’s commitment to sustainable development and climate resilience through science-policy integration, technological innovation, and cultural sensitivity.

Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Prof. Talat Ahmad, former Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Dr. Rasik Ravindra, former Director, National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR); Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, Dean Academic Affairs, University of Kashmir; experts, policy makers, and researchers from across the country; senior officials, faculty and students attended the valedictory session.

Snowfall In Higher

areas with fresh snow.

The pass connects the Tulail Valley in Gurez with the Mushkoh Valley towards the Drass sector.

Fresh snowfall was also reported from the higher reaches of Zojila Pass and Zero Point near Sonamarg in central Kashmir’s Ganderbal district, while the Apherwat Peak in Gulmarg also received the season’s first snowfall.

The rainfall and snowfall brought down temperatures across the region.

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 23.2 degrees Celsius, which was 4.6 degrees below normal, while the minimum temperature was 13.4 degrees Celsius.

Pahalgam recorded a maximum of 14 degrees Celsius, 9.9 degrees below normal, while its minimum temperature was 9.4 degrees Celsius.

Gulmarg recorded the lowest maximum temperature among the listed Valley stations at 11.2 degrees Celsius, 7.4 degrees below normal. Its minimum temperature was 5.8 degrees Celsius, which was 2.9 degrees below normal.

Qazigund recorded a maximum of 20 degrees Celsius, 6.5 degrees below normal, and a minimum of 12.4 degrees Celsius. Kupwara recorded 21.9 degrees Celsius as the maximum and 13.8 degrees Celsius as the minimum.

In Jammu, the maximum temperature settled at 31.4 degrees Celsius, 1.3 degrees below normal, while the minimum was 19.3 degrees Celsius, four degrees below normal.

The Meteorological Centre, Srinagar, has forecast generally dry weather from September 18 to 25, although brief spells of rain are possible at isolated places.

On September 26 and 27, partly to generally cloudy weather is expected, with brief spells of rain likely at a few places, while generally dry conditions are forecast from September 28 to 30.

The weather office has advised farmers to resume harvesting of apples and paddy, besides other agricultural operations, from September 18 as weather conditions are expected to improve.

For Thursday, the MeT Centre has forecast thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds at a few places, along with light snowfall over isolated higher reaches of north and central Kashmir.

Officials advised travellers heading towards higher reaches to exercise caution amid the changing weather conditions—(KNO)

Speaker Chairs All

ensure the smooth and effective conduct of the Assembly proceedings. He underlined that the legislative institution carries a significant responsibility towards the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

“Every eye is on the proceedings of the Assembly and the people are watching how their elected representatives articulate their grievances and raise issues of public importance in the House. This places a great responsibility on every member. It is, therefore, imperative that all members conduct themselves with due regard to the dignity, discipline and decorum of the House,” maintaining the Speaker.

He stressed that parliamentary debate should remain focused on public welfare, constructive deliberations and the effective articulation of issues confronting the people, while maintaining the established conventions and dignity of the legislature.

During the meeting, the members of the Business Advisory Committee put forward a range of valuable suggestions aimed at making the Session more relevant, inclusive and responsive to public aspirations. The members emphasised the importance of providing sufficient opportunities to legislators to raise constituency-specific concerns and matters requiring the attention of the government.

Among the key suggestions discussed was the conduct of Zero Hour, with members proposing that Chief Whips and party leaders should identify the members who would participate and furnish the requisite list in advance to facilitate effective management of the proceedings.

The members also suggested that mobile phone usage inside the Assembly Hall should not be permitted, in order to maintain disci-

pline, attentiveness and the decorum of the House.

Emphasis was also laid on timely circulation of the list of Private Members’ Bills, Resolutions along with questions and answers, well in advance of the proceedings. The members stated that advance availability of such legislative material would enable them to study the issues thoroughly, prepare appropriately and raise relevant supplementary questions during the Session.

The Committee further stressed that every member should be provided adequate time and opportunity to present matters of public concern, constituency grievances and issues of wider significance before the House, in accordance with the applicable rules and the approved business of the Assembly.

The Speaker took note of the suggestions put forth by the members and underscored the collective responsibility of all members and concerned stakeholders in ensuring the orderly, productive and meaningful conduct of the Autumn Session.

The meeting concluded with an emphasis on strengthening parliamentary engagement, facilitating constructive debate and ensuring that the proceedings of the Assembly remain focused on the concerns and aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Secretary, JKLA, Manoj Kumar Pandit was also present in the meeting.

If Govt Has No

saying their demands had not been accepted.

He urged the government to initiate talks and appealed to the protesting employees to call off their strike if the government agreed to negotiate. "I would also appeal to the daily-waigers to call off their strike if the government agrees to negotiate. But at least take some initiative," he said.

On threats issued to Kashmiri Pandits, Sharma said the community would not be intimidated by posters or threats. "Kashmir belongs to every resident, including Kashmiri Pandits. This is not the time when anyone can try to frighten people," he said—(KNO)

Leverage Strengths,

export goal.

Dulloo also directed the department to prepare a comprehensive plan focusing on capacity building, infrastructure upgradation, establishment of clusters and effective organisation of artisans and craftsmen. He also advised the formulation of a detailed blueprint to leverage incentives and schemes of the Government of India, while designing suitable UT-specific interventions to achieve the objectives in a time-bound manner.

Emphasising the importance of sound planning, the Chief Secretary observed that the assessments and projections underlying the Action Plan should be scientific, evidence-based and founded on robust data, as the quality of these assessments would directly influence the outcomes.

On this occasion the Commissioner Secretary, I&C, Vikramjit Singh highlighted the outline of the strategic framework developed by the Department for the period 2026-2030 which seeks to align the national export vision with coordinated UT- and district-level interventions.

The Commissioner Secretary also underscored the Jammu and Kashmir’s improved trade readiness, noting that the UT had risen from 36th position in 2020 to 2nd position in 2024 in the national Export Preparedness Index among Small States, North-Eastern States and Union Territories.

He further added that the proposed framework comprises the State Export Action Plan (SEAP) and District Export Action Plans (DEAPs), with interventions tailored to the competitive strengths of individual districts.

The Action Plan as elucidated by the Director, Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, Mussarat Islam envisages substantial expansion of the export ecosystem by 2030, with the active registered exporter base targeted to increase to 15,000, against the present 269 active RCMC exporters and a potential pipeline of around 1,000 users.

It further aims to ensure 100 per cent GI-QR tagging of exports for enhanced authenticity and traceability, promote 100 crore in e-commerce exports through focused digital onboarding and market-access interventions, and raise Free Trade Agreement (FTA) utilisation to over 50 per cent, from the current level of below 20 per cent.

The department also presented a phased implementation framework comprising immediate, medium-term and long-term interventions. Immediate priorities over the next 0-2 years include scaling up the Artisan Credit Card, establishing Export Textile Planning Cells under Tex-RAMPS and launching the unified “Soulful J&K” GI branding campaign.

Additionally the Medium-term interventions over 2-4 years include introducing ESG and EUDR compliance certifications for more than 100 manufacturing units and establishing raw material banks to strengthen the production and export ecosystem.

Moreover the Action Plan proposes to leverage the benefits of key Central Government schemes of the Ministry of Textiles, including the Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL) and SAMARTH, the scheme for capacity building in the textile sector. It also envisages utilising the J&K Export Subsidy Scheme, 2021, under which eligible exporters

are entitled to an export subsidy of 10 per cent, subject to a maximum of 5 crore per exporter, to strengthen the competitiveness of local products in international markets.

Concluding the meeting, the Chief Secretary underscored the importance of sustained institutional coordination, robust monitoring and effective implementation of the Action Plan to strengthen Jammu and Kashmir’s export ecosystem, enhance the global reach of its traditional crafts and secure sustainable livelihoods for its approximately 4.50 lakh artisans and craftsmen.

Under PM, India

highlighted the government’s record on internal security and border management, saying insurgency and long-running disputes in parts of the country had been addressed during Modi’s tenure. "Naxalism has been eradicated, decades-old disputes in the Northeast have been resolved through peace accords, and the borders are secure," he said.

The Home Minister said national security was central to the government’s development approach, arguing that security was essential for economic and social progress.

"A secure India is the first prerequisite for a prosperous India; Modi ji has proven this," he said.

Meanwhile, BJP president Nitin Nabin also praised PM Modi, describing the prime minister’s political journey as one centred on "Nation First".

Nabin said Modi’s leadership had contributed to India’s development and self-reliance and helped the country advance its position globally.

He described Modi’s tenure as a period of governance and public welfare, saying the prime minister’s leadership had given India a "renewed identity and enhanced strength"—(KNO)

MoE proposes review

a view to ensuring a transparent, fair and workable framework for teacher eligibility, the Government proposes to undertake a comprehensive review of the existing arrangements relating to TET,” MoE said.

The Ministry said that the measures proposed for consideration of TET includes examination of the existing TET eligibility and qualification framework as well as examination of issues relating to teachers who are already in service and are required to acquire TET qualification;

MoE also said that the consideration of measures shall ensure that TET examinations are conducted periodically and at reasonable intervals and

The Ministry has further proposed to review the examination of the practical difficulties faced by serving teachers in obtaining TET qualification.

MoE said that there must be a consultation of State Governments, Union Territory Administrations, NCTE, educational experts and other stakeholders.

It also said that the government will review whether appropriate amendments to the relevant statutory provisions are necessary in the larger public interest—(KNO)

Cold Storage Bookings

space much earlier. Those who have not made arrangements in advance are now struggling to get space," a grower said.

Another grower said last year’s market was unfavourable when a large quantity of apples arrived together due to highway disruption. "Those who had the option of keeping their produce in cold storage waited for better market conditions and were able to sell at comparatively better prices later," he said.

Cold storage unit holders said bookings began several months ago, with growers reserving space soon after last season’s stored produce was cleared.

"Most of our capacity was booked months in advance. The response has been much stronger this year because growers who stored their apples last season received relatively good returns. The remaining capacity has also been booked now," a cold storage operator said.

Another unit holder said most facilities are making preparations to receive the crop from next week.

"Several units are scheduled to start receiving produce from next week. Since capacity is limited, growers cannot wait until the last moment to make bookings. The demand this year is significantly higher than what we witnessed earlier," he said.

Growers said cold storage has increasingly emerged as an important option for managing market risk, particularly when arrivals are concentrated within a short period.

"Cold storage gives growers some flexibility. Instead of selling the entire crop immediately when arrivals are high and rates are weak, they can store part of the produce and wait for the market to improve. But this option is useful only when storage is booked in advance," another grower said.

The growers, however, maintained that cold storage alone cannot resolve all the challenges confronting the horticulture sector and called for better market management, transportation facilities and timely market information to help them make informed decisions.

With the new apple season approaching its peak, the early exhaustion of cold storage bookings has also highlighted the growing dependence of growers on controlled storage facilities to protect themselves against sharp fluctuations in market prices—(KNO)

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Rana lays foundation stone for flood-restoration, riverbank protection works in Jammu

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Thursday laid the foundation stones for the restoration of 93 water supply schemes across Jammu East and Nagrota constituencies, worth ₹11.29 crore, and a river-bank protection work on the Tawi near Government Degree College, Sidhra, worth ₹3.40 crore.

The 93 water supply schemes were damaged during the August-September 2025 floods, affecting water supply infrastructure in several areas. Their restoration is being taken up under the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) Disaster Mitigation scheme at an estimated cost of ₹11.29 crore. The project aims to restore the damaged infrastructure and strengthen the resilience of water



supply systems against future flood-related disruptions, ensuring reliable and uninterrupted drinking water supply to the affected communities.

Rana also laid the foundation stone for a ₹3.40 crore Tawi river-bank protection work near Government Degree College, Sidhra, under the SASCI scheme. The project strengthens the riverbank and protect adjoining areas from erosion and flood-related damage.

“Flood protection is not just about responding to disasters; it is about pre-

paring our infrastructure and communities before disaster strikes. Our focus is on strengthening vulnerable areas, restoring damaged infrastructure and building systems that can withstand future floods,” Rana said.

The foundation stone-laying ceremony was attended by MLA Nagrota Devyani Rana, MLA Jammu East Yudhvir Sethi, senior officers of the Jal Shakti Department, representatives of the local areas and a large gathering of local residents.

While inaugurating

WSSs, the Minister said that ensuring safe and dependable drinking water supply to every household remains a top priority of the Government and that the restoration of flood-damaged infrastructure was being pursued on a mission mode to minimise hardship for the affected population. “Access to safe drinking water is a basic necessity and the Government is committed to restoring every scheme damaged in last year’s floods without delay,” he said, adding that the sanctioned works had been specifically identified after a detailed assessment of flood-related damage in the two constituencies.

Rana directed the executing agencies to ensure strict adherence to prescribed quality standards, timely mobilisation of resources and completion of the works within the stipulated timeframe, so that the intended benefits

reach the public without unnecessary delay. He further directed regular field-level monitoring and periodic progress reviews to pre-empt execution bottlenecks.

The Minister also underscored the Government’s broader commitment to building climate-resilient public infrastructure across Jammu & Kashmir, stating that restoration efforts were being combined with strengthening measures to make water supply schemes better equipped to withstand future natural calamities. He called for close coordination between the administration, executing departments and elected public representatives to ensure that grievances arising from infrastructure damage are addressed on priority and that development benefits reach every locality within the constituency.

JSCL, LEAD launch Jammu Smart City Hackathon

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Jammu Smart City Limited (JSCL), in collaboration with LEAD (LJK Economic Growth & Development Dialogue), on Thursday launched the Jammu Smart City Hackathon, bringing together innovators, entrepreneurs, startups, researchers and community organisations to develop practical solutions to the city’s urban challenges.

The initiative aims to create a platform for connecting innovative ideas with government departments and other city stakeholders, helping develop solutions that are practical, scalable and suited to Jammu’s needs.

The hackathon will focus on six broad themes—urban planning, green spaces and public realm; cleanliness, waste management and sustainability; digital governance, mobility and smart infrastructure; tourism, heritage and culture; inclusive communities and animal welfare and urban resilience and disaster management.

Addressing the gathering, CEO, JSCL, Dr. Devansh Yadav said the hackathon would provide an opportunity to bring together innovative ideas

and connect them with the city’s development needs, with a focus on solutions that can be practically



implemented and scaled.

Registration for the hackathon will remain open from September 17 to 25, 2026. Participants will go through a structured process involving ideation, mentoring, prototyping and evaluation before presenting their solutions.

Selected participants will also have opportunities for incubation and potential investment support, aimed at helping promising ideas move towards implementation.

As part of the launch, JSCL and LEAD also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on various development initiatives in Jammu. The MoU was signed by LEAD Convenor Harinder Gupta and CEO, JSCL, Dr. Devansh Yadav.

The partnership will cover areas including cultural promotion, startup and entrepreneurship development, innovation and urban and economic development,

with a focus on strengthening collaboration between the city administration and Jammu’s wider innovation ecosystem.

The launch brought together representatives from academic institutions, industry and the innovation ecosystem, including Dr. Suhaib Batt of MIET Jammu; Dr. Jasvinder Pal Singh and Dr. Harnain Kour of Central University of Jammu; Dr. Raj Kumar V and Dr. Yogesh Nimdeo of IIT Jammu; Dr. Vivek Sharma, Kannav Padha and Druri Sharma of IIM Jammu and Vijay Kumar Raina, Gourav Abrol and Alankrit Mahajan from LEAD.

Others present included Prof. (Dr.) Sarabjeet Singh, Tushar Gupta, Rupesh Masson, Gunjan Sharma and Rahul Trakroo.

From JSCL, Pankaj Kumar, Rahul Pandit, Ashish Anand and Neeraj Tickoo were among those associated with the initiative.

PM Modi’s birthday

BJP organises ‘Ashirwad Ka Diya’ prog at Lal Chowk

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) Jammu and Kashmir unit on Thursday organised an ‘Ashirwad Ka Diya’ programme at the historic Clock Tower in Lal Chowk, Srinagar, to mark the 76th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The party workers and supporters gathered at the clock tower and lit diya and candles as part of the celebrations, offering prayers for the Prime Minister’s long life and good health. The programme was held as part of the BJP’s nationwide birthday observances centred on the ‘Ashirwad Ka Diya’ initiative.

Addressing the gathering, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Jammu

and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and BJP leader Sunil Sharma, extended birthday greetings to PM Modi on behalf of the party’s Kashmir unit.

“First of all, at Kashmir’s historic Clock Tower in Lal Chowk, on behalf of the BJP’s Kashmir unit, we would like to extend our heartfelt birthday greetings to our Prime Minister Narendra Modi. We pray for his long life and good health. The entire BJP unit in Kashmir and people at large are praying for this at this historic Clock Tower,” Sharma said.

He said Prime Minister Modi’s public life had included a long tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat followed by nearly 12-and-a-half years as Prime Minister of India.

“Today marks the cele-

bration of twenty-five years spent in office, a tenure comprising roughly twelve and a half years as the Chief Minister of Gujarat and another twelve and a half years as the Prime Minister of India,” Sharma said.

Describing the tenure as “unprecedented” and “remarkable”, the LoP Sharma said PM Modi had dedicated his public life to the service of the nation.

He said BJP workers have assembled beneath the Clock Tower to light lamps and pray for the Prime Minister’s long life and good health, while seeking blessings from the Almighty for his continued service to the country.

The ‘Ashirwad Ka Diya’ programme was part of the BJP’s nationwide birthday-related ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’—(KNO)

SKUAST-K celebrates Graduation Day at Shalimar Campus

VC urges Graduates to lead with Resilience and Innovation



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) held the Graduation Day ceremony for the Undergraduate Batch of 2022 of the Faculty of Horticulture and College of Agricultural Engineering and Technology at the Shalimar Convention Center, Faculty of Horticulture.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai attended the ceremony as the Chief Guest.

The ceremony began with the donning of ceremonial robes and an academic procession led by UG Coordinator, Dr. Aziz Mujtaba, with the participation of university officers and divisional heads.

Addressing the gathering, Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai congratulated the graduating students and highlighted the contribution of SKUAST-K students to the university’s innovation ecosystem. He noted that a majority of the university’s

recent patents and emerging startups have been spearheaded by graduating students.

Prof. Ganai said the university’s academic standards and course offerings have expanded to respond to evolving global requirements. Emphasising the role of higher education in society, the Vice Chancellor said a university’s contribution should be reflected in producing skilled and empowered graduates capable of becoming self-reliant and developing sustainable solutions. He encouraged the graduates to build resilience, embrace self-reliance and adapt to changing professional and technological environments.

Earlier, Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension and Dean, Faculty of Horticulture, presented welcome address.

On the occasion provisional degree certificates were presented to the graduating students. The programme also included the signing of academic scrolls, oath-taking ceremony, and student valedictory address

Swachhata Hi Seva Campaign launched with Community in B'pora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: As part of the nationwide Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) 2026 campaign, a series of community and school-level activities were organised across Bandipora to promote cleanliness, source segregation, responsible waste management and sustainable environmental practices.

The campaign commenced at Ward six, where citizens participated at the household level by cleaning their homes and lighting lamps as a symbolic Sankalp (pledge) towards adopting a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable way of life. The activity highlighted the importance of making cleanliness a regular household and community practice rather than a one-time exercise.

An intensive awareness and demonstration drive on the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026 was also conducted at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Plan, Bandipora, with a special focus on four-way source segregation of waste. Students and faculty members were sensitised about the proper segregation and handling of wet, dry, sanitary and special-care waste and the importance of responsible disposal at source.



The programme also promoted the Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (RRR) approach, encouraging students and community members to donate, reuse and responsibly manage items such as books, school bags and other usable materials, thereby reducing waste generation and promoting a culture of reuse.

As part of the campaign’s educational outreach, a Swachhata Gyan Yatra was organised by Eaglet Public School, Bandipora, from the school premises to the Ekart Service Centre. The exposure activity provided students with an opportunity to understand cleanliness, responsible waste handling and sustainable practices in their surroundings.

An interactive Swachhata and Water Management session was also organised, focusing on rainwater harvesting, water conservation and responsible disposal of wastewater.

Participants were encouraged to adopt simple and practical measures for conserving water and preventing water pollution.

Adding a creative dimension to the campaign, a thematic “Waste to Art” competition was held at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Plan, Bandipora. Students showcased their creativity by transforming waste and discarded materials into useful and artistic items, conveying the message that waste can be given a new life through creativity, reuse and responsible management.

The Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 campaign will continue to focus on community participation, awareness, source segregation, resource recovery, water conservation and sustainable waste-management practices, with the objective of making cleanliness and environmental responsibility an integral part of everyday life.

ADDC Shopian chairs Workshop on launch of Swachhata Hi Seva

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone Thursday chaired a workshop on the launch of Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 at Mini-Secretariat Shopian.

The workshop was organized by Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat, Shopian under the auspices of the Directorate of Rural Sanitation, Department of RD&PR, J&K to sensitise officers and officials about the objectives, activities and responsibilities under the fortnight-long Swachhata Hi Seva campaign, being observed from September 17 to October 2, 2026, under the theme “Swachhata Mein Sahbhag, Swachh Bharat, Viksit Bharat.”

The ADDC called for active participation and coordinated efforts by all concerned departments to make Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 a meaningful and impactful campaign across



the district.

The ADDC emphasized that sanitation must not remain a mere ceremonial demand but must be adopted in its true spirit in every aspect of daily life. He stressed that Swachhata Hi Seva should be transformed from a campaign into a sustainable public movement, with active participation of every section of society.

The ADDC called upon all department to ensure visible cleanliness, proper waste segregation and scientific waste management in their respective areas. He emphasized greater involvement of students, youth clubs, panchayat Raj Institutions, Self-help Groups and local communities, saying that collec-

tive participation is essential for creating a clean, healthy and environmentally responsible society.

The ADDC further directed concerned officers to ensure effective inter-departmental coordination, proper planning and timely execution of activities, while laying special focus on rural areas and public places. He urged all stakeholders to make Swachhata Hi Seva 2026 people-centric, participatory and result-oriented, so that it’s impact continues beyond the fortnight campaign.

District Programme Officer, ICDS, Mohammed Imran highlighted the pivotal role of the Rural Development Department in driving public cleanliness.

DG Rural Sanitation launches UT-wide Swachhata Hi Seva Campaign

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director General Rural Sanitation, J&K, Anoo Malhotra Thursday launched the UT-wide Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) 2026 campaign at Block Khonmoh, Srinagar, calling for collective efforts to transform cleanliness from a time-bound campaign into a sustained habit and an integral part of everyday life.

Addressing students, officials and community members at the launch programme, the DG Rural Sanitation said the objective of Swachhata Hi Seva is to inculcate responsible behaviour and build a sustained people’s movement towards cleanliness and environmental protection.

She stressed that Swachhata Hi Seva should not have a defined beginning or end, but must become part



of people’s daily habits and behaviour. She also highlighted the importance of four-stream waste segregation at source, urging students and schools to take the message of responsible waste management to their homes and communities.

The DG encouraged schools to organise more awareness and creative programmes on cleanliness and urged students to actively participate in the campaign and share their initiatives to inspire wider community participation.

The launch programme

featured vibrant student-led performances, with participating schools presenting creative skits on different aspects of Swachhata. Sheikh Ali Mission School, Khonmoh, presented a skit on the Swachhata Hi Seva theme, while Higher Secondary School, Khonmoh, showcased a creative performance highlighting the importance of cleanliness.

Samaa Public School, Balhama, and Radiant Model School, Khonmoh, also presented skits centred on cleanliness and environmental responsi-

bility. Northland Public School performed a skit highlighting the importance of waste segregation and maintaining a clean environment.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Director Rural Sanitation, Kashmir, Shabir Ahmad Hakak, said Swachhata Hi Seva represents a collective movement for cleanliness and responsible citizenship.

He said cleanliness holds an important place across faiths and traditions and emphasised that the campaign must evolve into a permanent habit.

He explained the major pillars of SHS 2026, including identification and cleaning of Cleanliness Target Units (CTUs), cleanliness of public places, and greater involvement of youth and students. He called upon students to become active participants

and ambassadors of the campaign.

Joint Director, RDD, Mantasha Binti Rashid, said the success of the campaign ultimately depends on how individuals contribute through simple actions in their daily lives. She encouraged students to practise home composting of vegetable and kitchen waste, explaining that biodegradable waste can be converted into manure while reducing the amount of waste entering the environment.

She observed that nature functions through a circular system, while excessive use of plastic has disturbed this balance. She urged students to encourage their families to adopt composting and other sustainable practices, emphasising that such measures help fulfil collective responsibility towards nature.

3rd T20I: Abhishek's record century takes India to 127-run win over Afghanistan, clinch series 3-0

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Left-handed opener Abhishek Sharma lit up the Arun Jaitley Stadium, packed with 26,230 fans, by hitting the fastest T20I century by a player from a Test-playing nation and the quickest ton by an India men's batter, off just 30 balls, as India thrashed Afghanistan by 127 runs to seal a 3-0 series win on Thursday.

If Sunday hinted at Abhishek finding form again by hitting a swash-buckling fifty, Thursday left no doubt. The left-handed opener knocked over a stack of records on the way to his hundred, bettering the 35-ball effort of Rohit Sharma against Sri Lanka in 2017 for the fastest by an Indian, and going third on the overall list behind only Estonia's Sahil Chauhan (27 balls) and Turkey's Muhammad Fahad (29).

Though Afghanistan mounted a late fightback in the back end of the innings and kept India to 221/7, including taking four wickets in the final four overs, Nitish Kumar Reddy and Ravi Bishnoi then took 3-25 and 3-26 respectively to bowl Afghanistan out for 94 in 14.1 overs. With Afghanistan losing four wickets in the power play, India



were on course to clinch a clinical 3-0 series win after defeating Zimbabwe by the same margin in July.

On a pitch with no demons, Abhishek showcased supreme power and timing to hit a brilliant 108 off 34 balls, laced with nine fours and eleven sixes at a strike-rate of 317.65, with 102 of those runs coming from boundaries alone. His carnage meant India were 100/0 at the end of the power play, and despite a late stumble, the designated visitors managed to cross the 220-mark.

He found an able partner in Sanju Samson, who made a 35-ball 50, his second fifty in a row in this series, as the duo shared a 142-run opening stand. For Afghanistan, Azmatullah

Marzai picked up 2-27, while Rashid Khan, who was electrifying in effecting a run-out and taking two astounding catches, and Abdullah Ahmadzai took a scalp each.

Electing to bowl first, Afghanistan had a slip in for Abhishek when he came on strike in the first over. But once he drove Fazalhaq Farooqi through cover for four, the slip was moved out. After that, whatever Afghanistan tried, it didn't work, as Abhishek's brilliance just threw them out of gear.

Omarzai bowled short at the stumps in the second over, and Abhishek pulled it 86 metres behind square for six. With his attacking instincts unlocked, Abhishek hit Omarzai over his head for four with mid-off and mid-on up, then danced down the track to loft over cover for six, as 17 runs came off it. Farooqi's next over went for 23 runs, as Abhishek hammered him for two sixes and as many fours.

Mohammad Nabi's only over cost 29 runs. Samson first hit him for consecutive sixes, before being dropped on 22 by captain Ibrahim Zadran at mid-off. But Abhishek reached his fifty off just 16 balls with a six down the track - the sixth time he has reached a fifty inside 20 deliveries - before hitting a four through the gap between cover and point, and finished the fifth over with a six over the straight boundary.

Abhishek treated Rashid Khan with disdain - hitting him for four over extra cover, and followed by an inside-out boundary and six over wide mid-off to bring up India's century in the power play. After that, it was all going Abhishek's way - as Ahmadzai and Mujeeb were clobbered for boundaries.

The next 14 balls he faced brought him 51 runs, and his third T20I hundred came in the ninth over when Abhishek drove Ahmadzai for a single. He did not seem to realise straight away that he had

Premier League Matchweek 5: Haaland, Liverpool, Arsenal and more headline key storylines

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The 2026/27 Premier League season is only four rounds old, but Matchweek 5 already offers several intriguing statistical narratives.

Manchester City are chasing a fifth straight victory, Arsenal are attempting to extend their winning run to 10 league matches, while Liverpool head into their meeting with Bournemouth looking to turn a run of draws into victories. Elsewhere, Bournemouth's extraordinary draw record in 2026 and Erling Haaland's unusual scoring record against Sunderland provide two of the weekend's standout talking points.

Brentford v Chelsea

Brentford are still searching for their first Premier League home win over Chelsea, having drawn four of their previous five meetings at the Gtech Community Stadium. Ten of Brentford's last 14 league matches have also ended in draws, while they are unbeaten in their last six.

Chelsea, meanwhile, have won only one of their last six away league matches. Their opening five games have produced 19 goals, more than those of any other side.

The set-piece numbers

could prove significant, with Brentford recording 2.34 set-piece xG excluding penalties, the second-highest figure in the division. Chelsea have conceded 1.57 set-piece xG. João Pedro leads the league for goal involvements with six, including three goals and three assists.

Tottenham Hotspur v Aston Villa

Tottenham and Aston Villa have not played out a draw in their last 22 Premier League meetings, with Spurs winning 15 and Villa seven.

Villa have won four of their last six league visits to Tottenham, despite winning only three of their previous 21 trips. Spurs, meanwhile, have opened the campaign with consecutive 0-0 draws, as many goalless draws in their last two matches as in their previous 181 league games.

Villa are still without a victory this season, matching only three previous five-game winless starts in their top-flight history.

Tottenham also have three players, Mathys Tel, Omar Marmoush and Sávio, among the six league players with at least nine completed take-ons. Sávio became the first player this season to complete four take-ons and create four open-play chances in the same match against Everton.

Brighton v Arsenal

Arsenal arrive at the Amex on a nine-match Premier League winning streak, conceding only twice during that run. Victory would take them to 10 consecutive league wins, a feat they have achieved only on a handful of occasions in their Premier League history.



3rd T20I: Need to play more series against top teams to improve, says Ibrahim Zadran

IAN S

NEW DELHI, Sep 17 (IANS) Afghanistan captain Ibrahim Zadran conceded that his side needs more regular fixtures against top-tier international teams to bridge the skill gap in the shortest format, after they suffered a 3-0 defeat to current T20 World Cup holders India.

At the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Afghanistan were totally thrown off their gear by a swashbuckling Abhishek Sharma, who hit 108 off just 34 balls, including reaching his century off 30 balls. In the face of the chase of 222, Afghanistan's off-colour batting line-up wilted under scoreboard pressure and were bowled out for 94 and suffered a 127-run defeat.

The 127-run thrashing handed out by India in New Delhi marked Afghanistan's heaviest defeat by runs in T20Is, with their 94 all out also the side's lowest-ever T20I score against the Shreyas Iyer-led side.

"We improved a little bit in the powerplay. I'm totally happy with the intent. I would say we didn't contribute well in today's



game. We just gave (away) back-to-back wickets. But we will work on it, and as I mentioned earlier, we have thought about that - how to take the intent forward.

"Yes, we will struggle for a little bit in one or two series, but I'm pretty sure with time, we will improve. If we are not going to work and we are not going to have that intent, then it's really hard to beat the big teams at the international level," Zadran said in the post-match presentation ceremony.

Zadran, who took over as Afghanistan's T20I captain from Rashid Khan after an early exit from this year's T20 World Cup, was also steadfast in calling for more high-profile fixtures

Delhi Capitals take cricket to Japan, partner with The British School in Tokyo

IAN S

TOKYO: With cricket set for a return to the Asian Games and the sport preparing for its Olympic comeback at Los Angeles 2028, Delhi Capitals have taken their grassroots outreach to Japan by partnering with The British School in Tokyo (BST).

The IPL franchise has partnered with the school to introduce more young students in Japan to cricket, with support from the Japan Cricket Association (JCA).

The partnership comes just days before a histor-

ic week for India-Japan cricket. The Indian women's team will face hosts Japan in the Asian Games quarter-finals on Friday, September 18, while the Indian men's team will meet Japan in the Suzuki Cup T20 International on September 22 at the Sano International Cricket Ground in Tochigi Prefecture.

As the first initiative under the partnership, former India captain and Delhi Capitals Women's Assistant Coach Anju Jain visited BST in September to conduct cricket workshops for primary and secondary students.

Wuhan Open: Rybakina, Sabalenka, Gauff and Swiatek lead star-studded field

IAN S

WUHAN: The Wuhan Open is set for a blockbuster return next month, with the tournament attracting every player currently ranked inside the WTA Rankings Top 10. US Open champion Elena Rybakina, who has also taken over the No. 1 ranking, will headline the WTA 1000 event. The Kazakh will be joined by Aryna Sabalenka, Jessica Pegula, Coco Gauff, Mirra Andreeva, Linda Noskova, Elina Svitolina, Karolina Muchova, Iga Swiatek and Marta Kostyuk.

The strength of the field extends beyond the leading names, with all but one player from the current Top 25 set to compete in Wuhan. Victoria Mboko is the notable absentee as



she continues her recovery from a left knee injury sustained earlier this summer.

The tournament, the second WTA 1000 event in a back-to-back stretch on the WTA Tour Driven by Mercedes-Benz calendar, will feature a 56-player singles draw. The main draw comprises 43 direct entrants, eight qualifiers, four wild cards and one special exemption.

Daria Snigur, Yuliia Starodubtseva, Cristina Bucsa and former World No. 1 Karolina Pliskova complete the list of direct entrants. Lili Taggar, Anhelina Kalinina, Mayar Sherif and Tamara Korpatsch are the first four players on the alternate list.

Doubles events are India's brightest medal hopes in table tennis at Asian Games, says Neha Aggarwal Sharma

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Former India paddler Neha Aggarwal Sharma believes the country's table tennis contingent at Aichi-Nagoya has both the experience and the temperament to better its modest Asian Games record, with the doubles events offering the brightest hopes for clinching medals in the continental event.

Olympians Sreeja Akula and G Sathiyam will lead India's 10-member squad at the continental showpiece event, where table tennis matches will be held from September 20 to 28 at the Sky Hall Toyota in Aichi Prefecture. The men's squad is spearheaded by veteran Sathiyam alongside Harmeet Desai, Manav Thakkar, Manush Shah and Payas Jain,



with Ankur Bhattacharjee and Ronit Bhanja in reserve.

"Like you rightly said, it's a good mix of experienced and young players. On the men's side, I would now term the team quite experienced, with Harmeet Desai, Sathyan, Manav and Manush all part of the previous Asian Games as well. Payas is the only change, and it's great to see him there.

"So that way, this team

has had the experience of competing, especially these four competing together at the World Championships, the Commonwealth Championships, which was held earlier this year. So the camaraderie, their team bonding and all of that is also really good. So look forward to that," Neha said to IANS in an exclusive conversation facilitated by Sony Sports Network on Thursday.

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