

Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
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■ Autumn Session

Srinagar Set For Political Buzz Today



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The summer capital Srinagar is set to witness hectic political activity today, with the National Conference, Congress and the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party convening separate legislature party meetings to chalk out strategy for the upcoming autumn session of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

Ahead of the session, the ruling National Conference has called a meeting of its legislators as well as the Independents supporting the Government at 4:30 PM at the banquet hall here.

The meeting will be chaired by NC president Dr. Farooq Abdullah in the presence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

Apart from its MLAs, the

NC has invited five Independents, Satish Sharma (Khour), Choudhary Mohammad Akram (Surankote), Pyare Lal Sharma (Inderwal), Dr. Rameshwar Singh (Bani) and Muzaffar Iqbal Khan (Thanamandi).

At 5:00 PM, the NC, Congress, CPI(M) and the five Independents supporting the Government will participate in a joint meeting.

Meanwhile, Congress has convened a separate meeting of its legislators at 3:30 PM. Chief Whip of Congress Nizamuddin Bhat confirmed that the meeting will take place at the party headquarters.

On the other hand, the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party has also called a meeting tomorrow evening to devise its strategy for the autumn session. Leader of Opposition

● P-06

Society That Loses Touch With Cultural Heritage Risks Losing Its Balance: LG

Says J&K Since Ancient Times Has Remained Cradle Of Sages, Saints, Seekers Of Truth

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said a society that loses touch with its visionaries and cultural heritage risks losing its balance, sensitivity and sense of direction.

“In today’s fast-paced life, people are facing unprecedented mental stress, crises of identity and the challenges of existential loneliness. It is equally true that external, material success alone cannot fill the emptiness within. I believe that the teachings of saints such as Mata Lalleshwari, and the cultural centre dedicated to her, will help fill that void and provide spiritual resources for self-discipline, mental peace and emotional resilience,” LG Sinha said while laying foundation stone of the Mata Lalleshwari Cultural Cum Heritage Centre at Mata Bhaderkali Asthapan, Thalwal, Jammu.

The project, sanctioned



under the Capex budget with an allocation of Rs. 4.5 crore, is envisioned as a landmark initiative to preserve and promote the timeless legacy of Yogini Lalleshwari.

Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted that Jammu Kashmir has, since ancient times, been a cradle of

sages, saints and seekers of truth. The Centre, dedicated to Mata Lalleshwari, will embody India’s civilisational consciousness and serve as a beacon of cultural harmony, spiritual tourism, and academic research.

“This project reminds us of our timeless civilisational consciousness. Today, we stand at

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha addressed a gathering in Jammu Saturday marking the unveiling of the statue of Acharya Abhinavagupt, the launch of the new logo of the J&K Academy of

Art, Culture and Languages, the release of two books, and the inauguration of a welfare scheme for artists and writers. The Lieutenant Governor described the occasion as the beginning of a cultural renaissance reawakening the soul of the Union Territory.

The Lieutenant Governor noted that the welfare scheme for artists and writers, conceived in 2021-22 and formalised in August 2024, reflects the nation’s gratitude towards those who preserve collective memory through stories, songs and our

● P-06

CM Attends Concluding Day Of Viksit Bharat Financing Conference

Deliberations Focus On Developmental Financing, Agricultural Transformation



GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Saturday attended the concluding day of the two-day high-level conference on “Financing India’s Journey towards Viksit Bharat,” organised by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India, in New Delhi.

The conference brought together State Finance Ministers and Finance Secretaries of States and Union Territories with Legislature to deliberate on strategies for

financing India’s long-term development and growth.

The Chief Minister noted the significance of the deliberations in shaping strategies for the long-term growth of the country and Jammu & Kashmir, particularly in areas of developmental financing, agricultural marketing and renewable energy.

The conference featured deliberations by eminent experts and economists on various aspects of financing the shared vision of Viksit Bharat.

The sessions

● P-06

Indian Civil Society Raises PoJK Rights Concerns At UNHRC

IANs

UNITED NATIONS: An Indian civil society representative has raised concerns over the shrinking civic space and alleged human rights violations in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) during the ongoing 63rd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Speaking during the General Debate under Item 3 on civic space and democratic participation, the representative said an open, free and inclusive civic space was essential for meaningful democratic participation and functioning democracies.

The Indian civil society group drew particular attention to the situation in PoJK, saying protests and tensions in the region had escalated since June. It referred to reports of loss of life and the alleged disproportionate



use of force by security forces, calling for accountability, dialogue and protection of fundamental freedoms.

The statement also linked the growing public grievances in PoJK to economic difficulties, including inflation and unem-

ployment.

“South Asia is also experiencing a serious civic-space crisis,” the representative said, referring to what it described as restrictive legislation, digital censorship and growing intolerance towards public dissent

● P-06

RBI Holds Conference On Cyber Security In Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Jammu on Saturday organised a one-day conference on financial sector initiatives and cyber security awareness at Hotel Taj Dal View, Srinagar, with Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo as the chief guest and RBI Deputy Governor Rohit Jain as the special guest.

In a statement issued, a spokesperson said the RBI Jammu organised the conference on September 19, 2026, in the presence of RBI Jammu Regional Director Prabhakar Jha.

The conference was attended by Chandraker Bharti (IAS), Principal Secretary, Home Department; M.K. Sinha (IPS), ADGP, CID; Commissioners/Secretaries and Administrative Secretaries from various government departments, including Industries & Commerce, Housing & Urban Develop-

ment, Planning, Development and Monitoring, Information, Revenue, and Labour & Employment; Amitava Chatterjee, MD & CEO, J&K Bank; controlling and zonal heads of banks operating in the UT; and other senior



officers from the UT administration, Jammu and Kashmir Police, RBI Central Office (Mumbai), Reserve Bank Innovation Hub, NABARD, NPCI and RXIL.

The spokesperson said Atal Dulloo, in his keynote address, highlighted that the UT administration has prioritised the development of key sectors such as

● P-06

■ Study Finds ...

Water Chestnut From Dal Lake Contains Elevated Levels Of Heavy Metals

Followed By Hokersar, Manasbal; Wular Shows Lowest Concentrations

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Water chestnut harvested from Kashmir’s Dal Lake has accumulated elevated levels of certain heavy metals, including cadmium and zinc, with concentrations in the edible fruit exceeding permissible limits cited in a new study, raising concerns over potential food-safety risks.

The study, published in Scientific Reports, analysed water, sediment and water chestnut (Trapa natans) samples from four major water bodies of Jammu and Kashmir -- Dal Lake, Hokersar Wetland, Manasbal Lake and



Wular Lake -- for eight heavy metals.

The researchers found a clear pollution gradient, with Dal Lake recording the highest levels of heavy-metal accu-

mulation, followed by Hokersar, Manasbal and Wular.

The edible fruits of water chestnut collected from Dal Lake contained cadmium at 0.11 milligrams per kilogram,

about 5.5 times the 0.02 mg/kg limit cited by the study. Zinc concentrations in the fruit reached 18.21 mg/kg, nearly 30 times the 0.60 mg/kg guideline value cited by the researchers.

The study, however, does not establish that eating water chestnuts from Dal Lake causes illness. Rather, the findings point to the need for continued monitoring of contaminants in aquatic food products and their potential movement through the food chain.

The researchers found that heavy metals accumulated most strongly in the roots of the water chestnut, followed by shoots and

● P-06

‘If Everything Needs Statehood, Why Are We In Govt?’: LoP Sharma

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Sunil Sharma on Saturday questioned the Omar Abdullah-led government over what he described as its repeated use of “statehood” as a response to basic public grievances, asking why the government was in office if it lacked the authority to address routine issues.

Addressing a public interaction programme in Srinagar, Sharma said people were approaching the government with problems related to water, electricity, roads, schools, hospitals and jobs but were repeatedly being told that the administration lacked the required powers.

“For every issue, whether small or big, the only answer that comes from the government and government machinery is that we have no powers,” Sharma said.

He said the elected government had completed two years but people were still facing frustration and confusion.

● P-06

■ Jammu Terror Attack

NIA Court Rejects Joint Bail Plea Of 3 Accused

AGENCIES

JAMMU: A special court has rejected a joint bail application of three accused arrested in a case related to an April 2022 terror attack near here ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Samba, citing the gravity of the offences and the material on record.

An assistant sub-inspector of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) was killed and several security personnel were injured in the attack on their vehicle in the Sunjwan area on the outskirts of Jammu on the intervening night of April 21 and 22, 2022.

The two attackers, identified as Pakistani nationals affiliated with the proscribed terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad, were subsequently killed in retaliatory action and a huge quantity of arms and ammunition was seized



from them.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is probing the case.

Rejecting the bail applications of the arrested accused -- Shafeeq Ahmad Sheikh, Bilal Ahmad Wagay and Mohd Ishaq Chopan, all residents of south Kashmir -- Special Judge, NIA court, Prem Sagar, observed on September 17 that there was sufficient evidence to presume that the accusations against the accused were prima facie true. War& Conflict

The accused had sought bail, citing the delay in trial and their prolonged

● P-06

Sharda Divas Celebrated at Sharda Temple Along LoC in Teetwal



PEERZADA SAYEED

KUPWARA: Sharda Divas, the annual observance associated with the Sharda Peeth pilgrimage, was celebrated at the historic Sharda Temple located along the Line of Control (LoC) at Teetwal in Karnah, with hundreds of devotees and followers participating in the programme.

The event witnessed the participation of devotees from different parts of the country, who gathered at the Sharda Temple to pay obeisance and participate in religious and spiritual activities organised on the occasion.

As part of the symbolic pilgrimage, devotees proceeded from the Sharda Temple towards the Teetwal Crossing Bridge, located along the LoC. The symbolic yatra was held to commemorate the traditional association of the region with the ancient Sharda Peeth pilgrimage and to underline the devotees' longstanding desire

to visit the historic shrine across the LoC.

Earlier in the day, a Homa was performed at the temple premises, where devotees offered prayers and sought blessings. The programme was followed by a holy bath in the Kishenganga River, which holds deep religious and cultural significance for devotees associated with the Sharda tradition.

A Bhandara was also organised for the participants, providing prasad and food to devotees and visitors who attended the day's programme.

The event was organised by the Save Sharda Committee Kashmir, under the leadership of its chairman Ravinder Pandita. The committee has been advocating for the revival of the traditional pilgrimage to the ancient Sharda Peeth, situated in Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, Ravinder Pandita reiterated the committee's demand for the immediate reopening of the Sharda

Peeth pilgrimage route, stating that devotees should be facilitated to undertake the traditional pilgrimage to the revered shrine.

The gathering at Teetwal also highlighted the historical and cultural importance of the area, which has emerged as an important point for discussions around the Sharda pilgrimage and the heritage associated with the ancient seat of learning.

The celebration brought together devotees, members of the organising committee and local participants in a programme that combined religious observance with a symbolic expression of the continued connection of devotees with Sharda Peeth.

The organisers expressed hope that the traditional pilgrimage route would be reopened in the future, enabling devotees to visit Sharda Peeth and reconnect with the ancient religious and cultural heritage associated with the shrine.

J&K's first Street Food Vendor Training Programme held in Jammu

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: In a first for Jammu & Kashmir, street food vendors from Jammu and adjoining districts were Saturday trained and certified at a one-day Street Food Vendor Training Programme.

The programme was organised at PSPS Government College for Women, Gandhi Nagar by the Northern Regional Office of FSSAI in collaboration with the Food and Drug Administration, J&K under FoSTaC and Eat Right India campaign.

It was announced that eight such sessions will be held in every district of the Union Territory.

Member of Parliament Jugal Kishore Sharma-the Chief Guest- presented FoSTaC training certificates to the participants. He also administered an oath to them to uphold and implement safe food practices. He said vendors carrying the certificate will enjoy an edge over their peers in the marketplace, as it testifies to the quality and safety of their food.

The initiative, he added, reflects the government's vision of dignified workplace practices, clean and



healthy food and stronger public health outcomes. He announced that more such programmes would follow across J&K.

Announcing the district-wise roll-out, Joint Commissioner Food Safety, Jammu & Kashmir Sanjeev Kumar reiterated the department's commitment to public health and the upskilling of street food vendors. He outlined plans for wider public awareness, including social media outreach.

Joint Director, FSSAI, Ankeshwar Mishra said street food is a vital part of any region's identity and for Jammu's street food to earn wider recognition, its vendors must be equipped

with the best training and practices alongside certification. Held as per the directions of the Government of India, the session covered personal and stall hygiene, waste disposal, procurement and storage of raw material and safe handling and storage of cooked food. He also informed vendors that FSSAI provides a free-of-cost registration facility to them.

Participating vendors shared their experiences and assured compliance.

Manager FSSAI-Northern Regional Office Nimanishi and President, Chamber of Commerce and Industries Jammu Arun Gupta were among the dignitaries present.

WMDA conducts sanitation drive around Manasbal Lake

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: The Wullar Manasbal Development Authority (WMDA), in collaboration with a local school, Delight Public School, Kulpora, Manasbal Saturday held a series of awareness camps and sanitation drive in the catchment areas of Manasbal lake to raise awareness among people and stakeholders about conserving the famous water body and ill effects of pollution.

Wullar Manasbal Development Authority, Ahsanul Haq Chishti, highlighting the importance of sanitation, said the Authority as part of its continuous social outreach would continue to conduct such drives with citizen involvement in coming days as well to further raise awareness among people regarding sanitation and preservation of Manasbal lake. He said the Authority has flagged cleanliness within and around the lake as top



During the rally, participants, comprising students, volunteers and officials of WMDA highlighted the need for maintaining ecological balance and maintaining sanitation around the lake.

Chief Executive Officer,

priority and sought public cooperation in maintaining the same.

He thanked the management, staff and students of Delight Public School for cooperating and participating in the sanitation drive.

DC Pulwama reviews implementation of PM-NAPS in district

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom Saturday chaired a meeting at the Administration Complex Pulwama to review the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS) in the district and take stock of measures for increasing apprenticeship opportunities for eligible youth.

During the meeting, detailed presentations were given on the online process for registration and onboarding of establishments and candidates under NAPS. The presentation covered the step-by-step process of establishment registration, completion of establishment profile, creation of apprenticeship opportunities, searching suitable candidates, processing applications and other procedural formalities.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments and field functionaries to identify eligible establishments in their respective sectors and facilitate their registration on the apprenticeship portal. He called for concerted efforts to ensure that eligible establishments complete their profiles and create suitable



apprenticeship opportunities so that more local youth can be connected with practical training and work-based learning opportunities.

The DC further stressed the need for effective coordination among DIC, Education, Health, Labour and ITI authorities for wider outreach and facilitation of eligible candidates. He directed the concerned officers to facilitate registration of eligible youth, ensure completion of their profiles and guide them in identifying and applying for suitable apprenticeship opportunities.

During the meeting, Dr. Qayoom laid emphasis on execution of Employer-Apprentice agreement and actual engagement of apprentices in potential/eligible establishments and directed the concerned to complete target by 25th September, 2026.

The Deputy Commissioner also called for regular monitoring of the

registration and engagement process and directed the concerned officers to address procedural bottlenecks, provide necessary handholding to establishments and candidates and ensure timely completion of apprenticeship contracts wherever eligible.

Emphasising the importance of apprenticeship in bridging the gap between formal training and workplace requirements, the Deputy Commissioner said that concerted efforts should be made to expand the apprenticeship ecosystem in the district and provide local youth with opportunities to gain practical experience, industry-relevant skills and enhanced employability.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Pulwama; General Manager, DIC Pulwama; and officers from DIC, Education, Health, Labour, ITI Pulwama besides the concerned technical teams.

Sensitization Programme on "Issues Related to Narcotics" held at JKJA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Under the patronage of Dr. Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Judicial Academy), and under the guidance of the Chairman and Members of the Governing Committee of the J&K Judicial Academy, a One Day Sensitization Programme on "Issues Related to Narcotics" was conducted Saturday at the Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy, Mominabad, here in collaboration with the Narcotics Control Bureau, Srinagar Zonal Unit.

The programme aimed to sensitize judicial officers, prosecutors, investigating officers and other stakeholders on the legal, investigative and evidentiary issues arising under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS Act).

The Keynote Address was delivered by Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Chairman, Governing Committee, J&K Judicial Academy. He emphasized that the stringent provisions of the NDPS



Act require strict adherence to statutory safeguards and highlighted the importance of lawful search and seizure, reliable evidence, proper chain of custody and fair investigation.

Referring to Sections 42, 50, 52A, 67 and 37 of the Act, Justice Rajnesh Oswal stressed the need for proper documentation, corroborative and digital evidence, and truthful investigation.

He also underscored the importance of a human-

centred approach towards persons suffering from substance dependence while maintaining firm enforcement against organized trafficking.

Director, J&K Judicial Academy, Naseer Ahmad Dar, in his Welcome and Introductory Address, emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts among investigators, prosecutors and the judiciary in effectively addressing NDPS cases. He highlighted the need for

lawful investigation, strict compliance with statutory safeguards and proper preservation of evidence to ensure effective and timely adjudication.

Sambit Mishra, IRS, DDG, NCB-NWR, emphasized the importance of interaction among investigators, prosecutors and the judiciary so that each stakeholder understands the expectations and constraints of the others. He stressed that effective prosecution depends not only on the evidence collected but also on strict compliance with procedural requirements and proper presentation of the case before the court.

In his Special Address, Abdul Qayoom, DIG Crime Branch, highlighted the growing challenge of drug abuse and emphasized coordinated efforts by police, prosecution and judiciary. He stressed capacity building, procedural compliance, proper documentation and preservation of chain of custody, besides the need to investigate the forward and backward linkages of drug trafficking networks rather than limiting investigations to persons found carrying contraband.

During Session-I, titled "Challenges Faced in Investigation of NDPS Cases (IO Perspective)", Kubra Nazir, DySP, ANTF Kashmir, highlighted challenges relating to Sections 42 and 50, searches, independent witnesses, videography, inventory, chain of custody, sampling, forensic delays and collection of digital and financial evidence.

She emphasized timely compliance and proper documentation, particularly in view of the geographical and cross-border trafficking challenges in Jammu & Kashmir.

Session-II, titled "Identification of Investigation Gaps Affecting Prosecution and Evidentiary Strength", was conducted by Aftab Jeelani Wani, Public Prosecutor, NCB, Srinagar Zonal Unit. He emphasized that the strength of an NDPS prosecution depends substantially upon the quality and legality of investigation, particularly compliance with statutory requirements, proper search and seizure, documentation, chain of evidence and establishment of foundational facts before reliance on statutory presumptions.

JKBOSE holds consultative meeting on development of vocational courses



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) held a consultative meeting to deliberate on the development of vocational courses tailored to the local needs and emerging employment opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting, held at the JKBOSE headquarters at Bemina here, was organised as part of the Board's process for submission to the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) for Dual Recognition and as a step towards developing a new vocational course in the sector of Agriculture.

The consultation brought together experts from the vocational education and agriculture sectors, including Dr T.

N. Giri, Director, Vocational Education, NIOS, and Prof V. S. Mehrotra, Head, PSSCIVE, NCERT, Bhopal, besides experts from SKUAST-Kashmir, SKUAST-Jammu and the Department of Agriculture, J&K.

Addressing the gathering, the Chairman, JKBOSE, said the Board was among the few Boards in the country to have received a Letter of Intent (LoI) from NCVET, describing it as an important step towards strengthening vocational education and skill-based learning in school education. He said the Board was focusing on sectors having considerable potential in the Union Territory, particularly agriculture and tourism, with the aim of enabling students to acquire skills relevant to local employment and livelihood opportunities.

Siemens Scholarship Program invites applications from meritorious students

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Siemens Limited has launched the 14th edition of Siemens Scholarship Program and invites applications from deserving, meritorious engineering students.

Based on the German model of Dual Education, the program hones youth to become industry-ready technicians and engineers, and launch a sustainable career in engineering, R&D or manufacturing. With the Program, Siemens intends to create impact in the soci-

ety – promoting technical education by leveraging its core competencies such as innovative technologies and know-how.

Under this initiative, Siemens will provide financial assistance to deserving meritorious students who lack the economic means. Siemens would also acquaint these bright minds with the dynamics of the industry, thereby leading to their holistic development. The scholarship program is available for students throughout the four years of gradua-

tion and 50% of scholarships is reserved for girls.

As of 2026, over 2,300 students from 176 government engineering colleges across 28 states in India have been part of the Siemens Scholarship Program.

Eligibility: First-year students of Government Engineering colleges from the following streams can apply: Mechanical / Production, Electrical, Electronics/Instrumentation, Electronics & Telecommunication and Computers/Information Technology.

ADC Kupwara chairs meeting to review solid waste management measures

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Additional Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan, Saturday chaired a meeting to review the implementation and progress of various measures related to solid waste management in the district.

The meeting held a threadbare discussion on several

key issues concerning effective implementation of the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026, with emphasis on strengthening waste management mechanisms and ensuring compliance by all stakeholders.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the registration of Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs) and the identification of BWGs failing to comply with the provi-

sions of the SWM Rules, 2026. Directions were also issued regarding issuance of notices to non-compliant bulk waste generators.

The meeting also reviewed the inspection of waste processing plants to assess their functioning and compliance with prescribed standards. The status of four-way waste segregation and the retrofitting of door-to-door waste collection vehicles was also discussed.

No permission sought or issued for proposed Gurez event: AD tourism



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Assistant Director Tourism Gulmarg Saturday clarified regarding social media post circulated through the twitter handle "Tantra in silence at gurez" that his office has neither granted any permission nor issued any authorization for con-

ducting the said event, through an official communication.

It further stated that, "this office has no information or official communication regarding the proposed event referred to in the said social media post. No application seeking permission for the event has been received or processed

by this office," reads the clarification.

It further clarified that the said proposed event has not been authorized/ approved by the Office of the Assistant Director Tourism, Gulmarg, and this office has no association with the organization or conduct of the event mentioned in the social media post.

Div Com chairs High-Level Meeting on Traffic Management System

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg Saturday chaired a high-level meeting of the Multi-disciplinary Committee / Regional Transport Authority (RTA) to review the progress of various projects and interventions aimed at easing traffic congestion in Srinagar city.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, SSP Traffic, RTO Kashmir, Chief Engineer KPDCI and Executive Engineers of R&B, besides other concerned officers.

During the meeting, a detailed review was undertaken regarding the progress of key road infrastructure projects including Development of Natipora to Chanapora road, Development of T-Junction at Natipora crossing, Construction of flyover from Shalteng to Parimpora, Construction of footbridge at Pediatric Hospital, Bemina, Construction of underpass at Nowgam, Development of



Shopping Complex at Noorbagh, Development of road along Doodhganga River Bank from Barzulla to Sanat Nagar.

On the occasion, the Div Com also reviewed the status of Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL) projects, including identification of 10 additional junctions for installation of ITMS cameras, painting of zebra crossings and stop lines, implementation of IT-based parking system, and status of e-bus charging stations at Zoonimar and Batamaloo.

He also reviewed the Action Taken Report submitted by R&B, SSCL, RTO and Traffic Police on the decisions taken in previous meetings.

The Div Com fixed

fresh timelines for the concerned departments to achieve tangible progress. He directed SSCL and SSP Traffic to implement stop-line interventions at identified junctions within 10 days. He further directed Commissioner SSCL to hand over control room to the Traffic Police for augmenting deployment of traffic personnel to monitor the Traffic System.

The Div Com directed that the e-bus charging station at Batamaloo shall be made operational within ten days. He also directed SSCL for completion of 72 bus stops under Module-A by 31st October 2026. He further directed SE R&B and SE I&FC to conduct a joint inspection for development of the Lasjan Bund Road.

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates new road projects at Aharbal, Manzgam areas

Lays foundation stone for Health Centre at Gandwani

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, Saturday visited Kulgam district and participated in a series of programmes besides inaugural and foundation laying events aimed at strengthening the sports, healthcare and road connectivity infrastructure.

Earlier in the day, the Minister inaugurated U/19 girls Base Ball inter-district tournament at L/ NK Shri Nazir Ahmad Wani, Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Kulgam. The tournament was being hosted by the Youth Services and Sports Department, Kulgam with participation from all districts of the Kashmir Division.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister appreciated the efforts of the Youth Services and Sports Department in providing young athletes with opportunities to showcase their talent. She encouraged the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to actively participate in sports and contribute positively for the overall development of the society.

During the extensive tour, the Minister laid the foundation stones for construction of a Health Sub-Centre at Gandwani, to be constructed at an estimat-



ed cost of Rs. 40.00 lakh.

The foundation stones for construction and maintenance of the road from Chechmulla– Aharbal road to Lonepora, with an estimated cost of Rs.366.81 lakh; construction of road from Khuri Batapora ITI to Sheikhnagin with an estimated cost of Rs 30.00 lakh; construction of Aharbal Main road to Chandar Manzgam-A with an estimated cost of Rs. 18.00lakh and construction of road from H/o Bashir Mirza to Gujar Basti kawatqari with an estimated cost of Rs 15.00 lakh were also formally laid by the Minister.

The projects are aimed at improving the road connectivity, easing transportation and facilitating smoother movement of people in the adjoining areas of the district.

Sakeena Itoo spoke with

the people and enquired about the public welfare issues and provision of government extended services to them. She emphasized directed sectoral and district heads to regularly monitor the works and ensure the timely completion.

The Minister was accompanied by District Programme Officer, ICDS Zaheer Ahmad Kafi, Kulgam, SDM DH Pora, Bashir-ul- Hassan, Assistant Commissioner Development Kulgam, Bilal Kamgar, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer, Executive Engineers of PDD, Jal Shakti, Irrigation and Flood Control Kulgam, Executive Engineer (R&B) DH Pora, besides other concerned officers and officials in presence of huge gathering of local people.

‘BSF Wular Ultra Run 3.0’ part of efforts to work closely with local communities: IG Yadav

NAVEED UL HAQ

BUDGAM: Asserting that ‘BSF Wular Ultra Run 3.0’ is aimed at promoting fitness, positive energy and greater participation of youth in sports activities, Ashok Yadav Inspector General of the force for Kashmir Frontier on Saturday said the initiative is part of the BSF’s efforts to work closely with local communities and contribute towards the development of the region.

Talking to reporters during the unveiling of the official T-shirt for the Wular Ultra Run 3.0 at BSF Headquarters Humhama, Budgam, Yadav said the event is being organised for the third consecutive year at Wular in Bandipora.

“Our effort is to ensure maximum participation of the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, while also creating awareness about Wular and promoting fitness and



positive energy among the younger generation,” he said.

The IG said participants coming from outside Jammu and Kashmir would also get an opportunity to learn about the region, its natural beauty and Wular Lake.

“Whenever energy is channelled in a positive direction, there is less scope for it to move towards negative activities,” Yadav said, urging youngsters to focus on fitness and sports.

He added that the BSF had previously organised cricket, badminton and football tournaments in the region and witnessed enthusiastic participation from local youth.

The BSF Wular Ultra Run 3.0 is scheduled to be held on October 4, 2026, at Wular Lake, and is expected to witness participation from athletes and fitness enthusiasts from Jammu and Kashmir as well as other parts of the country—(KNO)



Swami Hridayanand Giri Maharaj calls on LG Sinha

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Swami Hridayanand Giri Ji Maharaj called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Saturday and briefed him about the upcoming Amba Yagya, a major spiritual and cultural event scheduled to be held from 6th to 15th February, 2027 at Tawi River Front, Jammu.

The Lieutenant Governor assured his support and cooperation to ensure the successful conduct of this significant spiritual gathering in Jammu.

The Amba Yagya will bring together devotees for a series of spiritual observances, including 51 Havan Kunds across 10 Mahavidya forms, participation of 11,000 women in the Kalash Yatra, 9 crore Navarna Mantra Jaap, 9 lakh Deepak Prajwala, Shrimad Devi Bhagwat Katha, Kanya Puja, Suhagan Puja, Batuk

Pujaan and daily cultural programmes.

Rajesh Gupta, President, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, J&K and Shri Shakti Dutt Sharma, Vice President, VHP, J&K were also present during the interaction.

Meanwhile, a delegation comprising of Pawan Kumar Shastri, President, Jammu Yatri Bhawan Trust, Jammu/Haridwar; Raj Kumar Gupta, President, Jammu Kashmir Gau-Raksha Samiti; Anil Gupta, senior Vice President, Jammu Chamber of Commerce, and Raman Gupta, social worker, also called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

The members of the delegation put forth the demand for strengthening direct rail connectivity between Jammu and Uttarakhand, and other important matters pertaining to promotion of religious tourism in the region.

Javid Dar visits Handwara Fruit Mandi



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Saturday visited Handwara Fruit Mandi and reviewed its overall functioning, infrastructure and facilities being provided to fruit growers, traders and other stakeholders associated with the horticulture trade.

Member Parliament Choudhary Mohammad Ramzan and MLA Langate Sheikh Khursheed Ahmad accompanied the Minister during the visit.

The Minister held a detailed interaction with representatives of fruit growers, traders and the Mandi Association and listened to their concerns and suggestions regarding the smooth functioning of the mandi. The stakeholders apprised the Minister of various issues pertaining to basic infrastructure, facilities, marketing arrangements, transportation and

other requirements aimed at facilitating hassle-free trade and ensuring better returns to growers.

While addressing the gathering, Javid Dar sought constructive suggestions from the stakeholders for further improving the functioning of the mandi and strengthening the existing marketing mechanism. He stressed the importance of developing efficient, transparent and grower-friendly market infrastructure to ensure that farmers and fruit growers receive better facilities and an enabling environment for the marketing of their produce.

The Minister assured the representatives that all genuine demands and issues highlighted during the interaction would be examined and addressed on priority, in coordination with the concerned officers. He directed the officers to maintain close coordination with the mandi associations and remain responsive to the genuine requirements of growers and traders.

SCHLINGEL International Film Festival

Kashmiri Feature Film 'The Sledge' Selected for International Competition

GMK NEWS NETWORK

Srinagar: Kashmiri feature film 'The Sledge', written and directed by National Award Winning Filmmaker, Raja Shabir Khan, has been officially selected for the International Competition of the 31st SCHLINGEL International Film Festival for Children and Young Audiences, to be held in Chemnitz, Germany, from 2 to 10 October 2026.

The film will have its World Premiere at the prestigious international festival, marking an important milestone for Kashmiri cinema and for the filmmakers and young actors involved in the project.

Set against the snow-covered landscape of Kashmir, 'The Sledge' is a 75-minute Kashmiri-language feature film that follows three children who accidentally break their father's sledge. Afraid of being punished, they decide to earn the money needed to repair it by selling kahwa to tourists in Gulmarg. Their simple plan takes an unexpected turn when they discover a tourist's bag containing money and chocolates.

Faced with a choice between using the money

to solve their problem or returning it to its owner, the children are forced to confront questions of honesty, temptation, responsibility and doing the right thing.

The film features Haziq Mohammad Khan, Eashel Khan and Raima Khan in

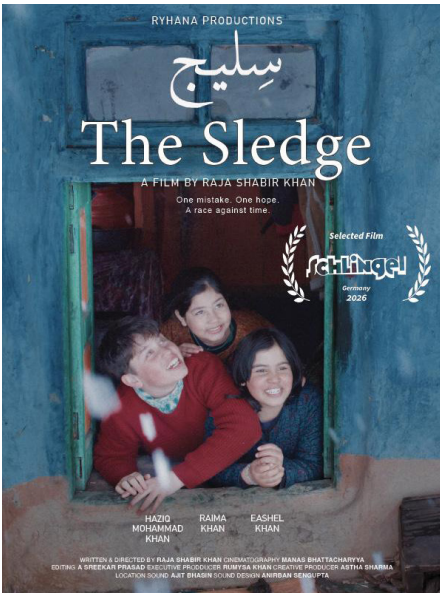
rooted in Kashmir, its landscape and its people, but the emotions and choices faced by the children are universal. I am particularly happy that the film is reaching an international audience through a festival dedicated to children and young audiences.”

The SCHLINGEL International Film Festival is an established international festival dedicated to films for children and young audiences. Its International Competition brings together films from different parts of the world and provides a platform for young audiences to engage with diverse cinematic stories and cultures.

The selection of 'The Sledge' places a Kashmiri-language children's feature film from Kashmir in an international competitive festival programme, giving the film an opportunity to reach audiences and film professionals beyond the region.

The film's World Premiere will also mark the international festival debut of its young cast, who will have the opportunity to represent their film and Kashmir on an international platform.

'The Sledge' is presented in Kashmiri with English subtitles.



the lead roles. The film has been produced and directed by Raja Shabir Khan, with Ramayasa Khan serving as Executive Producer.

Speaking about the selection, director Raja Shabir Khan said: “It is a great honour for 'The Sledge' to have its World Premiere in the International Competition at SCHLINGEL. The film is deeply

Rana inaugurates ₹6.53 cr water project in Channi Himmat, Bahu

Lays foundation for ₹5.90 cr scheme for Bathindi, Sunjwan

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Saturday inaugurated a water supply project for the areas of Channi Himmat and Bahu and laid the foundation stone of a water supply augmentation project for Bathindi and Sunjwan, with the two projects having a combined estimated cost of ₹12.43 crore.

MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa, along with senior officers of the Jal Shakti Department and other concerned departments, were present on the occasion.

The Minister inaugurated the water supply project for Channi Himmat and Bahu, executed at an estimated cost of ₹652.78 lakh. The project is aimed at ensuring regular and daily water supply to residents of the areas that have been facing shortages.

The project included the drilling of new tube-



wells and allied works to augment the availability of drinking water and strengthen the existing supply arrangements.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister said the completion of the project marks an important step towards resolving the water deficit in the affected areas and providing households with a more reliable supply of drinking water.

He said that ensuring access to safe, adequate and dependable drinking water remains a key priority of the government, adding that the newly commissioned infrastructure would provide much-needed relief to residents and

improve the overall water supply position in the area.

Later, the Minister laid the foundation stone of the water supply improvement and augmentation project for Bathindi and Sunjwan, under SASCI, at an estimated cost of ₹590.50 lakh.

The project is aimed at strengthening the existing water supply infrastructure and augmenting its capacity to meet the present and emerging requirements of the rapidly developing areas.

Once completed, the scheme is expected to improve water availability and enhance the reliability of supply for residents of Bathindi and Sunjwan.

The Minister directed the concerned officers to ensure that the Bathindi and Sunjwan augmentation project is completed within the stipulated timeline, while maintaining the prescribed standards of quality.

He also stressed the need for proper operation and maintenance of the newly commissioned tubewells to ensure that the benefits of the completed project reach residents without interruption.

The two projects form part of a broader series of inaugurations and foundation stone-laying ceremonies undertaken during the past week to strengthen and expand water supply infrastructure across Jammu.

MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa expressed gratitude to the Minister for taking up the projects and said the initiatives would provide significant relief to residents who had been facing difficulties due to inadequate water supply.

Later, the Minister

chaired a meeting with senior officers of the Jal Shakti Department to take stock of the water supply situation in the area and review the progress of ongoing and proposed works.

During the meeting, the Minister directed the officers to prepare Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for all pending and proposed water supply schemes without delay, so that the projects could be processed for approval and funding at the earliest.

Emphasising the importance of long-term planning, he asked the department to take into account population growth, future water demand and the changing requirements of urbanising areas while designing new and upgraded water supply schemes.

The Minister also called for close coordination among field units and directed officers to ensure prompt and effective redressal of public grievances related to water supply.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Hundred Odd Mental Health Experts Have Mountain To Climb

Kashmir has nearly 120 psychiatrists and 40 clinical psychologists across government and private institutions, with mental health and addiction treatment facilities functioning in every district. On paper, this is an encouraging milestone. It reflects years of investment in strengthening a healthcare sector that was once severely neglected. Yet, mental healthcare cannot be judged solely by statistics.

The real question is not how many psychiatrists or facilities exist, but whether a person struggling with depression in a remote village, a young student battling anxiety, or someone trapped in substance addiction can access timely, affordable and compassionate care without fear or stigma.

Jammu and Kashmir carries a unique psychological burden. Decades of conflict, repeated natural disasters, economic uncertainty, unemployment, drug abuse and the lingering effects of the pandemic have left deep emotional scars across generations. Mental health is no longer a niche medical issue, it is a pressing public health challenge.

The government's decision to establish addiction treatment facilities in all districts, expand Tele-MANAS services and strengthen institutions like IMHANS Srinagar deserves recognition. Integrating mental healthcare into primary health centres and training medical officers are equally important steps that can bring services closer to people. However, infrastructure alone is not enough. Many people continue to suffer in silence because of social stigma. Families often hesitate to seek psychiatric help, fearing judgment from society. In rural and far-flung areas, specialist services remain difficult to access despite official availability. Follow-up care, counselling and rehabilitation also require sustained attention if treatment is to be effective.

The growing menace of substance abuse further underlines the urgency of strengthening mental health services. Addiction is not merely a law-and-order issue; it is deeply connected to psychological distress, social isolation and economic hardship. Treatment must therefore combine medical care with counselling, family support and community rehabilitation.

The ongoing National Mental Health Survey-2 is an opportunity to understand the true extent of mental health concerns in Jammu and Kashmir. Its findings should guide evidence-based policies rather than remain confined to reports and presentations. Mental health deserves the same priority as physical health. Just as hospitals treat heart disease or diabetes without stigma, seeking help for depression, anxiety or addiction should become equally normal. Schools, colleges, workplaces, community leaders and religious institutions all have a role in creating awareness and encouraging early intervention.

The numbers placed before Parliament are a sign of progress. The next challenge is ensuring that these services are accessible, trusted and effective for every citizen. Success will not be measured by the number of psychiatrists on the payroll, but by the number of lives restored, families supported and silent suffering prevented. A healthier Jammu and Kashmir will ultimately depend not only on stronger hospitals, but also on a society that understands that mental health is health, and that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Bringing Cosmos To Classroom: A New Era Of Scientific Learning

"The Future Scientist Often Begins With A Child's First Moment Of Wonder."



HAROON RASHID BHAT

In a significant step towards making science education more experiential, innovative and engaging, the Department of School Education has taken an inspiring initiative by establishing Cosmic Astronomy and Science Labs at the cluster level. These specialised learning spaces are intended to take students beyond the boundaries of conventional classroom teaching by providing them with opportunities to observe, experiment, explore and create. One such laboratory has been established at Middle School Kurhama, under Cluster Kurhama in Ganderbal, and is already generating considerable enthusiasm among students.

For generations, science learning in schools has often remained largely confined to textbooks, blackboards, diagrams and examinations. Students may read about planets, galaxies, telescopes, satellites, the solar system and various scientific instruments, but many do not get an opportunity to see or interact with such models and equipment in reality. The Cosmic Astronomy and Science Lab seeks to bridge this gap by bringing scientific concepts into a more tangible and interactive environment.

The excitement among students at the Kurhama laboratory is clearly visible. The moment they enter the lab, the atmosphere itself creates a sense of curiosity and wonder. The carefully designed space, astronomical displays, scientific kits, models and interactive learning resources give students a feeling of entering a miniature cosmic world. Concepts that once appeared distant and abstract in textbooks suddenly become more visible and understandable.

The importance of such a facility lies not merely in the presence of sophisticated equipment but in the opportunities it creates for learning by doing. Students can observe scientific models, explore astronomical concepts, conduct activities and develop working models of their own. This changes the role of a student from a passive receiver of information into an active learner who asks questions, experiments and attempts to find answers.



This approach is particularly important in developing scientific temper among children. Scientific temper does not simply mean memorising scientific facts or securing good marks in science examinations. It means developing curiosity, rational thinking, observation, questioning, experimentation and respect for evidence. A child who is encouraged to ask "Why?" and "How?" is already taking the first steps towards scientific thinking.

The Cosmic Astronomy and Science Labs can therefore become important platforms for nurturing this mindset. When students are given an opportunity to handle scientific kits, observe models and construct working projects, they begin to understand that science is not merely a subject to be studied for an examination; it is a way of understanding the world around them.

The significance of the Kurhama facility was also highlighted during the recent visit of CEO Ganderbal, Mr. Nazir Ahmad Khan, who inspected the Cosmic Astronomy and Science Lab at Middle School Kurhama. During his visit, he interacted with students and staff and observed the facilities available in the laboratory. He expressed satisfaction with the initiative and the enthusiasm displayed by the students. He also directed the concerned Cluster Head to ensure the maximum utilisation of the laboratory, so that the largest possible number of students from the cluster can benefit from this facility.

This direction is particularly important because the success of such laboratories will ultimately depend on their effective and regular utilisation. A modern laboratory

should not become merely a showcase or a place visited occasionally by students. It should become an active learning centre where children regularly conduct experiments, develop models, participate in scientific activities and explore subjects beyond the prescribed textbook.

Teachers, too, have an important role to play in making these facilities meaningful. Scientific concepts that may appear difficult through conventional classroom instruction can often become much easier when demonstrated through models and practical activities. A teacher explaining the solar system, planetary motion, light, energy or other scientific phenomena can make use of the laboratory to transform an abstract lesson into an interactive experience.

Another important feature of such laboratories is that they can help identify and encourage students with a natural inclination towards science. Every classroom has children who are exceptionally curious, who constantly ask questions and who enjoy constructing or experimenting with things. Such facilities can provide these students with the space and resources to develop their interests further.

The initiative also represents a welcome movement towards experiential learning, an approach increasingly emphasised in modern education. Education becomes more meaningful when students are allowed to see, touch, construct, test and discover rather than merely listen and memorise. In this sense, the Cosmic Astronomy and Science Labs can complement classroom teaching and provide students with experiences that

textbooks alone cannot offer.

The establishment of such laboratories at the cluster level is also significant from the perspective of educational equity. Not every student has access to science centres, museums, advanced laboratories or specialised learning facilities outside school. Bringing such resources closer to schools can provide students from different backgrounds with opportunities to experience scientific learning firsthand.

However, the true measure of this initiative will not be the appearance of the laboratory or the number of instruments installed. Its success will ultimately depend on how many students actively use the facility, how many experiments they conduct, how many working models they develop and, most importantly, how effectively it nurtures curiosity and scientific thinking.

The Cosmic Astronomy and Science Lab at Kurhama therefore represents more than an addition to school infrastructure. It is an investment in curiosity, creativity and the scientific imagination of young minds. If effectively utilised, such facilities can become centres of innovation where students learn to question, investigate and discover.

Perhaps years from now, some of the children entering the Kurhama laboratory with excitement and wonder may become scientists, engineers, astronomers, researchers or innovators. Their journey may begin with a simple telescope, a scientific model, a working project or a question that arises inside this laboratory.

The Department of School Education deserves appreciation for creating such opportunities at the school level. What is needed now is sustained utilisation, active teacher participation and regular student engagement so that these laboratories fulfil their larger purpose.

The journey towards producing future scientists does not begin in a university laboratory; it often begins in a school classroom when a child is given the freedom and opportunity to ask a question, conduct an experiment and discover something for himself or herself. The Cosmic Astronomy and Science Labs can provide that first spark—and nurture it into a lifelong passion for science and discovery.

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DIGITAL LEAP

How India Moved From Lines To Links



SHOIAB MOHAMMAD BHAT

From a time when many services required physical visits to a time when many things can be done with a few clicks, India's digital journey has changed the way people manage everyday life. The change can be seen in employment, education, business, communication, tourism, and access to public and private services. The scope of Digital India is likely to continue expanding as more people gain access to digital services and become familiar with using them. The important part of this journey will be ensuring that people have both access to technology and the knowledge to use it safely and responsibly.

Digital India, therefore, is not simply about bringing more services online. It is about creating wider connections and opportunities, allowing local people, businesses and communities to connect with a much larger world. The coming years will show how much further this digital transformation can extend into our everyday lives.

Jobs and Employment Opportunities

Digitalisation has also changed the way people search for jobs. Earlier, a person looking for employment mostly depended on newspapers, personal contacts or physically visiting different offices and companies. Today, job information from local companies as well as organisations in other parts of the country and even abroad can be found online.

A person sitting in Kashmir can search for a job in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru or even with a foreign company. Applications can be submitted online, interviews can be conducted through video calls and appointments can be scheduled digitally.

This has created opportunities for young people who may not always be able to travel to another city simply to attend an interview. Online platforms have also made it easier for companies to find employees from different regions.

Businesses Moving from Local to National Markets

Digital India has also provided new opportunities for businesses. Earlier, many small businesses were mainly dependent on customers from their own locality. A shopkeeper or entrepreneur had to depend on people visiting their physical shop.

Today, digital platforms allow businesses to show their products to customers far beyond their own area. A local entrepreneur can display clothes, handicrafts, food products, artwork or other items online and receive orders from different parts of the country.

This has especially helped small entrepreneurs and home-based businesses. Social media pages and online marketplaces have become a way to introduce products, communicate with customers and promote businesses without requiring a large physical setup. Digital platforms have therefore created a connection between local products and national customers.

Education Beyond the Classroom

Education is another important area where digitalisation has brought major changes. Students today have access to online libraries, educational websites, digital courses, lectures and research material.

A student does not always have to travel to a big city to access information. They can search for



books, articles and educational resources online. They can also reach the work of authors, researchers and teachers from different parts of the world.

Many educational resources are available at a low cost, while some are completely free. Online learning has therefore made knowledge more accessible to students who may have limited resources.

Digital education also provides students with the opportunity to learn according to their own time and convenience. A student can watch a lecture again, read a digital book or search for an explanation of a difficult topic whenever required.

Social Media and Digital Opportunities

Social media also plays an important role in the digital world. It is no longer limited to chatting with friends or sharing personal photographs. Today, people use social media for business, education, tourism, awareness and communication.

Entrepreneurs can use social media to promote and sell their products. A small business can create a page, upload photographs or videos of its products and directly communicate with potential customers.

Social media has also changed the way people discover different places around the world. People share their travel experiences,

photographs and videos from local as well as international destinations. A beautiful location can become known to thousands or even millions of people through a single video.

This can be particularly useful for tourism. When people from different parts of the country or the world discover local destinations through digital platforms, they may become interested in visiting those places. Increased tourism can support hotels, restaurants, transport services, local guides, artisans and small businesses. In this way, digital promotion can contribute to the local economy and create employment opportunities.

Making Daily Life Easier

At present, digital services have become an essential part of many routine activities. It is possible to order medicines, purchase food products, book seats, pay bills, make appointments, find services, and interact with others without going everywhere physically. All this makes life easier and, in many cases, decreases the level of effort that one needs to exert in order to do some routine activities. For instance, prior to purchasing something, customers can see the prices on different websites, read reviews, and choose from various options.

At the same time, people need to remain careful while

using digital platforms. Online fraud, misleading information, fake products, and privacy concerns are also part of the digital world. Digital literacy is therefore important. People should know how to identify reliable information, protect their personal details and use online services responsibly.

Connecting Local People with the Wider World

The most important change brought by digitalisation is perhaps the connection it has created. A person or business that was once limited to a particular locality can now connect with people across the country and the world.

A local entrepreneur can reach a national customer. A student can access an international library. A job seeker can apply to a company in another city. A tourist can discover a destination that they had never heard about before.

This shows that Digital India is not simply about computers, mobile phones or internet services. It is about how technology is changing the way people live, work, study, communicate and do business.

When we look at today's world, almost everything is moving towards digital platforms. The scope of Digital India is therefore becoming wider every day. If digital access, awareness and responsible use continue to improve, technology can provide more opportunities for citizens, businesses, students and communities.

From a time when many services required physical visits to a time when many things can be done with one click, India's digital journey has changed everyday life in a significant way. The coming years will show how much further this digital transformation can go.

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■ Ticking Clock

Why Incremental Action On Climate Is No Longer Enough



MUZAMIL ARIF

“Climate change is a major threat to the existence of many developing countries.”

- Narendra Modi

Climate change stands as the defining existential challenge of the 21st century a crisis forged by human activity that now threatens the very foundations of civilisation, biodiversity, and planetary stability. Once dismissed as a distant scientific warning, it has become an immediate and harsh reality marked by record-shattering temperatures, devastating extreme weather events, and cascading ecological disruptions. As of August 2026, the world has already crossed critical thresholds. The past eleven years (2015–2025) rank among the warmest on record, with global mean temperatures hovering around 1.42–1.44°C above pre-industrial levels. This relentless warming, driven primarily by greenhouse gas emissions, demands urgent and collective global action. For a country like India, with its diverse geography, massive population, and developing economy, the stakes are extraordinarily high.

SCIENTIFIC BASIS AND GLOBAL CURRENT SCENARIO

The scientific consensus remains unequivocal: human activities — primarily the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, intensive agriculture, and industrial processes — have unequivocally caused the observed warming. Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide continue to rise, pushing Earth’s energy imbalance to historic highs. Ocean heat content reached new records in 2025, while sea levels continue their steady rise. Glaciers are retreating rapidly, and Antarctic sea ice remains at alarmingly low levels.

Recent reports, including the “10 New Insights in Climate Science 2025/2026”, highlight accelerating groundwater depletion, declining land carbon uptake, and signs that warming



may be accelerating. Extreme weather events — heatwaves, floods, droughts, wildfires, and intensified cyclones — have become more frequent and severe. In 2025 alone, such events caused trillions of dollars in economic losses and claimed thousands of lives worldwide. Ocean acidification and marine heatwaves have triggered widespread coral bleaching, threatening entire ecosystems. Biodiversity loss is accelerating at rates far exceeding natural baselines, while food systems face mounting stress from shifting rainfall patterns and extreme heat.

IMPACT ON INDIA.

India confronts these challenges with acute vulnerability. As a tropical nation with a 7,500 km coastline, the fragile Himalayan ecosystem, and over 1.4 billion people, it ranks among the most climate-vulnerable countries. In 2025, extreme weather events affected the country on more than 330 days, resulting in significant loss of life and massive economic damage. Prolonged heatwaves, with temperatures frequently crossing 40–45°C, have disrupted agriculture, reduced labour productivity, and strained public health infrastructure. February 2025 was recorded as India’s hottest in 125 years.

Erratic monsoon patterns have led to devastating floods in urban centres like Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai, while other regions face prolonged droughts. Rising sea levels threaten coastal communities and low-lying

islands. Himalayan glaciers are melting at an accelerated pace, endangering the water security of hundreds of millions who depend on the Ganges, Indus, and Brahmaputra river systems. Agriculture, which employs nearly half of India’s workforce, faces compound risks, including new pests, soil degradation, and yield losses. Vector-borne diseases are spreading to new areas, and urban air pollution often compounds climate-induced health risks. Economically, climate change is estimated to erode 4–6% of India’s GDP annually through lost productivity, infrastructure damage, and higher adaptation costs.

INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS AND PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

Globally, the Paris Agreement continues to serve as the central framework, yet collective progress remains insufficient. At COP30 held in Belém, Brazil, in 2025, countries submitted updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), but current policies still project warming of 2.3–2.8°C by 2100 — well above the 1.5°C safe limit. The emissions gap remains wide, and the remaining global carbon budget is being exhausted rapidly.

Key challenges include slow fossil fuel phase-out, inadequate climate finance for developing nations, and geopolitical tensions that hinder cooperation. While renewable energy deployment has seen remarkable growth worldwide, with costs falling

dramatically, hard-to-abate sectors and political resistance continue to slow the transition. Equity remains a core issue: nations least responsible for historical emissions suffer the most severe consequences. Technological solutions such as carbon capture, green hydrogen, and advanced energy storage are progressing but scaling too slowly to match the urgency of the crisis.

INDIA’S RESPONSE AND INITIATIVES

Despite these challenges, India has demonstrated both ambition and pragmatism. The country achieved its target of 50% non-fossil fuel installed power capacity five years ahead of the 2030 deadline set under the Paris Agreement. By early 2026, renewable energy capacity surpassed 270 GW, with solar and wind leading the surge. India now ranks among the world’s fastest-growing renewable energy markets and remains firmly committed to reaching 500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2070.

Flagship initiatives such as the National Solar Mission, International Solar Alliance, National Green Hydrogen Mission, and LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) movement reflect India’s proactive stance. The country is also advancing its carbon credit trading scheme and investing heavily in electric mobility, grid modernization, and climate-resilient infrastructure. Community-led adap-

tation programmes, agroforestry, watershed management, and promotion of climate-smart agriculture are yielding encouraging results at the grassroots level. India’s approach seeks to balance rapid economic development and energy access for all with responsible climate action — a model that could inspire the Global South.

THE WAY FORWARD: SOLUTIONS AND HOPE

Addressing climate change requires a comprehensive, multi-pronged strategy. Mitigation demands deep and rapid decarbonisation: phasing down fossil fuels, scaling renewable energy with robust storage solutions, enhancing energy efficiency, and preserving forests through nature-based solutions. Adaptation measures — including early warning systems, climate-resilient crops, sustainable urban planning, and protective infrastructure — are equally vital.

International climate finance, technology transfer, and capacity building must flow adequately to developing countries. Behavioural change, circular economy models, and youth-driven climate action will play decisive roles. For India, priorities include peaking emissions at the earliest, electrifying transport, decarbonising hard-to-abate sectors, and building resilience in agriculture and coastal zones.

CONCLUSION

Climate change is not merely an environmental issue; it is a civilizational challenge encompassing justice, security, equity, and long-term survival. The choices made in this decisive decade will determine the fate of generations to come. While the situation is grave and a temporary exceedance of the 1.5°C threshold appears likely, hope lies in human ingenuity, falling costs of clean technologies, growing public awareness, and demonstrated policy momentum.

India has the opportunity to pioneer a model of inclusive, sustainable, and green growth that balances development with planetary health. The time for incremental half-measures has passed. This generation must rise to the challenge with determination, solidarity, and transformative action. Only through collective wisdom and urgent execution can we ensure that future generations inherit a habitable, thriving, and equitable Earth.

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Cities Growing On Garbage Heaps

DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH

While rapid urbanisation in India is creating opportunities for economic growth, employment, and improved living standards, the scientific management of the resulting solid waste remains a major challenge. Unplanned urban expansion, growing population, changing lifestyles, consumerism, and the increasing use of single-use items have increased both the quantity and variety of waste in cities. In many cities, waste collection, transportation, and disposal are still primarily based on the “collect-transport-dump” model. This results in open dumping and burning, water source pollution, foul smell, air pollution, and increasing landfill pressure. Therefore, the challenge facing India is not just waste removal but also its transformation into a resource.

India’s solid waste is extremely diverse. Municipal solid waste from domestic and commercial activities constitutes the largest portion, including food and other organic materials, as well as paper, plastic, glass, metal, textiles, and packaging materials. The large volume of organic waste presents both a challenge and an opportunity for India, as it can be used to produce fertiliser and biogas. Plastic waste is another major problem. Multi-layer packaging and single-use plastics, in particular, are difficult to recycle and are likely to end up in drains, rivers, and oceans. Construction and demolition debris, including concrete, bricks, stone, tiles, wood, and metal, is also rapidly increasing. Scientific recycling can be used for road construction and new construction.

Additionally, biomedical waste, e-waste, and hazardous industrial waste require special care. Infected materials, needles, contaminated plastics, and pharmaceutical residues from hospitals, if mixed with general waste, can pose a serious threat to healthcare



workers, waste pickers, and the general public. Similarly, e-waste from computers, mobile phones, batteries, and other electronic devices can contain precious metals, as well as lead, mercury, and other harmful substances. Hazardous waste such as chemicals, solvents, paints, and industrial residues must be kept separate from general municipal waste.

The first and most important technological solution to address this crisis is waste segregation at the source. Separating wet, dry, and hazardous waste makes the entire subsequent management process more effective. GPS-based garbage vehicles, sensor-equipped smart bins, RFID technology, and digital tracking systems can make collection systems more transparent and efficient. But it’s important to understand that technology is no substitute for civic discipline. If waste isn’t segregated at the household and

institutional level, even state-of-the-art processing plants won’t deliver the desired results.

Composting and biomethanation are important solutions for organic waste. Composting can convert organic waste into useful organic fertiliser, while anaerobic digestion produces biogas and organic residues. This reduces landfill pressure and provides useful resources for energy and agriculture. Decentralised composting and biogas plants in large cities can also reduce transportation costs and unnecessary waste transfer.

Material recovery facilities are extremely useful for dry waste. They use conveyor belts, magnetic separation, air classifiers, optical sorting, and modern sensor technology to separate paper, metal, and various types of plastic. Artificial intelligence and computer vision-based systems may make automated sorting even more effective in

the future. However, mixing wet waste with recyclable materials reduces its quality and economic value. Therefore, source separation is fundamental to this entire technology chain.

Mechanical recycling for plastic waste is effective for relatively clean and uniform plastics. Some chemical recycling and pyrolysis technologies can be used for harder plastics. These technologies offer the potential to yield fuel or chemical raw materials, but a life-cycle assessment of their energy requirements, costs, and environmental impact is necessary. Simply being technically feasible does not automatically make a solution sustainable.

Energy production from waste is also an important option. Through controlled combustion and refuse-derived fuel technologies, energy can be obtained from residual waste that cannot be recycled or bioprocessed. Modern emission control systems help

control pollutants. However, India’s mixed and high-moisture municipal waste often has a low calorific value. Therefore, burning all mixed waste without separation is not a viable strategy. Energy production should not be considered a substitute for recycling and bioprocessing but rather a means of managing the residual waste that remains.

Finally, the need for scientific landfills remains, as recycling of all types of waste is not possible. Engineered landfills, including liners, leachate collection, gas capture, and groundwater monitoring, limit pollution. Biomin-ing and bioremediation are also useful technologies for reclaiming old waste sites in India, allowing recyclable materials to be extracted from old waste and the land reused.

India must now move from a linear “produce-use-throw” economy to a circular economy. “Reduce, reuse, repair, recycle, and resource recovery” must become the cornerstone of urban policy. Producer responsibility, reasonable fees for waste producers, the integration of waste pickers into formal systems, accountability of bulk waste generators, and enhancing the technical capacity of local bodies will be important steps in this direction.

In fact, solid waste management is not just an engineering problem but a question of urban governance, social behaviour, and resource management. Technology can separate, process, and recover waste, but its proper use requires citizen participation, effective institutional arrangements, and rigorous monitoring. Indian cities must move beyond a “waste removal” mindset to a “waste-to-resource” approach. This approach can become the foundation for a clean, sustainable, and resource-efficient India amid a growing population and urbanisation.

(Dr. Priyanka Saurabh, PhD (Political Science), is a poet and social thinker.)

Srinagar Set

Sunil Kumar Sharma will chair the meeting of BJP MLAs to discuss the party’s plan to corner the Government during the session.

“We are holding a meeting of MLAs tomorrow,” Sharma told KNO. He added that the BJP, after holding meetings across Jammu & Kashmir to gather feedback on governance and other issues, will raise matters affecting the common people.

“We will seek answers from the Government for every promise they made to the people of Jammu & Kashmir,” he said—(KNO)

Society That Loses

exhibitions, translation initiatives, and archival facilities, while also fostering fellowships in Kashmir Shaivism.

“The Centre will empower youth through art and creative expression, promote social harmony, and strengthen national integration,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that cultural and heritage centres are a national imperative. He said beyond economic growth, a nation requires civilisational memory and moral direction.

“The Mata Lalleshwari Centre will reconnect society with its roots, provide spiritual resources for mental peace, and contribute to grassroots economic vitality by attracting seekers, historians and tourists. The initiative aligns with the vision of the Hon’ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, who has consistently underscored the importance of integrating heritage with development. The Centre will stand as a monument to India’s cultural soul and a source of national strength,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that he has been constantly reminding the society that a tree without roots cannot withstand a storm and in the same way, a society disconnected from its foundational visionaries, cultural heritage and the philosophy of its sages loses its balance, sensitivity and sense of direction.

Mata Lalleshwari Cultural and Heritage Centre will contribute to spiritual tourism and economic revitalisation. In this sacred land, where holy pilgrimage sites, ancient temples and centres of spiritual practice are spread across the region, this centre will attract seekers, historians and travellers from all over the world,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Shri Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary, Culture Department; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Shri Tejinder Singh, IGP, Jammu; Shri Shridhar Patil, DIG, JSK Range; Dr. Rakesh Minhas, Deputy Commissioner Jammu; Shri K.K. Sidha, Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums; Shri Arvind Karwani, Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner; Shri Dileep Pandita, President, Mata Bhaderkali Asthanan Trust; Shri Ashok Kaw, General Secretary, Mata Bhaderkali Asthanan Trust; Shri Chand Ji Pandita, Organizing Secretary and other members of the Trust, senior officials, prominent citizens and devotees in large number attended the foundation stone laying ceremony.

—Art serves

priceless traditions. “I believe that artists and writers are not only creators but also guardians of society’s collective memory. They have given words to Jammu and Kashmir’s priceless culture, voice to the emotions of society, and have shouldered the duty of carrying this Union Territory’s heritage to future generations. Therefore, honouring them is nothing less than honouring our own civilization, our own culture, and our own identity,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor paid tribute to Acharya Abhinavagupt as a philosopher, spiritual practitioner, poet, and master of aesthetics whose profound contributions to Kashmir Shaivism and Pratyabhijna philosophy remained confined to limited scholarly circles for centuries. He termed this neglect not merely academic but a “damage to civilizational memory,” and called for correcting historical oversights so India’s youth can access their intellectual heritage.

“The time has now come to correct these historical oversights. This task must be inspired by our commitment to truth, because our youth have the right to know how vast, how ancient, and how connected to the global community is the intellectual depth of the civilization they inherit,” he said.

Highlighting Abhinavagupt’s seminal work Tantraloka and his theory of rasa, the Lieutenant Governor said that art serves as a doorway to inner awakening, reflecting the unique Indian vision where art, life, and the pursuit of truth are inseparable.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated Dr. Vaid-ehi Taman on her book Abhinavagupt: The Voice of Eternal Shiva and Ms. Akriti Sharma on Raghunath Temple, Channi Parat: Hidden Heritage of Sunderbani, describing both works as vital contributions connecting Jammu Kashmir’s heritage to India’s shared civilizational consciousness. He noted that the Raghunath Temple at Channi Parat, begun under Maharaja Gulab Singh and completed under Maharaja Ranbir Singh, exemplifies Jammu Kashmir’s rich tangible heritage.

“I want the new generation to remember that our ancestors built this nation with their wisdom, with their questions, with their experiences, and with their continuous search for truth. It is our sacred responsibility to ensure that this knowledge does not fade from memory. Our duty is to understand that knowledge, honour it, pass it on to new generations, and preserve it for the times to come,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that under the leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi new energy has been infused into Jammu Kashmir’s Economic and cultural landscape. He called upon universities, schools, and cultural institutions to introduce young people to thinkers like Abhinavagupt as living voices relevant to contemporary questions of consciousness and creativity, and urged greater private

and institutional support for research and publishing in this field.

“We must encourage writers like Dr. Vaidehi Taman and Ms. Akriti Sharma, who, through the difficult and patient work of research, study, and interpretation, can build a bridge between ancient heritage, knowledge, and modern understanding. Such work should not only be a matter of appreciation; it must also receive our active encouragement and institutional support,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed hope that the two books would reach readers across the country and that the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages would continue driving the region’s cultural renaissance forward.

“We must place the historical facts in the right perspective with confidence. We must adopt the same curiosity and the same honest scholarship that characterized our ancestors,” he said.

Shri Arvind Gupta, Member of Legislative Assembly from Jammu West; Shri Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary, Culture Department; Shri Shakti Kumar Pathak, Director Anti-Corruption Bureau, J&K; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Shri Tejinder Singh, IGP, Jammu; Dr Rakesh Minhas, Deputy Commissioner Jammu; Ms. Shruti Awasthi, Regional Director, IGNC; Ms. Harvinder Kour, Secretary, JKAACL; eminent literary personalities; prominent citizens from different walks of life and attended the unveiling ceremony.

MeT Predicts Dry

settled at 10.5 degrees, which was 1.5 degrees below normal.

Qazigund recorded a maximum of 26 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 8 degrees, while Pahalgam recorded 22.5 degrees and 5.2 degrees, respectively.

Kupwara recorded a maximum temperature of 28 degrees Celsius, while Kukernag and Gulmarg recorded 25.2 degrees and 18.2 degrees, respectively.

In Jammu division, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 32.2 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 20.6 degrees. Katra recorded 31 degrees and 18.2 degrees, while Banihal recorded 27.8 degrees and 11 degrees, respectively.

Bhadarwah recorded a maximum temperature of 27.4 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 8.4 degrees.

No significant rainfall was recorded across most stations during the day, although 24-hour rainfall ending at 8:30 am was recorded at a few places, including 9.4 mm at Kukernag and 1.2 mm each at Qazigund and Batote.

The weather department has advised farmers to make use of the predominantly dry conditions for harvesting and other agricultural activities—(KNO)

CM Attends Concluding

covered key themes including the macroeconomic outlook, financing agricultural transformation and financing the energy transition.

The discussions provided insights into the challenges ahead while highlighting the opportunities before India in its journey towards becoming a Viksit Bharat.

Indian Civil

in parts of the region.

The intervention came during a broader discussion at the Human Rights Council on challenges facing civic space globally. It said peaceful protesters, human rights defenders and civil society organisations in different parts of the world were increasingly facing arbitrary detention, excessive use of force, legal harassment and other forms of intimidation.

The Indian civil society representative also highlighted India’s tradition of voluntary action and civic engagement, noting the contribution of civil society initiatives to democratic and social reforms, including the Right to Information.

At the same time, the statement said the prevailing social and political environment had placed increasing pressure on civic space and called for collective attention to the issue.

The representative urged the international community to protect and strengthen civic space and ensure that short-term exigencies did not undermine democratic freedoms.

The statement was delivered under the General Debate on civic space and democratic participation at the 63rd session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

RBI Holds Conference

tourism, agriculture and allied activities, hydropower and MSMEs. He stressed the need to leverage their inherent strengths and channelise credit towards these sectors to expand agricultural term lending, upgrade existing SHGs into meaningful enterprises and promote handicrafts and niche products in the UT.

He said RBI’s Unified Lending Interface (ULI) would accelerate credit delivery and accomplish for lending what UPI accomplished for retail payments. Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS), he said, would help address liquidity issues faced by MSMEs and facilitate their further growth, while the Central Bank Digital Currency (Digital Rupee) and its programmability feature could offer possibilities for targeted state subsidies under welfare schemes.

The spokesperson said Dulloo, stressing the continued focus of the Government of India and the UT administration on reducing cyber frauds, advised all stakeholders to act collectively. He also encouraged stakeholders to draw actionable roadmaps based on the conference for the progress of the UT.

Rohit Jain, Deputy Governor, RBI, in his special address, highlighted the role of the central bank as a full-service institution and underscored that, apart from its core functions such as monetary policy, regu-

lation and supervision, the RBI has a developmental agenda focused on payment and settlement systems, financial inclusion and market development.

He stressed that ULI, an RBI initiative, would help achieve seamless and frictionless credit access across diverse sectors of the economy, thereby improving overall economic well-being. He said that while technology brings efficiency, it also creates risks of cyber fraud.

He said the RBI consistently engages with government authorities to address these challenges. Technology-driven solutions such as MuleHunter.ai for strengthening fraud detection, card tokenisation, introduction of the ‘.bank.in’ domain, unified calling numbers and the compensation framework for unauthorised electronic banking transactions would help create a financial ecosystem that protects customers and retains their trust in the banking sector, he said.

The spokesperson said Jain also stressed the need to scale up efforts to increase public awareness about these initiatives. He expressed gratitude to the UT government for its active involvement in the conference.

The conference featured thematic sessions on Unified Lending Interface (ULI): Present Status & Challenges, including its rollout in J&K; Digital Rupee (e)—CBDC; MuleHunter.ai and its implementation; the supervisory approach to digital lending apps; card tokenisation, the ‘.bank.in’ domain and unified calling numbers; the compensation framework for small-value fraudulent electronic banking transactions (EBTs); the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C)/State Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (S4C) and modus operandi of cybercrime in J&K; fraud prevention measures for UPI payments; and Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) and challenges in J&K.

Water Chestnut

fruits, indicating that the plant retains much of the contamination around its root system.

Iron was the most abundant element detected. Its concentration in roots from Dal Lake reached 322.50 mg/kg, while zinc reached 82.45 mg/kg in roots. Cadmium in Dal Lake roots was recorded at 0.42 mg/kg.

The researchers also found substantial differences between the lakes. Wular recorded the lowest heavy-metal concentrations among the four water bodies, while Manasbal also showed comparatively lower contamination. The authors attributed the differences partly to variations in external pollution sources and water exchange.

Sediment analysis provided another important finding, with Dal Lake showing the highest enrichment of heavy metals. The researchers reported that several metals, including cadmium, chromium, nickel and iron, exceeded Canadian sediment-quality guideline thresholds in parts of the sampled sediment.

The study also identified a potentially useful environmental role for water chestnut. Because the plant efficiently accumulates metals, the researchers said it could serve as a biological indicator of pollution and potentially have applications in phytoremediation—(KNO)

‘If Everything Needs

“The popular government has completed two years, and throughout these two years, we have brought the poor people to a position of frustration and confusion,” he said.

Sharma said the Opposition had a responsibility to engage with people when the government failed to address their concerns. He said his party’s legislative group would take up issues raised by people in the upcoming Assembly session and also pursue matters requiring intervention from the Centre.

He, however, questioned the government’s explanation that several problems could not be addressed because Jammu and Kashmir had not yet regained statehood.

“Where pipes had to be connected, where poles and wires were required, where schools needed staff, where hospitals needed doctors and paramedics, where potholes on roads had to be filled, for every issue the same answer was received — statehood is not there,” he said.

Sharma then questioned the purpose of the elected government and the Assembly if statehood was being cited as the answer to basic administrative problems.

“If at the end of two years we say that we need statehood even to install poles, wires and pipes, and we need statehood even to provide staff, then why are we in government? Why are we in the Assembly?” he asked.

He went further and said the government should consider dissolving the present arrangement rather than continue for the full five-year term if it believed it could not function without statehood.

“If after two years we still have the same answer, I feel that after five years the same answer will be repeated,” Sharma said.

He said unemployment, particularly among young people, would be among the major issues for the Opposition during the upcoming Assembly session. Referring to data presented during the interaction, he said people aged between 19 and 29 accounted for more than 32% of Jammu and Kashmir’s population.

“This section is the largest in Jammu and Kashmir’s population and is currently under stress and depression,” Sharma said, arguing that many young people had no income to support their parents, pay for siblings’ education or meet family responsibilities.

He also criticised the government’s approach to recruitment and outsourcing, claiming that 25,000 jobs had already been occupied through outsourcing.

“You have occupied 25,000 jobs. I say this with a guarantee that these 25,000 will not be advertised again,” he said.

Sharma said outsourced employees could themselves begin demanding regularisation in the future, adding that workers from different government schemes and departments were already seeking regularisation.

He also accused the government of trying to play the role of the Opposition while retaining the privileges of being in power.

“The unfortunate thing is that the people sitting in government also want to do the work of the Opposition,” Sharma said. “The government also wants to remain in the Opposition, but wants to enjoy all the power.”

On the upcoming Assembly session, Sharma said there were numerous issues to be raised but questioned the limited number of sitting days.

He also contrasted the government’s claim that Jammu and Kashmir had more Assembly sittings, on average, than some other states, with the region’s specific problems.

“Jammu and Kashmir’s issues are different. There are so many issues here on a single platform. So a response like this makes a person ask: where should we go, whom should we speak to?” he said.

Sharma also defended the Opposition’s public outreach programme, saying it was intended to hear people’s grievances and take them to the appropriate forums.

On statehood, he said the issue should not be used as a blanket explanation for administrative shortcomings.

“I am raising the slogan of statehood only to strengthen my vote bank,” he said, while adding that statehood was not preventing the government from dealing with most of the issues being raised by people.

Sharma’s remarks came ahead of the upcoming Assembly session, with the BJP seeking to focus attention on unemployment, recruitment, public services and what it describes as the government’s failure to address people’s day-to-day grievances.

NIA Court Rejects

incarceration, among other grounds.

The court said the delay in trial is not good ground, particularly in militancy related cases.

“In the present case, delay in trial is not attributable to prosecution. Moreover, time and again, it has been held by apex court and different high courts that delay in trial cannot be considered as good ground for granting bail by trial court.

“Such a plea can only be raised before constitutional court and not before the trial court. So this ground for bail is outrightly rejected,” the court said in its 27-page order.

It also noted that the trial was already underway and witnesses were being examined.

“Material available on record indicates the involvement of the applicants in furtherance of conspiracy for unlawful activities, which needs to be corroborated from other relevant witnesses yet to be examined...,” the court said.

“...in such a scenario, if the applicants are released on bail, there is every likelihood that they will influence the key witnesses of the case which might hamper the process of justice,” it said.

The trio are accused of receiving infiltrated terrorists in Samba district, transporting them to Jammu city and arranging safe shelter for them. They are also accused of providing similar assistance to other groups of terrorists in the past and facilitating their movement to the valley.

“In the present case, the applicants are facing trial for alleged commission of offences as being part of a criminal conspiracy to commit serious offences like in present case, which is punishable with death or imprisonment,” the court said.

The court accordingly rejected the joint bail application of the three accused, keeping in view the nature and gravity of the offences and the larger interest of the State and Union territory.

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Kreeri Residents Demand Immediate Repair of Dilapidated Roads

IRFAN TILGAMI

BARAMULLA: The deteriorating condition of vital link roads connecting Kreeri with Tilgam and Thindma via Pathnar has triggered widespread outrage among local residents, who accuse the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department of persistent neglect. Despite repeated representations and promises by successive administrative authorities, both stretches continue to lie in shambles, posing serious risks to commuters and disrupting daily life.

The Kreeri-Tilgam road, which serves as an essential artery for several hamlets, has deteriorated significantly over the years, marked by eroded tarmac and massive craters.

Locals said that the road was included in developmental plans and that people had repeatedly raised the demand for its upgradation before senior authorities.



“The road was included in developmental plans and people raised the demand for its upgradation before senior authorities many times. But despite these prior interventions, the project never materialized on the ground,” Mohammad Saleem, a resident of Tilgam, said. Locals lamented that commuters are forced to navigate a treacherous path daily.

A similar grim situation prevails on the Kreeri-

Thindma route via Pathnar. Residents said that the stretch has been plagued by deep potholes for the past several years, yet no repair or macadamization work has been initiated.

“The road has become completely unmotorable, especially during inclement weather when craters turn into water-logged pools,” said Gulzar Ahmad Bhat, a resident of Kreeri. He said transporters frequently avoid this

route, and school children, patients, and elderly citizens bear the brunt of official apathy.

An official from the R&B Department stated that the issue has been noted and assured that the matter would be looked into for appropriate redressal. “The issue has been noted and the matter would be looked into for appropriate redressal,” the official said.

Meanwhile, aggrieved residents have urged the District Administration Baramulla and senior R&B authorities to sanction immediate macadamization and repair works to alleviate the suffering of the rural population before the onset of harsh weather.

Residents said that any further delay would compound their hardships, especially for students, patients, and elderly persons who depend on these roads for daily movement. They demanded time-bound action from the concerned authorities.

Min Dar lays foundation stones, inaugurates Dev projects in Rafiabad

Emphasises time-bound execution, quality, people-centric development

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Saturday laid foundation stones and inaugurated a series of major developmental projects across Rafiabad constituency, marking a significant push towards strengthening rural infrastructure and improving public services in the area.

The projects, spread across key sectors including education, veterinary services, livestock development and road connectivity, are aimed at creating modern infrastructure and improving the quality of essential services for the people, particularly those living in rural and far-flung areas.

At Watergam, Javid Dar laid the foundation stone for an Engineering Complex, being constructed at an estimated cost of rupees 60 crore. The facility is expected to strengthen infrastructure and provide improved facilities for the concerned sector.

The Minister also laid the foundation stone for an Embryo Transfer Technology (ETT) Laboratory at Chijhama, Rafiabad, envis-



aged as an important intervention for strengthening modern breeding practices and improving livestock development infrastructure in the region.

At Shultoo, Rohama, Javid Dar inaugurated the upgradation of the existing Veterinary Building, including fencing, completed at a cost of rupees 29 lakh. The facility is expected to enhance veterinary services and provide improved support to livestock farmers and animal rearers of the area.

Giving impetus to educational infrastructure, the Minister laid the foundation stone for construction of a 10-room double-storey building at Higher Secondary School Shultoo, at an estimated cost of rs 2.74 crore.

He also laid the foundation stone for construction of Physics, Chemistry,

Biology and Computer laboratories/rooms at Boys Higher Secondary School Shultoo, involving an estimated cost of rs 72 lakh, aimed at providing students with better academic infrastructure and strengthening science and technology education.

In the road sector, the Minister inaugurated the Brandub-Khahmoh Road, 1st and 2nd kilometre, completed at a cost of rs 1.70 crore, providing improved connectivity and facilitating smoother movement of people and goods.

At Arkhurwari, Javid Dar laid the foundation stone for the permanent restoration of the Vohlutra-Shultoo-Arkburwari Road, estimated to cost rs 1 crore, which will further improve connectivity between the adjoining habitations and enhance access to essential services

and markets.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the Government is committed to take development to the doorsteps of the people, with special focus on strengthening infrastructure and public services in rural and far-flung areas. He said that development is not merely about creation of physical assets but also about ensuring that these assets translate into better services, greater opportunities and improved quality of life for the people.

Javid Dar directed the concerned departments and executing agencies to ensure strict adherence to timelines, quality standards and prescribed specifications in all ongoing and upcoming works. He stressed the need for close inter-departmental coordination and regular monitoring so that projects are completed within the stipulated time without compromising on quality.

The Minister reiterated that the Government will continue to accord priority to need-based, inclusive and people-centric development, with focused interventions in education, healthcare, agriculture and allied sectors, rural infrastructure and road connectivity.

JKEDI organises District-Level Startup Idea Challenge at GDC Tral

GMK NEWS NETWORK

TRAL: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), in collaboration with Government Degree College Tral, organised a District-Level Startup Idea Challenge and Boot Camp under the J&K Startup Idea Challenge 2.0.

The programme organised with the theme Ignite Ideas, Build Startups, Create Impact aimed to nurture creativity among students and aspiring entrepreneurs and equip them with the confidence and support needed to transform innovative ideas into viable business ventures. It forms part of JKEDI's broader initiative under the J&K Startup Policy 2024-27 to foster a robust startup ecosystem across the Union Territory through district-level boot camps.

Distinguished guests present on the occasion included Chand Kishore Sharma, Joint Director, JKEDI; Prof. Jasvinder Singh, Principal, Government Degree College Tral; Raiyees Manzoor, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Pulwama; Mohd Ayoub Joo, Chief Manager, Cluster Office Pulwama, J&K Bank; Prof. Rafiq Ahmad Khan, HOD Physics, GDC Tral; Dr. Umar Amin, Assistant Professor, Department of Com-

merce, GDC Tral; Arshid, successful entrepreneur from New Hatric Bakery; Nazir Ahmad Mir, Senior Faculty Member, ITI Tral; Tariq Beigh, Block MIS Officer, NRLM Tral; along with other dignitaries, faculty members and guests.

The programme provided a platform and starting point for students to begin their entrepreneurial journey. An idea today, with the right support, can grow into something remarkable tomorrow.

Students pitched their startup ideas before a panel of experts. The most promising ones will be shortlisted for intensive mentoring, pitch training and the Grand Finale of the J&K Startup Idea Challenge 2.0. Selected innovators will receive opportunities for mentorship, incubation support and pathways to convert their concepts into sustainable ventures.

The event concluded by reminding participants that every successful startup begins with the determination to take the first step.

The organisers expressed gratitude to all dignitaries, faculty members and students for their enthusiastic participation and reiterated JKEDI and GDC Tral's commitment to empowering the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to become job creators rather than job seekers.

Dr Karwani inspects construction work in Transit accommodations



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M), Dr. Arvind Karwani, concluded a week-long inspection tour of transit accommodation sites for PM Package Employees under construction across the Kashmir Valley.

Dr. Karwani was accompanied by concerned site engineers and senior officials of the district administration and Relief Organization.

While interacting with the site engineers at the construction sites, he emphasized on achievement of targets in a time bound manner. He particularly underlined on the importance of early completion of allied works and basic amenities at the sites, so that the possession of allotted quarters can be handed over to the employees at the earliest possible, as per the criterion laid down by the Government.

He enjoined upon the engineers to ensure quality of the work and execution strictly as per the approved DPR.

Dr. Karwani also interacted with PM package employees at various locations and gave a patient hearing to their demands, particularly related to the allotment of quarters.

Pertinent to mention that 6000 quarters at 20 different locations across the Kashmir valley under PMDP programme are being constructed for PM Package employees, out of which 5176 flats stand constructed. Allotment of flats has been made against the applications received from the employees for all the sites and possession of flats shall be handed over to the employees immediately after the completion of the important basic infrastructure and take-over of the sites from the PWD(R&B).

The construction work on allied works like boundary wall, internal roads, drainage, elevators and community hall etc. is also going on in full swing.

Dr. Karwani assured employees that all possible efforts are being made to ensure that employees are handed over possession of flats at the earliest possible.

Arigam Tral residents seek urgent action on drinking water crisis

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Pulwama: Residents of Arigam village in Tral area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district have urged the authorities to expedite work on a long-pending water supply scheme, claiming that the village continues to face an acute shortage of safe drinking water despite the project having been sanctioned several years ago.

The residents said the existing water supply arrangements are inadequate and, in some areas, the water supplied is contaminated, forcing many families to depend on natural springs in Tral town to meet their daily drinking water requirements.

Social activist Ishfaq Gul said the shortage had caused considerable hardship to residents, particularly women and elderly people who, according to him, are often forced to travel several kilometres to collect drinking water.

“We are facing immense difficulties due to the lack of clean drinking water. The water available through the existing system is not fit for consumption, while the arrangements made so far are insufficient for the village,” Gul said.

He said a new water supply scheme for Arigam was sanctioned in 2018 following repeated demands from residents, but the project has remained pend-

ing for years.

“Despite repeated assurances that the work would be started, there has been no meaningful progress on the ground. People have been waiting for years and are now losing patience,” he said.

Another resident and Auqaf member, Abdul Rehman Baba, said two public water posts were installed around two years ago after the issue was highlighted, but these have failed to resolve the problem.

“Two water posts were installed, but considering the population and requirements of the village, they are far from sufficient. People continue to struggle every day to arrange drinking water,” Baba said.

He said residents had hoped that the long-pending project would finally move ahead following the intervention of MLA Tral Rafiq Ahmad Naik.

The residents have appealed to MLA Tral Rafiq Ahmad Naik and Deputy Commissioner Pulwama Dr Basharat Qayoom to intervene personally and ensure that the scheme is executed at the earliest so that the village gets a reliable supply of potable water.

AEE Jal Shakti Tral, Shoaib Ahmad, said the department was taking steps to start the work soon.

“On Tuesday, we will finalise the land for the OHT (Overhead Tank), and the work will be started very soon,” he said—(KNO)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
WATER WORKS DIVISION SRINAGAR

HQ:-KOTHIBAGH SRINAGAR

Phone No.: 0194-2477207, email:- xen-wwdsgr@jk.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Short Term E-NIT. No. 37/WWD/Sgr/Civil of 2026-27 Dated 18.09.2026

For and on behalf of the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, e-Tenders are invited from Registered/Approved and valid Civil Class of Contractors/Agencies/Firms registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments and whose registrations are renewed for current financial year for the following works on 'Percentage Basis':

Table-I

S. No	Name of Work	Estd. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Tender Doc. Fee (in Rs.)	Head of Account	T.O.C in Days	Class of Contractor	Tender Call
1	Providing water supply to Jammu & Kashmir Pollution Control Committee at Rajbagh Srinagar	1.23	2460/-	100/-	DC Work (Consent Budget 2026-2027)	20	D	1 st

Position of AAA:- Accorded

Position of Funds:- Available with Competent Authority

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Book of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the website: www.jktendersgov.in As per schedule of dates given below

Table (II)

01	Date of publishing of Tender Notice (Online)	18.09.2026
02	Period of downloading of bidding documents	19.09.2026 10:00AM To 25.09.2026 4:00 PM
03	Bid Submission Start Date	19.09.2026 10:00 AM
04	Bid submission End Date	25.09.2026 4:00 PM
06	Date and time of opening of Bids (Online)	26.09.2026 2:00 PM

No:-WW/Sgr/CC/4716-26
Dated: 18.09.2026

DIPK-5895-26
DT: 19/09/2026

Executive Engineer
Water Works Division Srinagar

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE PROTECTION

OFFICE OF THE, WILDLIFE WARDEN, WETLAND DIVISION, KASHMIR.

ZAINAKOOT, SRINAGAR.

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

E-NIT No. 01 OF 2026-27 Dated: 15/09/2026

(Please read the tender document carefully before submission of bid)

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, UT of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders are hereby invited on percentage basis (in two cover system) from approved and eligible contractors registered with CPWD / PWD / MES / Forest / Wildlife Department / Central / State / UT Governments for execution of below work/s.

S No	Range	Name of Work	Tentative Adv. Cost in lacs.	Cost of T/Doc. (Rs.)	Earnest Money / EMD	Time of completion	Class of Contractor
1.	Hygam, Hokersar, Kranchoo, Manibugh and Shallabugh WLCR	Erection of Boundary Pillars and Fencing (02 at Hygam, 24 at Hokersar, 07 at Kranchoo, 08 at Manibugh and 12 at Shallabugh WLCR = Total 53 BPs)	3.27	Rs 100/- Account 0406 - Forest / Wildlife	2 % of advertised cost, in the shape of CDR/ FDR pledged to Wildlife Warden, Wetlands Division Kashmir	30	DEE

Position of AA / TS: Accorded.

Position of Funds: Partly Available.

Major Head of Account: CAPEX.

1. Schedule of Dates

No	Event	Date / Time
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	15/09/2026
2	Period of Downloading of Bidding Documents (online)	19/09/2026 from 11:30 AM to 30/09/2026 upto 06:00 PM
3	Bid Submission - Start Date	19/09/2026 from 11:30 AM
4	Bid Submission - End Date	30/09/2026 upto 06:00 PM
5	Opening of Technical Bids (Online)	01/10/2026 at 03:00 PM (Office of the Regional Wildlife Warden, Rajbagh, Srinagar)
6.	Opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation (Office of the Regional Wildlife Warden, Rajbagh, Srinagar)
7	Clarifications / Q&A	02:00 pm - 04:00 pm on any day between Issue-Date and Closing-Date
8	Submission of Hard-Copy Documents by Lowest-First (L1) Bidder	Within 3 working days of Financial-Bid opening

All dates are subject to change by notice on the e-tender portal.

2. Tender & Bidding Documents

- e-NIT (qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of Quantities, Terms & Conditions, annexures) - download from http://jktenders.gov.in.
- Complete Bidding Package (drawings, detailed specifications, BOQ, etc.) - download from https://jktenders.gov.in as per the schedule above.

Bidders are required to read the e-tender Submission Manual (available under Downloads on the portal) before preparing their bids.

Any violation of these conditions shall result in immediate stoppage of work, imposition of penalties as per rules, termination of contract, blacklisting of the contractor, and forfeiture of EMD and Performance Security.

No. WLW(WL)/Acctts/2026-27/103-05

Date: 15/09/2026

DIPK-5906-26

DT: 19/09/2026

Sd/-
Wildlife Warden
Wetland Division, Kashmir,
Srinagar

CMYK

Kamil Pooran gets maiden T20I call-up, Campbell returns for West Indies' India tour

NEW DELHI: Cricket West Indies on Saturday announced its squads for the upcoming limited-overs tour of India, with Kamil Pooran earning his maiden T20I call-up and John Campbell returning to the ODI squad after recovering from a hamstring injury.

West Indies and India will play three ODIs and five T20Is in eight cities from September 27 to October 18. The Shai Hope-led ODI team has retained the core group that featured in the recent home series against Sri Lanka and New Zealand. Campbell missed the last two ODIs against New Zealand due to his hamstring injury but returns for the India tour. Meanwhile, Ackeem Auguste has been ruled out as he continues his rehab after surgery in August. He has been replaced by Jewel Andrew, an additional option in the top and middle order.

Shimron Hetmyer, who played in the final two matches of the New Zealand series, has been given an extended recovery period following the Caribbean Premier League



and will join the squad for the T20I leg.

The first two ODIs against India will be the final of the automatic qualification cycle for the ICC Men's 50-over World Cup. However, whatever hap-

penes West Indies cannot overtake their nearest rivals in the qualifying table and will therefore have to take part in the ICC qualifying tournament early next year.

West Indies coach Daren Sammy though believes the India series is still a big opportunity for his side.

"Playing against the top team in the world presents us with a chance to fine tune and improve our performances as an ODI team which has seen quality performances across the cycle," Sammy said. "The series also creates a valuable platform to assess players who are stepping into important roles for this series with a long-term target of competing in the World Cup in 2027."

Opening batter Kamil Pooran has been called up to the T20I squad for the first time following an impressive run in domestic cricket. The right-hander scored 273 runs in eight innings at a strike-rate of 159.64 with an average of 39.

Quentin Sampson, who was part of the West Indies squad in the ICC T20 World Cup earlier this year in India, has also been included while experienced all-rounder Jason Holder has been rested. Sammy said the T20I squad has been picked with an eye on building a strong side for the 2028 T20 World Cup.

"We are looking to build on the momentum from our series win against Sri Lanka, with the long-term goal of developing a strong core of players ahead of the next T20 World Cup," he said. "The challenge of playing against the World Champions at home will provide valuable preparation, allowing us to continue improving and developing both individually and as a collective unit."

The West Indies squad will depart the Caribbean on September 21 and arrive in Thiruvananthapuram on September 23.

West Indies ODI squad: Shai Hope (captain), Jewel Andrew, John Campbell, Keacy Carty, Roston Chase, Matthew Forde, Justin Greaves, Amir Jangoo, Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Vitel Lawes, Gudakesh Motie, Keemo Paul, Sherfane Rutherford and Jayden Seales.

West Indies T20I squad: Shai Hope (captain), Jewel Andrew, Roston Chase, Matthew Forde, Shimron Hetmyer, Akeal Hosein, Shamar Joseph, Gudakesh Motie, Keemo Paul, Kamil Pooran, Rovman Powell, Sherfane Rutherford, Quentin Sampson, Romario Shepherd and Shamar Springer.

Asiad organizing committee apologises for playing N. Korean anthem at S. Korean hockey match

IAN S

NAGOYA (JAPAN): The organising committee of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games has apologized for mistakenly playing the North Korean anthem at a South Korean hockey match, the South Korean sports governing body said Saturday.

Before the men's Pool A match against Bangladesh at Gifu Prefectural Green Stadium in Gifu, Japan, on Friday, the North Korean anthem was played instead of South Korea's, reported Yonhap.

The match organizers then played Bangladesh's anthem before playing the South Korean anthem later.

Right after the incident, the Korean Sport & Olympic Committee (KSOC) lodged an official complaint with the organizing committee over the anthem mix-up, demanding an official apology and prevention of a recurrence.

"Around 9 p.m. later that day, two officials from the Asian Games organizing committee visited the South Korean team office and offered an official apology for the error in playing the anthem," the KSOC said in a release.

KSOC President Ryu Seung-min said the KSOC will keep making efforts to help South Korean athletes focus entirely on their competitions without being distracted by issues unrelated to the games.

"It is absolutely unacceptable for the national anthem, a symbol of our nation, to be performed incorrectly at an international multisport event, and we view this matter with the utmost seriousness," Ryu said.

"We will continue to demand that the organizing committee thoroughly investigate the cause of this incident and implement measures to prevent its recurrence."



Asian Games a big opportunity to gel and build momentum, says Shreyas Iyer

IAN S

NEW DELHI: India T20I captain Shreyas Iyer said he is treating his maiden appearance at the upcoming Asian Games as an opportunity to adapt quickly to unfamiliar conditions while building team synergy on the back of India's recent 3-0 series triumph over Afghanistan.

The Iyer-led Indian team will leave for Japan in an early morning flight on Sunday and will first play a one-off T20I against Japan before entering the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya.

"Regarding, Asian Games, this is going to be my first time. So, I am looking forward to going there and firstly to get used to the conditions because we have never been there before.

"So, having a set of ideas about how the wickets are over there, it's going to be a combination of everything and the most important aspect is that again we gel along as a team and this series is definitely a great momentum towards Asian Games," Iyer said in a video posted on BCCI's social media accounts on Saturday.

Reflecting on India's recent series victory over Afghanistan, Iyer praised the relentless hunger shown by the opposition while hailing his own squad's dominant and optimistic mindset throughout the assignment.

"All the Afghan players, if you see and look at them, they are rollicking characters and they have this phenomenal attitude when they step onto the field, they want to win. They have that hunger and zest in them to come out here and perform.

"The first series win was in Zimbabwe. The second series win and that too away, but at home. It feels amazing. Every individual took that responsibility to go out there and perform to the best. I feel that it was the contribution that made us win the series with a comprehensive victory.

"I think the approach itself was optimistic. When we stepped onto the field, we wanted to set a rhythm for ourselves going into the tournament and then match one, you saw how dominating we were in our approach. The attitude was phenomenal and I think that carried on in the second game and third game as well here we saw," he elaborated.

Iyer also reserved special praise for opener Abhishek Sharma, who produced explosive performances at the top of the order, including hitting a record 30-ball ton in the final game on Thursday.

"Abhishek, the way he batted throughout, he usually has his practice over here in Delhi and he said he is very much used to the wickets around. So, we were expecting big scores from him here and also the previous two games he delivered it, so happy for him."

Attributing the team's sustained standards to a supportive dressing room culture, Iyer signed off by saying that energy off the field translates directly into performances on it.

"To be honest, we have decided that we are going to set a standard for ourselves and every game you see, we keep getting better."



La Liga: Madrid derby in focus as Atletico host Real with more than pride at stake

IAN S

MADRID: Atletico Madrid will host city rivals Real Madrid in the first Madrid derby of the La Liga season on Sunday, with both sides looking to head into the international break on a winning note.

Atletico will enter the derby at the Metropolitan Stadium high on confidence after a 3-0 away win over Real Sociedad and a comfortable 4-0 home victory against Osasuna in midweek.

Real Madrid, meanwhile, sit second in the table after securing wins over Rayo Vallecano and Elche in their last two league outings. They defeated Rayo 4-1 before edging past Elche 3-2.

Despite collecting the required results, Real coach Jose Mourinho will be seeking an improved defensive performance from his side, reports Xinhua.

Real conceded 18 shots, including seven on target, against Rayo, while Elche fought back from 0-2 down to level the contest at 2-2 before Carlos Espi's injury-time winner secured all three points for Mourinho's side.

Mourinho will also have decisions to make regarding his defensive lineup. Denzel Dumfries is likely to start at right-back ahead of Trent Alexander-Arnold, while Marc Cucurella is expected to operate on the left.

Ibrahima Konate, Dean Huijsen and Antonio Rudiger are likely to compete for two central defensive spots.

Kylian Mbappe will be the main attacking threat for Real Madrid, with Jude Bellingham, Yan Djanandje and Arda Guler expected to provide support.



Premier League: Manzambi, Jackson, Buendia strike as Aston Villa beat Tottenham 3-2

IAN S

LONDON: Aston Villa secured their first Premier League victory of the season after beating Tottenham Hotspur 3-2 in an entertaining clash at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium on Saturday.

Johan Manzambi, Nicolas Jackson and Emi Buendia scored for Villa, while Conor Gallagher and Jan Paul van Hecke found the net for the hosts as Unai Emery's side held on for all three points.

The result means Villa have now won three of their last four matches in all competitions and have lost only once in their last five games.

Villa goalkeeper Zion Suzuki played a key role in the victory, making several important saves, including three to deny Savio in the first half.

After an open start, Villa broke the deadlock in first-half stoppage time. John McGinn kept the ball in play before finding Boubaacar Kamara, who played Manzambi through. The youngster finished from close range to score on his full debut for Villa.

Tottenham thought they had equalised shortly after the hour mark when Mohammed Kudus found the net, but the goal was ruled out following a VAR review for offside in the build-up.

Villa then doubled their lead in the 67th minute. Suzuki sent a long ball forward, which Manzambi collected before laying it back for Jackson. The striker took a fine touch before placing his shot into the far corner.

Buendia added a third in the 78th minute with a superb long-range finish. He received the ball from McGinn before curling his effort into the top corner from around 25 yards.

Tottenham pulled one back in the 86th minute when Gallagher finished from close range, giving the home side hope of a comeback.

Van Hecke then scored with a far-post header deep into added time, but Villa managed to see out the remaining moments and claim victory.

The win also continued Villa's strong recent record against Tottenham. They have now won eight of their last 11 meetings with Spurs in all competitions, including five of their last six visits to the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

Admiration can wait for 90 minutes, says Akash Mishra ahead of triple friendlies

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The prospect of facing Panama, Brazil and Uruguay on home soil has added to the excitement around the Indian camp, but defender Akash Mishra knows the Blue Tigers must set their opponents' stature aside once the matches begin.

For Mishra, the three fixtures offer India an invaluable opportunity to test themselves against some of the best players in world football. These friendlies will be particularly special, as the Indian players prepare to face footballers they have watched and admired.

"We have watched these opponents on television since childhood and idolised them, but that is one part of it. We have to put those emotions aside and perform for the 90 minutes. After that, the other emotions can come out," Mishra said.

"As players, when we heard that we would be playing Panama, Uruguay and Brazil, it felt like a huge opportunity. We have not played against teams like these before, so it is a major opportunity for all Indian players. The experience will show us where we stand, because talking is easy, but playing on the pitch is what really matters."

The Blue Tigers will play the three matches in Bengaluru and Kolkata, two cities that hold special memories for Mishra. While he remembers India's 2023 SAFF Championship campaign at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium and qualifying for the AFC Asian Cup 2023 in Kolkata, the full-back believes the passionate support in both cities can give the hosts additional strength.

"Personally, I have good memories of Kanteerava from the SAFF Championship, and we qualified for the Asian Cup in Kolkata. When you talk about pressure, I think it is actually our strength, because Bengaluru and Kolkata are such football-loving cities. The supporters there give us strength, so it is a big positive for us to play these teams at home.

"Of course, the teams we are facing are of a very high calibre, but football is still eleven versus eleven. We have to carry out the tactics the coach gives us on the pitch and give our best."



INOX

SRINAGAR

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MOVIES WATCHLIST

20 SEPTEMBER 2026 SUNDAY

DAAYRA (A)

HINDI

01:40 PM 05:35 PM

HANUMAN ANSH (U)

HINDI

02:35 PM

MIRZAPUR: THE MOVIE (A)

10:45 AM 12:50 PM 06:45 PM

RESIDENT EVIL (A)

ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

10:45 AM 04:40 PM 08:30 PM

VIBE (A)

HINDI

10:45 AM 04:35 PM 07:30 PM

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