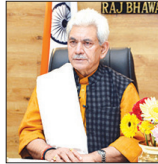


Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K
@OfficeOfLGJandK



Deeply pained by the loss of lives in an unfortunate road accident in Kupwara. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the early recovery of the injured. I have directed the District Administration to ensure best possible treatment to the injured.

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5 Dead After Vehicle Falls Into Ravine Near LoC

LG Expresses Grief, Directs Best Possible Treatment



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: A tragic road accident in the Seemari area of Tangdhar, located close to the Line of Control (LoC) in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, claimed five lives and left several others injured on Monday, officials said.

An official said that the driver lost control of the vehicle near Seemari Road in Karnah, following which it skidded off the road and plunged into the Kishenganga River.

He said five persons died on the spot, while eight others sustained injuries. The injured were rushed to a Hospital for treatment. "Of the eight injured, six were referred to Srinagar, while two are presently undergoing treatment at SDH Tangdhar," the official added.

The deceased were identified as Mohammad Idrees (32), son of Kaser Din; his 9-year-old daughter Hamza; Sayeed Begum (30), wife of Mohammad Idrees; Shabir Ahmad (70); and Raja Irshad (27), son of Majeed Khan.

The injured have been identified as Sajid Ahmad of Semari; Naveed Ahmad, son of Ghulam Hussain; Mushtaq Ahmad, son of Ghulam Nabi, of Semari; Farhan Khursheed, son of Khursheed Ahmad, of Teetwal; Javid Ahmad of Kadhama; Ashia Begum, wife of Abdul Hameed, of Semari; Ajaz Manzoor, son of Manzoor Ahmad, of Semari; and Shariq, son of Mukhtar Ahmad, of Teetwal.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident and said he had

■ BJP Walks Out

Jammu And Kashmir Assembly Passes Statehood Resolution

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: After BJP legislators created an uproar and staged a walkout, the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Monday passed a resolution seeking immediate restoration of full statehood, during its autumn session.

The Legislative Assembly passed a resolution calling upon the Government of India for the immediate and urgent restoration of full Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

The resolution was moved by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who is also the Leader of the House, on September 25 and was taken up and passed by the House today.

The resolution, in continuation of resolutions passed by the House on June 26, 2000 and November 6, 2024, states:



"In addition to the Resolutions passed by this House on 26th June 2000 and 6th November 2024, this House calls upon the Government of India for the immediate and urgent restoration of full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and resolves that this Resolution be forwarded to

Government of India."

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said the resolution was necessitated by the continued uncertainty over the restoration of Statehood despite the passage of nearly two years since the formation of the elected gov-

ernment.

Referring to the earlier resolution passed by the House on special status and constitutional guarantees, the Chief Minister urged members not to press amendments that, he said, could provide an excuse to the opposition (BJP) to oppose

■ Amidst uproar

BJP Runs Mock Assembly From Well

WARIS FAYAZ



SRINAGAR: The Legislative Assembly witnessed high drama on Monday as BJP legislators staged a mock Assembly session

from the Well of the House, while the ongoing uproar led to the marshalling out of BJP

and Congress members during the debate on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's resolution seeking restoration of full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

After entering into the Well, the BJP legislators, sat down and began conducting parallel proceedings, holding what appeared to be a mock session as the debate on the Statehood resolution continued in the House.

During the parallel proceedings, BJP MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia

No Place For Pakistani Agenda In J&K: LoP Sharma

WARIS FAYAZ

SRINAGAR: Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma on Monday said there was "no place for any Pakistani agenda" in Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that the Union Territory would remain an integral part of India.

Addressing reporters, Sharma said the BJP was committed to the restoration of statehood but opposed references to the 2000 autonomy resolution and the 2024 special-status resolution included in the resolution moved by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

"J&K is an integral part of India, and it will always remain. There is no room for any Pakistan agenda here," Sharma said.

He said the BJP would support a resolution confined to the restoration of statehood, but would not accept references that, according to him,



went beyond the statehood issue.

"If the CM brings only a statehood resolution, we will support it. Statehood is the agenda of the BJP and we are committed to it. It will come," he said.

Sharma objected to the references to the 2000 and 2024 resolutions, alleging that these raised issues linked to the pre-1953 constitutional position of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The resolution was moved by the CM. If it was only for statehood,

Govt Committed To Strengthen Health Infrastructure: Sakeena Itoo

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, Monday informed the Legislative Assembly that the Government is taking a phased and need-based approach to strengthen health infrastructure and improve healthcare delivery in Bani Constituency.

The Minister was Replying to a question raised by MLA Dr.Rameshwar Singh.

The Minister informed the House that 50 health institutions are presently functional in Bani Constituency, of which 19 are operating from private/rented accommodation, while the remaining institutions are functioning from their own buildings.

She further stated that construction work on the Sub-Centre at Bhakoga is currently under execution under NABARD



funding.

Sakeena Itoo said that the Government is committed to providing own buildings to the remaining health institutions in a phased manner, subject to the availability of suitable land and resources. She emphasized that infrastructure development is being prioritized on the

basis of need and availability of resources.

Minister informed that the Health and Medical Education Department has received the selection list of 416 Medical Officers from the J&K Public Service Commission, out of which appointment orders for 335 Medical Officers have already been issued. These Medical Officers will be considered for posting in areas and institutions according to requirements to further strengthen healthcare services.

Regarding vacancies among non-gazetted staff, the Minister said that the vacancies have already been referred to the concerned recruiting agencies for selection of suitable candidates on a priority basis. She added that, upon receipt of the selection/recruitment lists, paramedical staff would be posted in the concerned institutions

CS Reviews J&K's Preparedness For 'Reform Utsav' 2026

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Monday chaired a meeting of all the concerned Administrative Heads to review Jammu and Kashmir's preparedness for the upcoming nationwide 'Reform Utsav', a three-month mega-campaign scheduled from October to December 2026 to showcase transformative governance reforms, citizen-centric initiatives and developmental achievements of the past 12 years.

The meeting was attended by the concerned Administrative Secretaries, including Commissioner Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department; Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; and representatives of other concerned departments.

The meeting focused on strengthening institutional coordination, ensuring grass-



roots participation and finalising a comprehensive action plan for the effective implementation of the campaign across the Union Territory.

The nationwide initiative, spearheaded by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Government of India, envisages a whole-of-government approach to highlighting major governance reforms, their impact on citizens and the transformation brought about through various developmental interventions.

Chairing the meeting, the Chief Secretary

No Eligible PMAY-G Household Deliberately Deleted: Govt Says 42,540 Flagged Cases Recommended For Deletion, Verifying Deserving Households

RAJA SYED

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government has said that no eligible household or individual has been deliberately and officially rejected or deleted from the Awaas+ database under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), while 42,540 system-flagged cases have been recommended for deletion after verification at the Block and District levels.

The issue was raised by Kangan MLA Mian Mehar Ali through a question seeking details about the rejection or deletion of deserving and eligible households during the Awaas+ 2024 survey and subsequent scrutiny and verification process under PMAY-G 2.0.

In its reply, the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, said that



PMAY-G aims to provide pucca houses with basic amenities to eligible rural houseless households and households living in kutcha and dilapidated houses, in accordance with the prescribed guidelines of the Government of India.

The government said no eligible household or individual has been deliberately and officially rejected or deleted from the Awaas+ database at this

stage. However, it said some deserving households have reported not appearing in the draft Permanent Wait List (PWL), apparently due to the automated scrutiny and validation and eligibility checks undertaken through the prescribed system.

Since the final PWL has not yet been generated, the department said, non-inclusion of a household in the draft PWL

cannot, at this stage, be treated as a final rejection or deletion from the PMAY-G beneficiary selection process.

Regarding complaints about eligible households being excluded due to technical or system-generated flags or errors in the Awaas+ mobile application, the government said such complaints have been received at various levels.

On the grounds and criteria adopted for rejection or deletion from the Awaas+ database, the government said no eligible household or individual has been deliberately and officially rejected or deleted. However, cases flagged or reverted by the automated system are subject to verification or re-verification by the concerned field functionaries as per the prescribed procedure.

It said no case can be stated to have been finally

BJP Submits No-Confidence Motion Against Speaker

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday submitted a no-confidence motion against the Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, accusing him of allowing what they termed an unconstitutional reference to special status in the statehood resolution.

As soon as Question Hour began, BJP's R.S. Pathania stood up, claiming that the Speaker could not preside over the House after a no-confidence motion had been filed.

"You cannot sit on the chair," Pathania told the Speaker.

The Speaker rejected the objections, clarifying that under the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, leave for a no-confidence motion can only be taken up 14 days after receipt of notice.

"You can bring a motion. I have not seen it. Let me presume that it has been submitted. Our Rules are

J&K Incurs Rs 28,000 Cr In 3 Year Power Procurement

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (PDD) in past three years have spent Rs 28018 crores to procure 63080.62 million units (MU) of electricity, yet local DISCOMs accumulated a revenue deficit exceeding Rs 13,600 crore across the same period.

The government in a reply to the query of MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat in a Legislative Assembly said that in the year 2023-24 at least Rs 9453 crore was incurred to procure 20,985.70 Million Units (MU) of power.

It also informed the house that in the year 2024-25, the government incurred Rs 9088 crore to procure 21,159.40 MU of power and Rs 9477 crore in

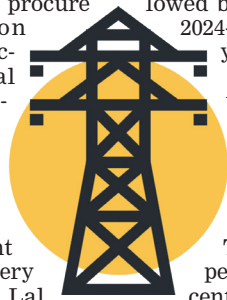
2025-26 to procure 20,935.50 MU of power.

The official figures however reveal that in the year 2023-24, there was a revenue gap of Rs 5238 crores followed by Rs 4198 crore in 2024-25 and 4177 in the year 2025-26.

Furthermore, the government informed the house that during the year 2023-24, Jammu and Kashmir was facing T&D losses of 41.68 percent and 38.06 percent of AT&C losses.

It also said that in the year 2023-24, the department was facing T&D losses of 28.99 percent and 32.04 percent of AT&C losses followed by 24.64 percent of T&C losses and 34.63 percent of AT&C losses in the year 2025-26 respectively.

Answering the queries regarding as to



CM Omar-led Govt extends Old Pension Scheme coverage to employees



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah-led Government Monday extended the benefit of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) to thousands of employees appointed against posts advertised or notified prior to December 24, 2009, but who subsequently joined service under the New Pension Scheme (NPS).

The Government issued the orders following the decision taken by the Council of Ministers, chaired by Chief Minister Omar Abdul-

lah, at its meeting held earlier this month.

Under the decision, employees appointed against posts advertised or notified prior to December 24, 2009 and who joined service under the NPS have been given a one-time option to switch over from the New Pension Scheme to the Old Pension Scheme.

The eligible employees will have to exercise the option through the proper channel within three months from the date of issuance of the Government order.

The Government has clarified that the option, once exercised, shall be final. Employees who do not exercise the option within the stipulated period will continue to remain covered under the New Pension Scheme.

The decision fulfils the Council of Ministers' decision to extend the benefit of the Old Pension Scheme to employees whose posts had been advertised or notified before December 24, 2009, providing eligible employees an opportunity to opt for OPS coverage.

DC Budgam reviews progress under Mission YUVA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Monday chaired a Review Meeting-cum-SBDU/DLIC Meeting to assess progress under Mission YUVA and review implementation of various targets in the district.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Budgam, Vivek Agarwal, Joint Director Planning, GM DIC, Chief Agriculture Officer, Principal Polytechnic Nagam, Superintendents of ITI Budgam and Charar-i-Sharif, Lead District Manager and other concerned officers.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the status of pending bank cases, hybrid training, capacity building, Udyam Jagriti, Hackathon, ONDC onboarding and Completion/ WIP reporting.

Taking note of pending cases with banks, he directed the concerned banks to undertake thorough scrutiny and ensure timely sanction and disbursement



on priority. He directed immediate enrolment of all disbursed cases pending under Hybrid Training and stressed close follow-up for timely completion.

Under Udyam Jagriti, the Deputy Commissioner directed coverage of all SHG members and awareness programmes in uncovered Panchayats. He also directed College Principals, Placement Coordinators and IIC Coordinators to intensify participation in the Udyam Jagriti 5.0 Hackathon.

On capacity building, the DC directed expeditious enrolment of eligible benefi-

ciaries, with DLIC-approved and disbursed cases to be taken up on priority. He stressed that there should be no delay between approval and training enrolment.

Under ONDC, the Deputy Commissioner directed accelerated onboarding of products and called for timely submission of Completion/ WIP Reports for all disbursed cases. He directed all concerned officers and stakeholders to ensure close monitoring, effective coordination and strict adherence to timelines for effective implementation of Mission YUVA.

DLC approves 11 Cases under PMFME Scheme in Budgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC) for the review and consideration of applications received under the Prime Minister Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM FME) Scheme.

At the outset, the District Nodal Officer and Chief Horticulture Officer (CHO), Budgam, briefed the chair about the applications/cases received under the scheme and placed the same before the committee for consideration and approval.

After detailed deliberations and examination of the cases, the District Level Committee approved all 11

cases placed before it for consideration.

The PM FME Scheme is aimed at providing financial, technical and institutional support to micro food processing enterprises and facilitating their formalisation and upgradation. The scheme provides a 50 percent credit-linked capital subsidy, subject to the prescribed scheme guidelines and limits, to eligible beneficiaries for setting up or upgrading food processing units.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for wider dissemination and effective publicity of the scheme across the district so that maximum eligible beneficiaries, particularly small entrepreneurs and prospective food processing unit holders, can avail the

benefits available under the scheme.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments to undertake coordinated awareness and outreach activities and ensure that eligible beneficiaries are sensitised about the objectives, eligibility criteria, financial assistance and other provisions of the scheme. He also emphasised the importance of facilitating prospective beneficiaries in completing the requisite formalities and submitting their applications within the prescribed framework.

The meeting also discussed the role of different line departments in promoting food processing activities and encouraging local entrepreneurship in the district.

DDAC B'pora holds Drug Awareness, CPLI Session at Garoora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: In a significant initiative aimed at strengthening drug prevention among school-going children, the District De-Addiction Centre (DDAC), Bandipora, in collaboration with District Administration Bandipora, organised

an awareness and Community Based Peer-Led Intervention (CPLI) session at Government Boys High School, Garoora, under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan of NAPDDR.

The session focused on creating awareness about substance abuse, strengthening refusal skills among adoles-

cents and sensitising teachers about their role in early identification and prevention.

Project Coordinator, DDAC Bandipora, Umar Islam, delivered a session on the role of teachers in drug demand reduction and services available at DDAC Bandipora.

Explaining the "1 TRY"

DC Srinagar chairs District Road Safety Committee meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo Monday chaired a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex to review the road safety scenario in the District.

The DC assessed measures being taken by various Departments for prevention of road accidents and ensuring safer mobility for commuters and pedestrians, besides improving assistance to accident victims.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner held detailed discussions on road safety concerns requiring immediate attention, measures to improve roads and allied safety infrastructure, corrective measures for identified accident-prone black spots and pedestrian safety, besides timely emergency medical response, post-crash care and expeditious settlement of assistance and compensation claims for road accident victims, with the objective of reducing road accidents and fatalities and ensuring safer road conditions for all road users.

On the occasion, the DC emphasised the need for greater outreach to road accident victims and their families so that eligible victims can avail the assistance available under the PM Rahat (Road Accident Victim Hospitalization and Assured Treatment) Scheme under which, every eligible road accident



victim on any category of road will be entitled to cashless treatment up to Rs 1.5 lakh

per victim, for period of seven days from the date of accident. He directed the concerned ARTO to ensure that information regarding the scheme reaches accident victims and eligible beneficiaries in a timely manner.

The DC also stressed the need for effective inter-departmental coordination among all concerned agencies to strengthen road safety measures and ensure timely implemen-

tation of necessary corrective interventions to minimise the risk of road accidents.

During the meeting, the DC also directed the R&B Department to draft a comprehensive Road Safety Plan under District road Safety Fund incorporating corrective measures for identified black spots, pedestrian safety engineering interventions and other necessary road safety measures.

The DC also stressed the importance of effective implementation of the Integrated Road Acci-

dent Database (IRAD) and directed the concerned agencies to ensure timely and accurate reporting of road accidents through the system. He underscored that reliable accident data is essential for identifying accident-prone locations and planning evidence-based corrective measures.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, IAS Probationer, Sai Kiran, Chief Planning officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer of R&B(North), Shabir Ahmad, Superintending Engineer of R&B (South), Tatheer Manzoor, Joint Commissioner, Hamid Iqbal Mir, Chief Education Officer, Gulam Mohi Ud Din, Executive Engineer R&B, Abdul Qayoon, Executive Engineer R&B, Khalid Mehmood, District Health Officer, Dr Rubeena, ARTO, Showkat Ahmad, District Informatics Officer, Shahnaz, Accounts Officer, DC Office, Mohammad Iqbal and other Officers of concerned Departments.

BJP attacks Omar over reference to Pakistan in statehood debate

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: BJP Jammu and Kashmir spokesperson Arun Kumar Gupta on Monday criticised Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for referring to Pakistan while questioning the linking of restoration of statehood to the security situation, saying Islamabad has no role in India's internal constitutional matters.

Gupta said the constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir was an internal matter and questioned the relevance of Pakistan in the debate over restoration of statehood. His remarks came after Omar, while speaking in the Legislative Assembly, questioned whether making statehood conditional on the guns falling silent would effectively leave the decision to Pakistan.

The BJP spokesperson said neither Pakistan nor its institutions could have any role in determining

when or how the constitutional powers of Parliament and the Government of India are exercised. He said Jammu and Kashmir's constitutional arrangements should be dealt with by India's constitutional institutions.

Gupta also referred to Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, saying it was for investigating agencies and courts to determine whether any particular statement attracted its provisions. He, however, said political leaders, particularly those holding constitutional office, should exercise caution while making statements concerning India's sovereignty and security.

"The BJP rejects any attempt, direct or indirect, to give Pakistan relevance in India's internal affairs," Gupta said, adding that the future of Jammu and Kashmir would be decided within India's constitutional framework. (KNS)

DC Anantnag reviews progress of SBM (G)



GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: In order to review the implementation and progress of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) in the district, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Monday chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC) on SBM (G) at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, Anantnag.

The meeting held a detailed review of various components of SBM (G), with particular focus on the status of works at different stages, including tendering, allotment and execution.

The Committee took a comprehensive assessment of the progress achieved so far and discussed measures to ensure timely implementation of the programme across the district.

During the meeting, the

Committee was informed that more than 2,480 SBM (G) works have been taken up, out of which around 2,430 works have been tendered and more than 2,000 works are presently under execution.

The meeting also reviewed the Locational Plan under SBM (G) and deliberated upon measures for its effective implementation. The Committee considered the need for suitable locations for various sanitation-related works and accorded approval to the alternate Locational Plan to facilitate smooth execution of the approved works.

The issue of fixation of Door-to-Door user charges was also discussed in detail, with the Committee deliberating on measures to strengthen the sustainability and effectiveness of sanitation and waste-management services at the grassroots level.

Environment Building Programme on Inclusive Education organised in Shopian

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: The Office of the Chief Education Officer, Shopian, organised an Environment Building Programme under the aegis of Samagra Shiksha, Inclusive Education Component, with the objective of sensitising teachers, parents and other community stakeholders towards the educational needs, rights and inclusion of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) enrolled in various schools of District Shopian.



Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Education Officer, Shopian, said that inclusive education is not merely an administrative or institutional responsibility but a collective social commitment to ensure dignity, equality and equal educational opportunities for every child. He emphasised that no child should feel excluded, neglected or disadvantaged because of disability or any other special educational need. He stressed that the true measure of an inclusive school is not merely the presence of a child with special needs in the classroom, but the extent to which that child is able to participate, learn, communicate, develop confidence and feel an equal and valued member of the school community.

He further highlighted the need for schools to progressively strengthen their infrastructure and accessibility facilities and ensure that teachers are adequately sensitised and equipped with appropriate pedagogical strategies to address the individual learning requirements of CWSN. He called upon teachers to adopt a compassionate and child-centred approach, recognising that every child has unique

abilities, strengths and potential.

The CEO also underscored the pivotal role of parents and the community in promoting inclusive education. He stated that sustained collaboration between schools and parents is essential for identifying the needs of children at an early stage, providing timely support and ensuring continuity between home and school-based interventions.

Emphasising the importance of changing societal attitudes, the Chief Education Officer called for collective efforts to move beyond sympathy towards acceptance, empowerment and meaningful participation of children with special needs. He observed that an inclusive education system ultimately contributes towards building a more sensitive, equitable and compassionate society.

The CEO further reiterated that the Education Department, Shopian, remains committed to strengthening the Inclusive Education Component of Samagra Shiksha and to ensuring that every child, irrespective of individual differences or disabilities, receives an opportunity to learn in a safe, supportive and enabling environment.

The Deputy Chief Education Officer, in his inaugural address, highlighted the importance of creating an inclusive, supportive and barrier-free educational environment where children with special needs can learn, participate and thrive alongside their peers.

The Dy. CEO emphasised that meaningful inclusion requires appropriate infrastructure, accessibility facilities and adequately trained human resources capable of responding to the diverse educational needs of children with special needs. He further stressed the importance of fostering an empathetic and child-friendly environment in schools and classrooms so that CWSN are provided equal opportunities to participate in the teaching-learning process and realise their full potential.

Comprehensive training and awareness sessions were subsequently delivered by Special Education Teachers, who sensitised the participants about various dimensions of inclusive education, identification of special educational needs, classroom support strategies, appropriate pedagogical interventions and the importance of creating an enabling environment for CWSN.

DC Kulgam reviews Action Plans for Youth Empowerment

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam Monday chaired a meeting to review the department-wise Action Plans for Youth Empowerment for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 at the Mini-Secretariat, Kulgam.

During the meeting, the DC reviewed the proposed activities and programmes of various departments aimed at ensuring sustained, meaningful and structured engagement of youth across the district.

The DC stressed the need for maximum outreach and a diverse range of youth-oriented programmes, with focus on skill development, entrepreneurship, sports and recreation, innovation,



culture, community participation and other areas of relevance to young people.

He directed the concerned departments to schedule programmes to equip youth with skills, enhance their awareness about Government schemes and employment opportunities, and facilitate their participation in various developmental initiatives.

The Deputy Commissioner called for close inter-departmental coordination

and directed the departments to schedule a maximum number of meaningful activities and awareness programmes for year 206-27 and 2027-28, ensuring wider participation of youth.

He further emphasized that the proposed activities should be realistic, outcome-oriented and properly planned, with regular monitoring and documentation to ensure effective implementation and wider outreach.

NEWS

AUTUMN SESSION

CM introduces Bill for decriminalizing, rationalizing offences to promote EoDB



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who is also the Minister for Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Monday introduced the Bill to amend certain enactments for decriminalizing and rationalizing offences for ease of living and ease of doing business (EoDB) and to repeal certain enactments and for matters connected

therewith or incidental thereto. The bill was introduced in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly during the ongoing Autumn Session. The Bill, designated as L.A. Bill No. 16 of 2026, has already been published in an extraordinary issue of the Official Gazette. Similarly, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah introduced the Bill to amend the Salaries and

Allowances of Members of the Jammu and Kashmir State Legislature Act, 1960, and for matters connected or incidental thereto in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly during the ongoing Autumn Session. The Bill, designated as L.A. Bill No. 14 of 2026, has already been published in an extraordinary issue of the Official Gazette.

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday informed the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly that the proposed 800 TPD Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) Project at Achan, Srinagar, estimated at ₹361 crore, is currently at the tendering stage.

Replying to a question by MLA Mubarik Gul during the Question Hour of the ongoing Autumn Session, the Chief Minister, who is also Minister Incharge Housing & Urban Development, said the project has an estimated waste-processing capacity of 800 tonnes per day and a timeline of 25 years, including a construction period of 24 months.

The proposed integrated project comprises composting facilities, a Bio-CBG plant, Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs), a Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) facility, scientific sanitary landfill, transfer stations, leachate management infrastructure and other ancillary environmental infrastructure.

The Chief Minister informed the House that no agency or contractor has so far been allotted the project, as the project is presently under the tendering process.

Meanwhile, a range of measures are being implemented by the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) for scientific management of municipal waste, environmental protection and remediation of legacy waste at Achan until the new integrated project is commissioned.

The SMC is presently managing around 500-550 TPD of municipal solid waste generated within Srinagar municipal limits through an integrated system of collection, transportation, processing and disposal. 100 per cent door-to-door collection has been achieved across all wards, while around 60 per cent source segregation is currently being achieved through sustained IEC campaigns, public participation and strengthened collection mechanisms.

The municipal corporation has also deployed more than 380 waste collection and transportation vehicles and engaged over 2,700 sanitation workers for collection, transportation and sanitation services. At Achan, a 100 TPD Material Recovery Facility has been established for segregation and recovery of recyclable materials including plastics, paper, cardboard and metals. The facility is operated and maintained through a specialized agency for scientific processing, recovery and channelization of recyclable materials to authorized recyclers and end users.

The SMC has also established a 85 TPD wet waste processing plant at Achan



agement of municipal waste, environmental protection and remediation of legacy waste at Achan until the new integrated project is commissioned. The SMC is presently managing around 500-550 TPD of municipal solid waste generated within Srinagar municipal limits through an integrated system of collection, transportation, processing and disposal. 100 per cent door-to-door collection has been achieved across all wards, while around 60 per cent source segregation is currently being achieved through sustained IEC campaigns, public participation and strengthened collection mechanisms.

A 60 KLD leachate treatment plant is also under construction for scientific management and disposal of leachate at the site.

In another initiative, a 125 TPD Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste Management Facility is being established at Achan under SBM-U 2.0. The work has been awarded, civil works have been completed, and mechanical works and equipment installation are currently in progress.

The facility, once commissioned, will enable scientific processing of C&D waste, recovery and reuse of construction materials, reduction in illegal dump-

ing and collection of solid waste. During the current financial year, mechanical dredging has also been carried out in several important channels using departmentally owned water masters. These include the channel from Dol Damb to Meena Bazar through Angraz Hut, two main channels in Khushalgar from Saidipora Bridge to Firdousabad Colony and Sazgiripora, while dredging and deepening of the main Gilsar has also been almost completed.

On the issue of sewage inflows into Dal and Nigeen lakes, the Chief Minister said sewerage from the periphery and adjoining areas of the Dal-Nigeen lakes, as well as houseboats in the two lakes, is being catered to through five Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs). These include the 16.10 MLD Brari-Numbal STP, catering to the southern periphery from Dalgate to Nehru Park and the western side of Dalgate; the 5.4 MLD Nallah Amir Khan STP, serving Lal-Bazar, Bota Kadal and adjoining areas; the 7.5 MLD Hazratbal STP, catering to Ashai Bagh, NIT, Saida Kadal, Saderbal-Kanitar and the University area; the 3.2 MLD Habak STP, serving Habak, Tailbal (Shanpora) and adjoining areas; and the 4.5 MLD Laam STP, catering to areas from Makai Park to Ishber and adjoining localities.

PMAY-G beneficiary inclusion being undertaken as per Gol guidelines: Javid Dar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Monday informed the Legislative Assembly that the Government is taking all necessary measures to ensure that eligible and deserving rural households are duly considered under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) in accordance with the prescribed guidelines of the Government of India.

Replying to a question raised by MLA Mian Mehar Ali, the Minister stated that PMAY-G aims to provide pucca houses with basic amenities to eligible rural households, particularly those living in kuccha and dilapidated houses.

The Minister clarified that no eligible household or individual has been deliberately or officially rejected or deleted from the PMAY-G Awaas+ 2024 survey at this stage. He said that certain Blocks have reported instances where deserving households are not appearing in the Draft Permanent Wait List (PWL), apparently due to automated scrutiny, validation and eligibility checks carried out through the prescribed system.

He emphasized that since the final PWL has not yet been generated, non-inclusion of a household in the Draft PWL



cannot, at this stage, be construed as final rejection or deletion from the PMAY-G beneficiary selection process.

Javid Dar further informed the House that complaints regarding exclusion of eligible households on account of technical or system-generated flags/errors in the Awaas mobile application have been received at various levels. He said that cases flagged or reverted by the automated system are being subjected to verification and re-verification by the concerned field functionaries as per the prescribed procedure. Therefore, no such case can be treated as finally rejected or deleted without due verification and approval by the competent authority, wherever required.

The Minister, however, informed the House that 4,250 system-flagged cases have been recommended for deletion after verification at the Block as well as District levels during the deletion module, in accordance with

the guidelines conveyed by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India.

Regarding the mechanism for inclusion of left-out or deleted beneficiaries, Javid Dar said that no prescribed provision or procedure is presently available for direct incorporation or re-inclusion of such beneficiaries in the PMAY-G beneficiary list.

He added that, with a view to identifying genuine and deserving households that may have been left out during the survey or re-verification process, Gram Sabhas have been conducted in the concerned Panchayats for identification and verification of such cases. Based on these proceedings, the Draft Permanent Wait List is being prepared, he added.

The Minister assured that all cases identified or recommended by the Gram Sabhas shall be examined and processed further in accordance with the applicable guidelines and instructions of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, and the procedure prescribed by the competent authority, as and when such provision is made available.

He reiterated that the Government remains committed to ensuring transparency, due verification and adherence to prescribed guidelines in the selection of beneficiaries under PMAY-G, so that genuine and deserving rural households are duly considered under the scheme.

31 healthcare institutions aresently functioning in B'pora Constituency: Min Itoo

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, Monday informed the Legislative Assembly that the Government is taking sustained measures to strengthen healthcare infrastructure, manpower and service delivery in Bandipora Constituency, with particular focus on peripheral, underserved, remote and difficult areas.

Replying to a question raised by MLA Nizam-ud-din Bhat, the Minister informed the House that 31 healthcare institutions are presently functioning in Bandipora Constituency, including the District Hospital, ANMT School, PHCs, NTPHCs and Health & Wellness Centres.

Sakeena Itoo said that the Government is continuously assessing the requirements of health institutions and taking necessary measures in accordance with sanctioned strength, service requirements and availability of resources. She said special attention is being accorded to strengthening healthcare facilities in peripheral and difficult areas.

On manpower aug-



mentation, the Minister informed that the J&K Public Service Commission had recommended 416 Medical Officers, out of which 335 have so far been appointed. She said these Medical Officers would be posted appropriately, keeping in view the healthcare requirements of peripheral, underserved, remote and difficult areas, with a view to further strengthening healthcare delivery.

Sakeena Itoo further informed that 466 Non-Gazetted posts borne on the establishment of the Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir, have also been referred to the recruiting agency for selection of suitable and eligible candidates.

On infrastructure, the Minister said that the Government is undertaking augmentation and upgradation of health facilities in a phased manner. Three infrastructure projects are presently under execution in Bandipora Constituency, which, upon completion, will further augment healthcare facilities for the local population.

Responding to the issue of incomplete, abandoned or unused health infrastructure, Sakeena Itoo clarified that, as per available records, no health institution in the constituency has been abandoned. She informed that some projects are presently under execution.

Hailstorm damage assessment underway in Gulmarg: CM Omar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the Revenue portfolio, Monday informed the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly that a detailed on-the-spot assessment of crop damage caused by the severe hailstorm in parts of Gulmarg Constituency is currently underway.

Replying to a Calling Attention Notice by MLA Gulmarg, Pirzada Farooq Ahmad Shah during the Autumn Session, the Chief Minister said the hailstorm occurred during the intervening night of September 11 and 12, 2026, at around 11:45 PM, affecting various villages of Tehsil Kunzer/Tangmarg.

The hailstorm caused damage to agricultural and horticultural crops, including apple orchards, maize and paddy/rice. Revenue teams, along with Agriculture and Horticulture teams, have already been deputed to the affected villages to conduct on-the-spot assessment and verification of crop damage in accordance with the prescribed norms and guidelines.

The Chief Minister said the concerned teams have been directed to furnish their detailed assessment reports at the earliest. The village-wise and crop-wise extent of damage will be intimated after the field reports are received and consolidated.



On compensation and relief, the Chief Minister said no compensation or relief has been sanctioned or released so far, as the assessment and verification process is still underway. Sanction and release of compensation, along with the details of the amount and number of beneficiaries, will follow strictly as per the prescribed relief norms after receipt and processing of the consolidated assessment report.

He further informed the House that no case has been finalized as on date, and the number of cases assessed, approved, paid and pending will be reported once the detailed assessment reports from the field functionaries are received and consolidated.

Regarding any special relief or assistance for the affected farmers and horticulturists, the Chief Minister said there is presently no such proposal with the department, as the assessment of losses is still under process in the district.

ST-II applications under PEG category in Uri being processed as per rules: CM

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the Revenue portfolio, Monday informed the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly that applications for issuance of ST-II certificates under the Pahari Ethnic Group category in Uri Constituency are being processed strictly in accordance with the applicable statutory rules, Government guidelines and codified criteria prescribed by the Government.

Replying to a Calling Attention Notice by MLA Uri, Dr. Sajjad Shafi regarding alleged administrative delays, non-processing and wrongful rejection of ST-II certificate applications, the Chief Minister said that, as per reports received from

the concerned Tehsildars, all applications received under the Pahari Ethnic Group category in Uri Constituency are being processed in accordance with the prescribed procedure and eligibility criteria.

The Chief Minister clarified that no eligible application within the constituency is being subjected to any arbitrary, wrongful or unwarranted rejection.

He said each application is examined objectively and on its individual merits, based on field verification reports, relevant revenue records/extracts and supporting documents furnished by the applicants.

The competent authorities, he added, are ensuring that the prescribed procedure and eligibility criteria are duly adhered to while processing each case.

Govt actively pursuing necessary clearances for Barnai-Jawdora road: Dy CM

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Government Monday informed the Legislative Assembly that it is actively pursuing all necessary clearances and taking sustained measures to facilitate the early commencement of work on the 18.824-km Barnai-Jawdora Link Road under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).

This was stated by Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary in reply to a Calling Attention Notice moved by MLA Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurez) regarding the commencement of construction work on the Jawdora-Barnai road.

Dy CM replied that the Government is actively coordinating with the concerned departments to resolve the pending issues and complete the requisite



forest and environmental formalities for the commencement of the project.

He stated that the proposal will be submitted on the PARIVESH portal immediately upon receipt of the required details on tree enumeration and the forest land involved, and the work will commence after the requisite forest clearance.

Elaborating, Surinder Kumar said that the project was sanctioned by the National Rural Infrastructure Development Agency

(NRIDA), Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, in 2025 at a total cost of ₹4742.38 lakh to provide all-weather connectivity to Jawdora habitation.

It was informed that the work was tendered and allotted within the prescribed timelines and the executing agency has already mobilized the requisite men and machinery, while a temporary diversion across the Kishan-ganga River has also been constructed to facilitate movement of construction

resources.

The Government further informed that, in view of the entire road alignment passing through forest land, obtaining the requisite forest clearance is mandatory before construction can proceed. Recognising this requirement, PIU Bandipora had initiated the clearance process well in advance.

To expedite the process, Dy CM informed that, joint inspections of the proposed alignment have been conducted by the PIU and Forest Department. PIU Bandipora has also been coordinating with the Geology & Mining Department for geological analysis and the Revenue Department for identification of suitable disposal sites for earthwork and muck material, as required for submission of the proposal on the PARIVESH portal.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Statehood Must Rise Above Political Rancour

The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly has once again placed the question of restoration of full statehood firmly before the Government of India. The resolution moved by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and passed by the House calls for the immediate and urgent restoration of statehood and seeks that the resolution be forwarded to the Union Government. The demand for statehood is, in itself, a matter that deserves a serious constitutional and democratic discussion. But what happened inside the Assembly while the resolution was being considered was less reassuring. BJP legislators protested over the inclusion of references to earlier Assembly resolutions, particularly the June 2000 autonomy resolution, and proceedings were disrupted. The same issue had already triggered uproar in the House on September 25. An elected Assembly should be a place where even deeply opposing political positions are debated through arguments rather than slogans, disruptions and physical confrontation. The BJP has every right to oppose the contents of a resolution, just as the government has the right to place its proposal before the House. But the democratic value of an Assembly lies precisely in allowing disagreement to be expressed without paralysing the institution. At the same time, the government benches also carry a responsibility. If references to past resolutions are included in a fresh resolution, their relevance should be clearly explained to the people. The Chief Minister has maintained that the new resolution does not replace or subsume earlier decisions of the House. That distinction should be made transparently so that a demand for restoration of statehood is not unnecessarily submerged under a wider and more contentious historical debate. The 2000 autonomy resolution belongs to a different political and constitutional period. The November 2024 resolution belongs to another chapter. The present demand for restoration of statehood is yet another issue. Conflating all three may serve partisan arguments, but it does little to advance a mature discussion on what Jammu and Kashmir needs today. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have already endured years of political uncertainty and institutional transition. They deserve an Assembly that concentrates on governance, development, employment, public services and the restoration of constitutional and institutional confidence. The statehood question is important enough not to be reduced to a shouting match between Treasury and Opposition benches. If the demand is to carry democratic weight, it should be articulated with constitutional clarity, debated with restraint and pursued through dialogue with the Union Government. The Assembly has spoken. The larger responsibility now is to ensure that the debate does not end with the passing of a resolution. What matters is whether the political leadership can convert the demand into a sustained, constitutional and constructive engagement with New Delhi—without allowing partisan confrontation to become the defining face of Jammu and Kashmir's democratic politics.

Beyond The Postcard

Kashmir's Water Bodies In Peril



DR RIZWAN RUMI

Dal Lake and its shikaras, the vast expanse of Wular, the wetlands of Hokersar, the quiet waters of Nigeen and Anchar, the winding Jhelum and the streams that descend from the mountains have collectively shaped the Valley's landscape, economy, culture and memory. Water is not merely part of Kashmir's scenery. It is part of Kashmir's identity. Yet beneath the familiar postcard lies a disturbing reality. Kashmir's water bodies are shrinking, becoming polluted, losing ecological functions and, in some cases, disappearing altogether. The latest warning is no longer anecdotal. A performance audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India found that of 697 lakes recorded in Jammu and Kashmir, 315 had disappeared and another 203 had suffered a reduction in area. Together, these 518 lakes accounted for a loss or disappearance of 2,851.26 hectares of water area compared with the historical baseline used in the audit. The CAG also found that 63 of the shrinking lakes had lost at least half of their water area, placing them at particularly high risk. These are not merely numbers. They represent a disappearing ecological inheritance.

Dal Is Only the Beginning

Dal Lake receives the greatest attention because it is Kashmir's most recognisable water body. Its green surface, excessive aquatic vegetation and polluted stretches quickly become news. The lake has received years of restoration efforts, sewage interventions, de-weeding operations and institutional attention. Yet the recurring appearance of the same problems raises an uncomfortable question: Are we restoring the lake—or simply managing its symptoms? Dal's problem is not simply weeds.

Excessive aquatic growth can be a visible consequence of nutrient enrichment, particularly when sewage and other nutrient-bearing inflows enter a water body. Official assessments have identified multiple drainage and wastewater pressures around Kashmir's lakes. A recent J&K Pollution Control Committee report submitted to the National Green Tribunal, for example, documented wastewater and drainage pathways affecting Dal, Nigeen and Anchar, while noting sewage-treatment infrastructure serving parts of these systems.

The lesson is important. Removing weeds from the water surface may make the lake look cleaner. But if the nutrients feeding that growth continue to enter the system, the ecological problem remains. A lake cannot be permanently restored from the surface downward. Its catchment must be restored from the land outward.

Nigeen and Anchar: The Less Visible Crisis

Dal's fame can sometimes obscure the condition of neighbouring water bodies. Nigeen, connected hydrologically and ecologically to the broader Dal system, faces pressures from urbanisation, domestic wastewater, solid waste and human activity. Anchar Lake faces its own set of challenges, including wastewater and drainage inflows from surrounding settlements.

The pollution pathways documented by the J&K Pollution Control Committee are particularly revealing. In the case of Anchar, the report identified domestic waste entering the lake through multiple small drains, along with other wastewater-related pressures. This should change the way Kashmir thinks about lake conservation. Water bodies should not be treated as isolated projects with separate boundaries. A drain does not understand which department owns the lake. Neither does sewage. Neither does sediment. Neither does pollution. What happens in one part of a watershed can eventually affect another.

Wular: More Than a Lake

If Dal is Kashmir's most famous lake, Wular is arguably one of its most important ecological assets. The Jhelum feeds Wular, making the lake an integral component of the Valley's larger hydrological system. Its significance extends beyond tourism. It supports fisheries, biodiversity and livelihoods while also functioning as a major natural water-storage and flood-buffering system. The official conservation record shows that Wular has already undergone substantial restoration interventions, including catchment treatment, boundary demarcation and dredging. About five square kilometres of critically silted areas were reportedly dredged, with around 78 lakh cubic metres of silt removed.



But the very need for interventions on such a scale should remind us of something fundamental:

- A lake is not just the water visible from its shoreline.
- Its catchment, streams, wetlands, sediment flows, surrounding land and human settlements are all part of its health.
- If the catchment continues to degrade, the lake will continue receiving the consequences.
- That is why conservation cannot stop at the lake boundary.

Hokersar: When Wetlands Become Invisible

Perhaps the most underappreciated part of Kashmir's water heritage is its wetlands. Hokersar is not simply a landscape where migratory birds arrive during winter. Wetlands perform functions that cities often attempt to reproduce through expensive infrastructure: they store water, support biodiversity, filter pollutants, regulate ecological flows and provide habitat. The disappearance or degradation of wetlands therefore represents the loss of natural infrastructure. Kashmir's own official environmental records underline the extraordinary diversity of its water landscape. A recent J&K Forest Department compilation identifies hundreds of lakes and ponds within forest and wildlife areas across Kashmir.

The problem is that ecological value is often recognised only after the landscape begins to disappear. A wetland is called valuable after it has been filled. A lake becomes important after it has shrunk. A floodplain becomes precious after a flood. That is precisely the logic Kashmir must abandon.

The Jhelum Is the Thread

Then there is the Jhelum. The river is often discussed independently—as a river, a flood channel or an urban landscape feature. But the Jhelum is also the thread connecting much of Kashmir's water story. The Valley's lakes, wetlands, tributaries and drainage channels form a complex hydrological network. The health of one component inevitably affects others. When wetlands disappear, natural water storage capacity is reduced. When drainage channels are narrowed or blocked, water movement changes. When catchments are degraded, sediment loads can increase. When sewage enters streams, downstream water bodies inherit the pollution. And when lake areas shrink, the Valley loses part of its natural capacity to absorb and regulate water. The devastating floods of 2014 demonstrated what happens when an already stressed hydrological system encounters an extreme event. The lesson should have been permanent. Instead, environmental memory often proves remarkably short.

The Most Alarming Finding Is Not Dal

The CAG findings should force us to look beyond the most famous lakes. If 315 recorded lakes have disappeared and another 203 have shrunk, the crisis is clearly bigger than Dal, Wular or Hokersar. The real environmental story is the gradual disappearance of Kashmir's water network. A small lake may never make the front page. A village wetland may never become a tourist destination. A forgotten pond may not have a shikara floating across it. But collectively, these water bodies form ecological infrastructure. Their disappearance reduces biodiversity, affects groundwater and local livelihoods, alters drainage and weakens the landscape's ability to absorb environmental shocks. This is why the CAG's numbers should not be treated merely as another alarming statistic. They should be understood as a warning about the changing geography of Kashmir itself.

The Problem Is Also Governance

There is another uncomfortable

dimension to the crisis. Kashmir does not lack institutions, schemes or conservation announcements. There are agencies responsible for lakes, wetlands, forests, urban development, municipal services, water quality and land management. Yet the ecological system does not operate according to administrative divisions. This creates a fundamental governance problem. A lake may be under one department. Its catchment may fall under another. Its surrounding land may be controlled by another authority. Wastewater may be the responsibility of a municipal institution. Encroachment may involve revenue administration. Pollution monitoring may belong to another agency. The lake, meanwhile, receives the combined consequences. Conservation therefore requires something more than departmental action. It requires landscape-level governance.

functioning? Is biodiversity recovering? Are fish populations improving? Is the lake retaining its ecological capacity? These are the indicators that matter. A clean-looking lake is not necessarily a healthy lake. And a lake covered in weeds is not necessarily the beginning of the problem. The problem may have started years earlier, upstream and underground.

From Restoration to Prevention

Kashmir now needs a change in philosophy. For too long, environmental governance has often followed a reactive model: Pollution appears → public outrages rises →cleanup begins →attention moves elsewhere →the problem returns. That cycle is expensive and ultimately unsustainable. The objective should be prevention. Every major water body should have a clearly defined catchment management plan, continuous water-quality monitoring, mapped drainage and sewage pathways, strict protection of buffer zones and transparent annual ecological indicators. The public should know not merely how much money was spent, but what ecological improvement resulted.

If a lake receives millions of rupees in restoration funding, citizens should be able to see measurable changes in its water quality, biodiversity, catchment condition and water-holding capacity. Conservation should have outcomes—not merely expenditure statements.

The People Around the Water Matter Too

There is also a human dimension that cannot be ignored. Fishermen, farmers, shikara operators, traditional lake communities and residents living around water bodies depend upon these ecosystems. Conservation cannot succeed by treating every person living near a lake as an enemy. At the same time, livelihoods cannot become a justification for uncontrolled pollution or encroachment. The answer lies somewhere more difficult: regulation combined with participation. People who depend upon a lake should have a stake in keeping it healthy. They should be part of monitoring, waste management, enforcement and restoration. A lake cannot be protected permanently against its surrounding community. It has to be protected with its community.

Beyond the Postcard

Kashmir's water crisis is no longer an environmental story confined to scientists, activists or government offices. It is a story about the future of the Valley. The disappearance of hundreds of lakes means the loss of habitats, livelihoods, biodiversity and natural water-storage systems. The shrinkage of existing lakes means less ecological resilience in a region increasingly exposed to changing rainfall, rising temperatures and extreme weather. The CAG's findings have given us a number. But behind that number are landscapes that once held water. Some have disappeared from the map. Others are shrinking before our eyes.

And some, like Dal, remain famous enough to receive attention—but not necessarily healthy enough to survive without continuous intervention. This should change the way we speak about Kashmir's lakes. Dal Lake should not be protected merely because tourists photograph it. Wular should not be protected merely because it is large. Hokersar should not be protected merely because migratory birds visit it. Nigeen, Anchar and smaller wetlands should not have to become ecological disasters before they receive attention. They should be protected because water is infrastructure, ecology, livelihood, memory and survival. Kashmir does not simply have a Dal Lake problem. It has a water-governance problem. And the time to address it is not when another lake disappears. It is while there are still lakes left to save.

The lesson is important. Removing weeds from the water surface may make the lake look cleaner. But if the nutrients feeding that growth continue to enter the system, the ecological problem remains. A lake cannot be permanently restored from the surface downward. Its catchment must be restored from the land outward.

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■ Beyond The Statistics

The 57 Million Unintended Pregnancies We Can Prevent



SHOBHA SHUKLA

Bodily autonomy and sexual health are often framed as matters of individual health, personal choice and human rights. But the latest evidence from the Adding It Up 2024 report by Guttmacher Institute shows that meeting sexual and reproductive health needs is not merely a health expenditure—it is a smart investment that can save lives, reduce unintended pregnancies and generate significant economic returns.

Main findings of this report that were presented by Dr Elizabeth A Sully, Guttmacher Institute's Director of International Research, during a SHE & Rights session organised ahead of World Contraception Day and International Safe Abortion Day, examine the need, impact, and cost of investing in sexual and reproductive healthcare across 128 low- and middle-income countries: 36 countries from Asia, 53 countries from Africa, 23 countries from Latin America and Caribbean and 8 countries each from Europe and Oceania regions.

In low- and middle-income countries across Asian and African regions, millions of women face significant unmet demands for modern contraception, leading to high rates of unintended pregnancies and maternal mortality. Fully funding comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care would dramatically reduce maternal deaths and unsafe abortions. SHE & Rights was organised by the Global Center for Health Diplomacy and Inclusion (CEHDI), Guttmacher Institute, Asian Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), CNS and partners.

From unmet need to unmet demand

One of the report's notable features is to rethink how contraceptive need is measured.

In Asia, approximately 129 million women of reproductive age are classified as having an unmet need for modern contraception. But this number includes women using traditional methods who may be satisfied with them and may not want to switch.

Guttmacher Institute therefore uses the term unmet demand to identify women who want to avoid pregnancy, are not currently using contraception and express an open-

ness to using family planning in the future.

A rights-based approach to family planning should not be about persuading people to adopt particular methods. Rather it should be about ensuring that people who want to prevent pregnancy can exercise that choice and access services they need.

By this measure, an estimated 36 million women in low- and middle-income countries in Asia have an unmet demand for contraceptive care.

Almost half of all pregnancies in Asia were unintended

Every year, the region experiences approximately 57 million unintended pregnancies, representing 47% of all pregnancies. Guttmacher Institute's analysis reports that 72% of them end in abortions, 17% in unplanned births and 11% in stillbirths and miscarriages.

Meeting all the sexual and reproductive health needs of women could reduce unintended pregnancies in Asia by 26% and unsafe abortions by 25%. Also maternal deaths would decrease by 65% and newborn deaths by 62%, while new HIV infections among babies could fall by 93%.

US\$ 12.4 billion gap in Asia

The report estimates that the annual cost of meeting all sexual and reproductive health needs in low- and middle-income countries in Asia is US\$ 38.8 billion. So an additional annual investment of US\$ 12.4 billion is required to fully fund contraception, maternal and newborn care, abortion services and treatment for 4 major curable sexually transmitted infections (STIs). This means increasing annual spending from an estimated US\$ 5.87 to US\$ 8.61 per person. That is an additional US\$ 2.74 per person a year.

At first glance, the additional investment may appear substantial. But every additional US\$ 1 spent on family planning and contraceptive care could save US\$ 1.97 in pregnancy-related and newborn care costs by reducing unintended pregnancies.

Africa: another powerful investment case

In low- and middle-income countries in Africa an estimated 29 million unintended pregnancies occur every year, representing 43% of all pregnancies. Meeting all sexual and reproductive health needs could reduce maternal deaths by 67% and newborn deaths by 70%, while new HIV infections among babies six weeks and younger could fall by 87%.

The required comprehensive package needs an additional annual investment of US\$ 40.1 billion, equivalent to US\$ 26.83 per person each year.

But then again, estimated savings are significant - every additional dollar invested in contraceptive services could save US\$ 2.49 in maternal, newborn and abortion care costs.



While the scale and nature of unmet reproductive health needs differ between Asia and Africa, yet the potential health gains by meeting all of them are substantial in both regions- every additional US\$ 1 spent is estimated to save US\$ 1.97 in Asia and US\$ 2.49 in Africa in maternal, newborn and abortion care.

In other words, contraception is not simply another line item in a health budget. It can reduce pressure on several other parts of the health system and reduce the need for expensive interventions later.

From statistics to action

Guttmacher Institute has turned its research into two online interactive tools that can help policymakers, advocates and journalists translate global evidence into country-specific scenarios.

The Family Planning Investment Impact Calculator is a tool that is available online to see what the impacts would be from investments made in family planning in different low- and middle-income countries. It allows users to select a country, investment amount and currency and estimate how many unintended pregnancies could be prevented, unsafe abortions averted and lives saved.

I have tried this tool online myself: if a US\$1 million investment in contraceptive care is made in the Philippines, it could provide modern contraceptive methods to approximately 84,000 women and couples, prevent more than 18,000 unintended pregnancies and avert nearly 4,000 unsafe abortions. It also estimated a saving of US\$ 2.51 in pregnancy-related and newborn care for US\$ 1 invested.

The Safe Abortion Calculator focuses on

the economics and health benefits of expanding access to safe abortion (provided within healthcare facility) care. It shows how investing in safe abortion care is a cost-savings investment.

When I tried this tool online, I found that by increasing the provision of safe abortion to 100% (from the current 26%) in Bangladesh, it could substantially reduce overall costs by an estimated 57.5%, resulting in a saving of US\$ 27 million. Because when we invest in safe abortion care, we see a massive reduction in post-abortion care needs and costs.

Thus, by using these tools one can better understand some of the concrete impacts of investments made in family planning. The tools are particularly relevant when health budgets and development assistance are under pressure. They allow the conversation to move from broad appeals for investment to concrete questions: What would additional financial resources achieve in a particular country? How many unintended pregnancies could be prevented? How many lives could be saved?

Riju Dhakal, Programme Officer, Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) asks whether international commitments and pledges are actually reflected in approved national budgets for sexual and reproductive health and rights. ARROW is working with partners in 12 countries, including India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Maldives, to examine financing for sexual and reproductive health and rights, and engage governments on investment and impact.

Amid concerns over falling development assistance for sexual and reproductive health

and rights (46% decline in official development assistance for it between 2024 and 2026), Dhakal called for the Guttmacher Institute's tools (Family Planning Investment Impact Calculator and Safe Abortion Calculator) to be used to localise the numbers, track government commitments and check whether financing pledges are actually reflected in approved national budgets.

She highlighted the importance of tracking not only what governments pledge, but also whether the money is budgeted, released and ultimately reaches services and communities.

Contraception is not a woman's responsibility alone

The investment debate also exposes a persistent gender imbalance.

The theme for World Contraception Day 2026 "No Barriers, Just Choices: Access to Options, Freedom to Decide!", highlights the importance of ensuring genuine reproductive choice. Yet contraceptive responsibility continues to fall disproportionately on women. Female sterilisation accounts for 24% of contraceptive use worldwide, compared with appallingly low 2% for male sterilisation.

The focus of International Safe Abortion Day 2026 is on "Solidarity in Action: Advance Reproductive Justice and Urgently Strengthen Health Systems for Comprehensive Abortion Care." And rightly so, as safe abortion is an essential component of sexual and reproductive healthcare and links it to reproductive freedom, gender equality and the right to health.

The question facing health systems is not only "how much will reproductive healthcare cost?" It is also about "what will it cost if these needs remain unmet?"

Ultimately, investing in contraception, safe abortion, maternal healthcare and newborn care is about ensuring that people can prevent pregnancies they do not want, have children when they do want them, receive safe care when they are pregnant, and survive childbirth and its complications.

The price of reproductive healthcare can be measured in dollars. The cost of not providing it is measured in unintended pregnancies, preventable illness, lives lost and opportunities denied to women.

It is high time we do away with patriarchal expectations that have often treated family planning and domestic care as women's responsibilities. A more equitable approach requires recognising contraception as a shared responsibility between sexual partners while protecting women's autonomy over decisions concerning their bodies.

Shobha Shukla is a feminist, health and development justice advocate

Beyond Terrorism: India's Firm Message To Pakistan



LALIT GARG

The 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly once again witnessed the familiar questions between India and Pakistan, questions whose resolution remains critically important for peace and stability in South Asia. According to the United Nations, the 81st session commenced on September 8, 2026, while the General Debate was held from September 22 to 26. The central theme of this year's debate was "Building Trust, Managing Change and Delivering an Effective United Nations for All." At a time when the world is grappling with wars, terrorism, economic inequality, energy crises and geopolitical tensions, the question becomes even more significant: When will South Asia break free from the cycle of old disputes?

In his address to the General Assembly on September 26, India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar delivered a pointed and forceful statement. Without naming Pakistan, he referred to a "serial practitioner of terrorism" who, a day earlier, had misrepresented facts and attempted to normalise terrorism and evade its consequences. He made it clear that this could not be accepted. He also asserted India's right to exercise self-defence against terrorism and stressed that governments sponsoring terrorism must be held accountable. He further underlined the need to expose and act against the financial sources that sustain terrorism.

A day earlier, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had raised the Kashmir issue in his address and criticised India's decision concerning the Indus Waters Treaty. Pakistan presented its position from its own perspective on the



international stage, while India continued to raise questions regarding Pakistan's alleged support for cross-border terrorism. Pakistan's representative also levelled serious allegations against India concerning terrorism and Kashmir. Thus, the UN platform once again became a stage for mutual accusations between the two countries. But the real question is: After all these accusations, how much progress has actually been made towards a solution?

The foremost question before Pakistan concerns its policy towards terrorism. India has consistently alleged that terrorist networks operating from Pakistani territory or with its support pose a serious security challenge to India. Jaishankar made this point in clear terms, stressing that terrorism and friendship cannot go hand in hand and that those responsible for terrorism must change their course.

Pakistan, on the other hand, has also accused India of supporting terrorism and has held India responsible for violent incidents within Pakistan. The truth and evidence relating to individual allegations may require investigation and verification in specific cases. Yet one

broader reality remains undeniable: terrorism has exacted a devastating human, economic and social cost from the people of both countries. Pakistan itself has been grappling with terrorist violence for decades. The question, therefore, is: How long will Pakistan continue to view terrorism primarily through the lens of strategic policy rather than recognising the threat it poses to its own national security and future?

Terrorism cannot become the permanent instrument of a nation's foreign policy. When terrorism is employed as a strategic tool, it can eventually turn into a threat to the very country that seeks to use it, damaging its internal security, economy and international credibility. Pakistan itself has suffered immensely from terrorist violence. It therefore has a historic opportunity to approach the issue of terrorism not merely from an India-centric perspective, but also in the context of its own national security and the future of its people. Combating terrorism is not simply about fulfilling another country's demand; it is fundamentally about protecting Pakistan's own citizens.

The second major question concerns

Kashmir. Pakistan once again raised the Kashmir issue at the UN General Assembly. Yet nearly eight decades of such debates have demonstrated that merely raising the issue on international platforms does not resolve the problem. The Kashmir dispute has deepened mistrust between India and Pakistan, generated security tensions and diverted attention from development priorities in both countries. If Pakistan genuinely seeks peace and stability in the region, it needs to seriously consider what it is achieving for the future of its own citizens by keeping Kashmir at the permanent centre of its foreign policy. Repeatedly raising Kashmir at international forums while leaving pressing domestic challenges in the background cannot provide a sustainable long-term solution for any country.

The third, and perhaps the most serious, question concerns Pakistan's economy and the everyday life of its citizens. Inflation, employment, energy, education, healthcare and social security are fundamental responsibilities of any government. Foreign policy becomes meaningful only when its ultimate objective is to make the lives of a nation's citizens safer, more prosperous and more dignified. For Pakistan, this is the time to seriously reflect on whether greater energy should be devoted to political and diplomatic campaigns against India on international platforms, or to the economic needs of its people, institutional stability and human development. It is equally important that India-Pakistan relations not be viewed solely through the prism of mutual accusations. India's security concerns are genuine, and the foremost responsibility of any government is to protect its citizens. Jaishankar also emphasised India's right to self-defence and its commitment to a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism at the United Nations.

At the same time, however, lasting regional peace requires a balance between firmness against terrorism and keeping avenues for dialogue open. Dialogue can be meaningful only when there is clarity and sincerity on the question of violence and terrorism. Pakistan must also understand that the world today does

not merely listen to statements; it closely observes policies, actions and conduct. The fundamental purpose of the United Nations General Assembly is to provide a platform for multilateral dialogue, peace and cooperation. If that platform is repeatedly used merely to level accusations against one another, the question naturally arises: What do the people of India and Pakistan actually gain from it?

India and Pakistan are both nuclear-armed neighbours. Therefore, tensions between them cannot remain merely a bilateral issue. Their consequences can extend to the security of the entire South Asian region and, potentially, to global stability. The most important question before Pakistan today is one of introspection: Does it want to build its future on the foundations of old disputes, Kashmir-centric politics and allegations surrounding terrorism, or on economic development, education, employment, institutional strength and regional cooperation? India, too, faces the challenge of keeping the possibilities of lasting peace in South Asia open without compromising national security.

The answer to when Pakistan will change cannot be provided by another country. Ultimately, change depends upon Pakistan's own political will, institutional decisions and policy choices. But the direction is clear: terrorism must not be allowed to become a political instrument in any form; the economic needs of the people must receive priority; confrontation centred perpetually around Kashmir must give way to a broader vision of the future; and relations with neighbouring countries must evolve on the foundations of trust, mutual respect and peaceful cooperation rather than violence.

If Pakistan chooses this path, the benefits will not accrue to India alone. They will extend to the people of Pakistan and to the entire South Asian region. But if it continues along the old path, the most difficult question will ultimately be posed not by the world, but by its own citizens: How long will the politics of the past be allowed to determine the present and the future of coming generations?

The author can be mailed at lalitgarg11@gmail.com



5 Dead After

directed the District Administration to ensure the best possible treatment for the injured. “Deeply pained by the loss of lives in an unfortunate road accident in Kupwara. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the early recovery of the injured,” the LG wrote on X—(KNO inputs)

Jammu And Kashmir

the Statehood resolution. “Why do we need this resolution? It has been two years. We have been waiting for two years, that the central government will fulfill its promise,” he said.

The BJP had objected to the resolution, citing its reference to the 2000 autonomy resolution and the 2024 special status resolution.

The Chief Minister referred to the Supreme Court judgment concerning Jammu and Kashmir and said the Court had directed that Statehood be restored at the earliest after elections. Questioning the continued delay, he said there was a need for clarity on what was meant by the phrase “at the earliest” and “as soon as possible”.

“Tell me, Mr Speaker, in which English, ‘as soon as possible’ means two years? In which English, ‘at the earliest possible’ means two years? And even after two years, there is still no clarity,” he said.

Omar Abdullah also sought clarity from the Union Government on the reference to restoring Statehood at an “appropriate time”. He questioned whether the restoration of Statehood was being linked to the security situation and militancy in the region.

The Chief Minister said that if restoration of Statehood was to depend on the complete cessation of militancy, the decision would effectively be linked to developments beyond the control of the elected government and people of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the decision on restoration of Statehood should be taken in New Delhi and not be left dependent on any other factor or external consideration.

The Chief Minister also rejected the argument that the demand for Statehood was linked to any particular political party or government. He said Statehood was an issue concerning the people of Jammu and Kashmir and not a matter of political ownership.

CM said that statehood is not for a particular party, family or for National Conference only but statehood would be for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting the administrative difficulties arising from Jammu and Kashmir’s present status as a Union Territory, the Chief Minister said several decisions that would ordinarily fall within the domain of an elected State government continue to face procedural and institutional constraints.

He cited the example of the committee constituted for examining the regularisation of daily wagers, saying that the committee had not been able to submit its report despite the passage of considerable time.

“We have formed a committee here for the regularization of the Daily wagers. The committee has not submitted its report yet. Why? Because we are UT Mr. Speaker,” he said.

The Chief Minister also raised the issue of the absence of an Advocate General for Jammu and Kashmir, saying that nearly two years after the formation of the elected government, the Union Territory continued to be without an Advocate General despite the matter having been formally taken up by the government.

“Almost two years have passed, the government has been formed, even today Jammu and Kashmir does not have Advocate General,” he said.

Omar Abdullah also referred to the issue of reservation and said the elected government had undertaken the process through a Cabinet Sub-Committee, followed by consideration and approval by the Cabinet. He said the government had subsequently responded to queries raised by the Union Government and had again forwarded its decision to the Lieutenant Governor.

He said the delay in implementation of the decision on the reservation issue illustrated the limitations under the existing administrative arrangement.

The Chief Minister further highlighted areas where, according to him, functions and institutions that had traditionally been associated with the elected government now fall outside its effective jurisdiction.

Referring to the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, he said the institution presently comes under the Lieutenant Governor.

He also referred to the universities at Awantipora and Rajouri, saying that under the previous arrangement the Chief Minister had an ex-officio role in the institutions, whereas the present arrangement does not provide the Chief Minister the same role.

“Today in both the universities there is no role of the Chief Minister. The Chancellor is LG but the Chief Minister is out of that position. Why? What is the problem?” he asked.

The Chief Minister also raised the issue of the pending approval of the Government Business Rules. He said the government had submitted the Business Rules to the Union Government nearly two years ago and that these had not yet been approved.

“We told them if there is any deficiency, we will fix it, but at least this confusion in exercising of

powers should be removed,” he said.

Omar Abdullah said the government had exercised patience but questioned how long the uncertainty could continue.

“Jammu and Kashmir doesn’t need any favor,” he said, asserting that restoration of Statehood was not a concession but a right and a commitment made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

“We are not accepting... we want the answer, we want justice and we have the right to rule. This is not Union Government’s favor,” he said.

Concluding his intervention, the Chief Minister urged the House to pass the resolution and called upon the Government of India to fulfill its commitment towards restoration of Statehood.

“I want this resolution to be passed,” he said. The house later passed the resolution.

BJP Runs Mock

targeted Congress MLA Nizamuddin Bhat over the references to autonomy and the pre-1953 position in the resolution.

“Do you want the restoration of the post of Prime Minister’s nomenclature in Jammu and Kashmir?” Mankotia asked Bhat.

The BJP members have been opposing the references to the 1952 and pre-1953 political position, arguing that such references should not form part of a resolution seeking restoration of statehood.

The protests and counter-sloganeering continued inside the House, disrupting the proceedings repeatedly.

As the ruckus persisted, BJP MLA Vikram Randhawa and MLA Arvind Gupta, along with Congress MLAs Irfan Hafiz Lone and Iftikhar Ahmad, were marshalled out of the House.

The Speaker warned the protesting legislators of strict action and directed members to maintain discipline and decorum during the proceedings.

“Maintain discipline or face tough action,” the Speaker warned amid continued sloganeering and protests.

The Congress legislators also raised slogans and displayed banners during the proceedings, adding to the disruptions inside the House—(KNO)

Fresh Snow

and Baderwah 6.2 mm during the past 24 hours. The highest rainfall of 16.5 mm was recorded at ARG Bakore.

The MeT department has forecast generally dry weather from September 29 to October 3.

From October 4 to 6, weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy, with light rain, light snowfall over higher reaches, thunderstorms and gusty winds at a few places. Similar conditions are likely on October 9 and 10, while October 7 and 8 are expected to remain largely dry.

The department has advised farmers to continue harvesting apples, paddy and other crops and ensure safe storage of harvested produce—(KNO)

No Place For

we would have taken part. But the references to 2000 and 2024 violate the Constitution,” he said.

The LoP also questioned the Congress over its position on the issue and asked whether the party supported a return to the pre-1953 constitutional arrangement and restoration of provisions associated with Article 370 and Article 35A.

“Congress got exposed today and they have to answer the country. Do they want the pre-1953 situation, Article 370 and 35A? They should answer and their leaders should be held accountable,” Sharma said.

He alleged that the National Conference and Congress were attempting to revive issues that could affect peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

“It is not like the opposition will oppose everything. J&K is a sensitive state and we have neighbours who always try to take advantage of things and disturb peace,” he said.

Sharma said the prevailing situation in J&K was peaceful and described restoration of statehood as the remaining major issue.

“Today the situation is peaceful and only statehood is missing. BJP is in support of the statehood demand of the government,” he said.

Sharma also criticised Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather for allowing the resolution to be taken up despite BJP objections. He said the BJP had moved a motion seeking the Speaker’s removal.

“We moved a motion for the immediate removal of the Speaker. He has no right to be there,” Sharma said.

On the timeline for restoration of statehood, Sharma questioned the Chief Minister’s authority to set a deadline.

“Who is the CM to set a timeline? Statehood will be given and we are committed to it. Discussions should not be taken in a hurry,” he said.

Sharma also announced that the BJP would launch massive protests across Jammu and Kashmir against the resolution, particularly over references to revive the pre-1953 constitutional position—(KNO)

Govt Committed To

and areas as per requirements.

Responding to the question regarding the

deployment or relocation of healthcare workers during the last two years, Sakeena Itoo informed the House that four healthcare workers from Bani Constituency have been attached, deployed or relocated during the period.

CS Reviews J&K's

emphasised that the campaign should go beyond ceremonial events and serve as an effective platform for bringing governance reforms closer to the people, particularly at the grassroots level.

The Chief Secretary directed the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department to work in close coordination with the Planning, Development and Monitoring Department to organise special Gram Sabhas across all Panchayats of the Union Territory ahead of the nationwide launch.

He stressed that these Gram Sabhas should provide an opportunity for citizens to learn about major governance reforms, assess their impact and identify developmental priorities specific to their respective areas.

Dulloo further directed the district administrations to immediately designate nodal officers for overseeing Panchayat-level activities and ensuring effective coordination among the departments concerned.

Emphasising timely preparedness, the Chief Secretary instructed all line departments to complete the identification of citizen-centric reforms, preparation of locally relevant Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material to share it with the Planning Department and deployment of field functionaries before October 2, 2026.

The Chief Secretary observed that the campaign should also provide an opportunity to assess the outcomes of major public welfare initiatives and sensitise citizens about the benefits of governance reforms. He called upon the departments to ensure that the achievements showcased during the campaign are supported by tangible outcomes and reflect improvements in public service delivery.

The Chief Secretary called for close inter-departmental coordination and meticulous planning to ensure that all scheduled activities are organised effectively and achieve the desired outreach.

As part of the campaign, the Commissioner Secretary, I&C, Vikramjit Singh apprised the meeting that two major events are proposed to be organised in Srinagar and Jammu during November and December, respectively, highlighting the Union Territory’s developmental transformation and the impact of major Central Government initiatives.

He highlighted that a high-level workshop focusing on the holistic development of Jammu and Kashmir is scheduled to be held at the University of Kashmir, Srinagar, in November 2026. The event will be coordinated by Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department, Alice Vaz.

Similarly, a workshop for industrial beneficiaries is scheduled to be organised by Industries & Commerce Department in Jammu during December 2026 to highlight the achievements and impact of the New Central Sector Scheme (NCSS), 2021, in promoting industrial investment and economic development across the Union Territory.

The meeting was further informed that the initial activities under the campaign are scheduled to commence in Srinagar on October 8, 2026, featuring major digital interventions of the Department of Justice, including Tele-Law and the Nyaya Setu AI Chatbot, alongside initiatives of the Department of Posts.

Concluding the Chief Secretary emphasised that Reform Utsav should serve as an opportunity to demonstrate the tangible benefits of governance reforms while strengthening public awareness, citizen participation and accountability in the delivery of government services across the length and breadth of the UT.

No Eligible PMAY-

rejected or deleted without verification and approval by the competent authority, wherever required.

“However, 42540 No of system flagged cases have been recommended for deletion after verification at Block as well as District Level during the deletion module,” the government said, adding that the guidelines in this regard were conveyed by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India.

On the mechanism to ensure that genuine and deserving households are not wrongly rejected or deleted and are given an opportunity for re-verification and inclusion, the government said no prescribed provision or procedure is presently available for direct incorporation or re-inclusion of left-out/deleted beneficiaries in the PMAY-G beneficiary list.

However, with a view to identifying genuine and deserving households that may have been left out during the survey or re-verification process, Gram Sabhas have been conducted in the concerned Panchayats based on the identification and verification of such cases, on the basis of which the draft PWL is being prepared.

The government further said that all such

cases identified or recommended by the Gram Sabha shall be examined and processed further in accordance with the applicable guidelines and instructions of the MoRD, Government of India, and the procedure prescribed by the competent authority, as and when such provision or procedure is made available.

The reply was furnished by the Minister-in-Charge, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj—(KNO)

BJP Submits

clear on how we deal with such motions,” the Speaker said, adding, “You don’t read the Rules properly.”

As the Speaker explained the procedures, BJP legislators continued their protests, shouting slogans: “Speaker Sahab kursi chhodo, Speaker Sahab kursi chhodo.”

Amid uproar, Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma reiterated that statehood was part of the BJP’s agenda but ruled out any discussion on the pre-1953 position.

“The Government of India rejected the pre-1953 position when Omar Abdullah was Union Minister,” Sharma said.

As the Deputy Chief Minister responded to LoP Sharma, BJP MLAs stormed into the Well of the House and disrupted proceedings.

In an unusual protest, BJP legislators staged a mock session from the Well of the House. After trooping in, they sat down and began conducting parallel proceedings.

During the mock session, BJP MLA Balwant Singh pointed towards Congress MLA Nizamuddin Bhat, accusing him of supporting autonomy.

“Do you want the restoration of the post of Prime Minister’s nomenclature in Jammu & Kashmir?” BJP MLA Mankotia asked Bhat.

The BJP legislators sitting in the Well also tried to disrupt speeches of almost every MLA, including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, during the debate on the statehood resolution—(KNO)

J&K Incurs

additional power stands purchased during 2024-25 to 2026-27 for Jammu and Kashmir Divisions during peak summer and winter, the government informed the house that the additional power has been purchased during peak summer and winter to meet the power demand of both regions as per the seasonal requirements.

“The power supply in the UT of J&K is met through the allocation of power from various CPSUs by Ministry of Power, Gol & generation from State owned power stations for which PPAs stand executed,” the government said.

It also informed the house that the allocation of power from CPSUs is revised by MoP, from time to time keeping in view the demand. Availability and generation scenario.

“The power procured for UT of J&K is as per the allocated quantum and as per the tariff determined by CERC and JERC. The energy is further scheduled to both the divisions as per the seasonal requirement of both regions,” the government said—(KNO)

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CS reviews progress of Census operations in snow-bound areas

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Monday chaired a high-level meeting of the UT Level Census Coordination Committee (UTLCCC) to review the progress of ongoing Census 2027 operations in snow-bound areas and assess preparedness for the upcoming Population Enumeration exercise in the remaining parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by the Commissioner Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department; Commissioner Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department; Secretary, Revenue; Divisional Commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir; Deputy Commissioners; Director, School Education; Joint Director, Census Operations, J&K; and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took a comprehensive district-wise appraisal of the ongoing enumeration exercise from the respective Deputy Commissioners, besides reviewing the administrative arrangements, logistical preparedness and inter-departmental coordination required for the smooth conduct of the subsequent phase.

Reviewing the progress in snow-bound areas, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned Deputy Commissioners to expedite the completion of the remaining Enumeration Blocks (EBs), ensuring that the exercise is concluded well before the sunset date



set for the exercise. He emphasized the importance of maintaining accuracy, comprehensive coverage and strict adherence to prescribed timelines, while calling for close coordination between the district administrations and census authorities to address any operational bottlenecks.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed preparedness for the upcoming enumeration exercise in non-snow-bound areas of the UT. He directed the concerned Divisional and District Administrations to put in place all necessary administrative and logistical arrangements well in advance, drawing upon the experience gained during the ongoing operations in snow-bound regions.

A detailed presentation on the progress achieved and upcoming activities was made by Joint Director, Directorate of Census Operations, J&K and Ladakh.

The meeting was informed that enumeration operations are presently underway across 95 designated charges spread over 16 snow-bound districts of Jammu and Kashmir. Of the 4,597 Enumeration

Blocks identified in these areas, 3,814 have already been completed, registering an overall achievement of 82.97 percent.

Four districts, namely Budgam, Bandipora, Ganderbal and Pulwama, have achieved 100 percent completion, while Kishtwar has recorded 98.84 percent progress, followed by Reasi at 94.49 percent and Udhampur at 91.69 percent. Regarding financial arrangements, the Commissioner Secretary, PD&MD, R. Alice Vaz apprised the meeting that the Department has released ₹49.20 crore to the respective districts to meet expenditure on IT infrastructure, fuel, contingencies, honorariums and training allowances for field functionaries.

The Committee was further apprised that intensive training of nodal officers, charge officers, supervisors and enumerators deployed for Special Charges in snow-bound areas had been completed in two phases across both Jammu and Kashmir divisions earlier this month.

Reviewing preparations for the compilation of the District Census Handbook (DCHB), the Chief Secre-

tary was informed that training of all concerned field functionaries had been completed between September 14 and 27, 2026.

The fieldwork for compilation of Village and Town Directories is scheduled to commence on October 1 through a dedicated digital portal, on which all field functionaries and charge officers have already been registered.

The exercise will involve collection of comprehensive information against 400 questions for the Village Directory and 420 questions for the Town Directory. The respective PCOs will exercise close supervision to ensure accuracy, completeness and reliability of the data collected.

The Chief Secretary stressed that the District Census Handbooks constitute an important repository of grassroots-level information and called for meticulous data collection and effective supervision at every stage of their preparation.

The meeting also reviewed the extensive Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign undertaken to generate public awareness and encourage active participation in Census 2027.

Satish Sharma exhorts departments to address public issues on priority

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for FCS&CA, IT, Youth Services and Sports, Science and Technology, Satish Sharma, Monday held a series of meetings with various delegations, during which issues concerning youth, sports, transport, food and public distribution, information technology, science and technology, employment and public services were raised.

The delegations, representing different groups, associations and sections of the public, apprised the Minister of their specific issues and sought his intervention for resolution of the same.

During the interactions, the representatives highlighted concerns related to sports infrastructure and facilities, opportunities for youth, employment and livelihood avenues, transport services, delivery of



public services and other matters requiring government attention.

While responding to the issues raised by the delegations, the Minister assured them that all their genuine concerns would be examined on priority and appropriate action would be taken to sort out the same.

The Minister directed the concerned officers to examine the issues falling within their respective jurisdictions and take necessary action wherever required.

Issues concerning youth development and sports figured prominently during the interactions.

The Minister reiterated the Government's focus

on providing young people with better opportunities to participate in sports, develop their skills and pursue avenues for employment and entrepreneurship. He emphasised that strengthening sports infrastructure, improving access to sporting facilities and supporting emerging talent are important components of youth empowerment.

Several issues relating to transport facilities and public service delivery were also brought before the Minister.

Satish Sharma directed the concerned authorities to examine the matters raised by the delegations and ensure that issues

within the departmental framework are processed appropriately.

The Minister also highlighted the importance of Information Technology and Science & Technology in improving the governance, enhancing service delivery and creating new opportunities for the younger generation. He said that technology-driven solutions can help make government services more accessible, efficient and transparent, while also opening new avenues for innovation, entrepreneurship and employment.

He maintained that his departments would continue to engage with the stakeholders and work towards strengthening youth-oriented initiatives, sports infrastructure, transport services, public distribution and consumer-related services, technology-driven governance and scientific innovations.

CPO reviews developmental progress of Aspirational Block Achgoza

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Central Prabhari Officer (CPO) for the Aspirational Blocks Programme, Bhupinder Kumar, Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of developmental initiatives and government schemes in Aspirational Block Achgoza, Pulwama, at the Circuit House, Pulwama.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, SSP Pulwama, Sahil Sarangal, ADDC Pulwama, Gulzar Ahmad Bhat, ADC Pulwama, Mohd Ashraf Sheikh, ACD, CPO, CEO, CMO and other senior district and sectoral officers from Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Health, Education, Social Development, Jal Shakti and other concerned departments.

A detailed presentation was made before the Chair on the developmental progress of the block, projects under implementation and various departmental inter-

ventions. The status of key indicators under the Aspirational Blocks Programme and Sampoornata Abhiyan 2.0 was also reviewed.

The departments of Agriculture, Health, Education, and PHE, among others, presented their progress and briefed the Chair about the schemes and initiatives being implemented in the block.

It was informed that several government schemes and developmental projects are already in progress. The Chair emphasised the need to identify and bridge the remaining gaps through effective convergence, coordinated efforts and timely implementation.

The meeting also discussed key demands and proposed developmental works for Achgoza, including a Public Library and Sports Complex, a building for the AYUSH Hospital, a Shopping Block for SHGs/MFP activities and a Meeting Hall at the BDO Office, Achgoza. The status of projects already under process was also presented before the Chair.

DC, SSP Kupwara visit Seemari, Console Bereaved Families

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse and SSP Kupwara, Syed Al-Tahir Gilani Monday visited Seemari in Karnah Sub-Division, where a tragic road accident claimed five lives and left several others injured.

Following the accident, the District Administration and Kupwara police launched a swift rescue operation, comprising teams from the civil administration, police, Indian Army and emergency services. All passengers were evacuated and rushed to SDH Tangdhar, where five were

declared brought dead.

After medico-legal formalities, the bodies were handed over to their families for last rites. Six injured passengers were stabilized and referred to GMC Handwara. Senior officers from district administration and police visited GMC Handwara to monitor the situation.

During the visit, the DC and the SSP inspected the accident site, took stock of the situation and met the bereaved families. They expressed deep grief, extended heartfelt condolences and assured the families of all possible support from the district administration.

National Mid-Term CME of IACAM concludes in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The 4th National Mid-Term CME of the Indian Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (IACAM) concluded in Srinagar after three days of discussions on the ethical, legal and clinical dimensions of child and adolescent mental healthcare.

Held from September 25 to 27, the CME was organised by IACAM in collaboration with the Jammu & Kashmir Psychiatric Society (JKPS). The programme, themed "Children, Ethics and Laws", brought together psychiatrists, psychologists, paediatricians, legal professionals, researchers and other mental-health practitioners from across the country.

The conference was inaugurated by Dr Iffat Hassan Shah, Principal/Dean Government Medi-



cal College, Srinagar, who attended the conference as Chief Guest.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Shah highlighted the expansion of mental-health services in Kashmir and acknowledged the sustained efforts of professionals working in the field.

Dr Savita Malhotra, Life President of IACAM, stressed the need to train and deploy more mental-health professionals to meet the growing psychological and developmental needs of children and adolescents.

Dr Vivek Agarwal, President, IACAM, and Dr Rachana Bhargava, Gen-

eral Secretary, IACAM, underlined the importance of integrating ethical and legal considerations into child and adolescent mental-health practice. They emphasised that such an approach is essential for ensuring responsible, rights-based and child-centred care.

The scientific programme examined the relationship between mental healthcare, child rights and the legal framework governing children and young people. Sessions addressed ethical dilemmas in clinical practice, legal issues involving children, mental-health assess-

ments, child protection, developmental concerns and the responsibilities of professionals working with young people.

The CME featured lectures, interactive workshops, panel discussions and academic exchanges. Across the sessions, speakers emphasised that children should be recognised not only as recipients of care but also as individuals with rights, voices, vulnerabilities and evolving capacities.

The programme included contributions from several distinguished experts and academicians, including Dr Shekhar Seshadri, whose work in child and adolescent mental health, ethics and child rights has influenced professional practice and training in the field. Clinicians, academicians and experts from diverse disciplines also participated in the scientific deliberations.

Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, (JAL SHAKTI) PHE, MECHANICAL RURAL DIVISION, SGR.

GIST OF E-TENDER.

E-N.I.T. No: - PHE/MRD/TS/ 35 of 09/ 2026

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Rural Division Srinagar invites e-tenders on item rate basis in two cover system from approved and eligible Contractors having GST registration/registered with J&K Govt., Railways and other State/Central Government Organizations for the following work: -

Sr.	Nature of Work	Location	Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Earnest Money Rs.	Cost of Tender Doc. Rs.	Time of Completion	Programme
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A	Replacement of existing damaged 125 Amp. MCCB at WSS	Qazipora 1 st	0.15	300/-	50/=	05 days	M&R

Critical Dates/Information.

1. Publishing Date	28-09-2026 (5:00 PM)
2. Period of Downloading of Bids	28-09-2026 (5:00 PM) to 05-10-2026 (11:00 AM)
3. Period of Submission of bids	28-09-2026 (5:00 PM) to 05-10-2026 (11:00 AM)
4. Date of opening of Tender/Timing	05-10-2026 at (12:00 P.M)
5. Tender Receiving Authority: Executive Engineer, (Jal Shakti) PHE Mechanical Rural Division Srinagar	
6. Document Cost: Non-Refundable in the shape of Treasury Challan/receipt shall be deposited to Account Head 0215 in favour of Executive Engineer (Jal Shakti) PHE Mechanical Rural Division Srinagar (The firm shall specify the e-NIT No. & name of work for which applied)	
7. Bid Validity Period: 90 Days	
8. The bids can be downloaded or uploaded on www.jktenders.gov.in	
9. Earnest Money Deposit in the shape of CDR/FDR/ bank guarantee from any Nationalized/Scheduled Bank pledged to the Executive Engineer Jal shakti PHE Mechanical Rural Division Srinagar. In case the e-NIT is cancelled, the EMD submitted for this e-NIT shall remain valid and will be considered for fresh e-NIT. Note:- The Date of cost of tender document fee and Earnest money must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date. Any deviation shall render the bidder as non-responsive.	

No: -PHE/MRD/TS/2122-26
DT: - 28-09-2026
DIPK-6196-26
DT: 28/09/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Rural
Division Srinagar.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION CHADOORA

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

ENIT NO. 75 of R&B /CHADOORA/ 4476-86 of 2026-27 DATED: 26/09/2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In Two cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/ Central Governments for the following works:-

SN	Nome of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rupees)	Time of completion (days)	M.H OF Account	Class Of Contactor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Construction of P/Bund around/ nearJamia Zia-Ul-Islam at Rupwan Hafroo Batapora.	8.00	300.00	16000	15	DDC Grants	C/D
2	Construction of road from PMGSY road to Masjid Sharief Chan Mohalla at Watkaloo.	14.00	600.00	28000	21	Untied Grants	B/C/D
3	Improvement of road from PMGSY road to H/O Mohd Maqbool Bhat and H/o Abdul Hameed Najjar Via H/o Ab. Ganie Bhat at Watkaloo.	32.00	1100.00	64000	30	Untied Grants	A/B

Project Authority: District Development Commissioner Budgam/ Director School Education

Position of Funds: Budgeted/Committed.

Position of AAA: Accorded

Position of TS: Sanctioned

1. The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	26/09/2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	26/09/2026
3	Bid submission Start Date	26/09/2026
4	Bid Submission End Date	06/10/2026 upto 5.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids	07/10/2026 11.00 AM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (deposited in MH: 0059) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora (tender inviting authority) and Earnest money / Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR/ BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora (tender receiving authority).

Note:- The Date of Treasury Challan and Earnest Money / Bid security must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date. Any deviation shall render the bidder as Non-responsive.

2.1 The 1st lowest responsive (Successful) Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/ BG in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora (Tender receiving authority) within 15 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after successful completion of Defect Liability Period (DLP) of the work. The CDR/ FDR/ Bank Guarantee should be valid till DLP period. The Date of Performance Security should be after the date of issuance of Letter of acceptance. Failure to produce Performance Security shall render the L1 as non- responsive and case for debarring of the Contractor for a period of 01 Year shall be forwarded to Higher Authorities.

3. At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/ BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e., Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora. Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/ BG @ 5% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the total cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period. In case of failure to produce Performance Security shall render the L1 as non-responsive and case for debarring of the Contractor for a period of 01 Year be forwarded to Higher Authorities.

18. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form).

No 4476-86
DATED: 26/09/2026

DIPK-6180-26
DT: 28/09/2026

Executive Engineer
R&B Division Chadoora

CMYK

CMYK

CMYK

Asian Games: Vithya Ramraj dedicates record-breaking bronze to twin sister Vidya, thanks to government support



IAN S

NAGOYA: Vithya Ramraj dedicated her record-breaking bronze medal in the women's 400m hurdles at the Asian Games 2026 to her twin sister Vidya, while expressing gratitude to the government and organisations that supported her journey as she rewrote the national record set by legendary athlete P. T. Usha.

"I dedicate this medal to my twin sister, Vidya Ramraj," Vithya told IANS after her bronze-medal-winning performance on Monday.

Asked about the reason behind the dedication, Vithya said, "Because she is always there for me. She always supports me. Whenever I ask her for anything, she sends it to me. I'm happy."

Vithya also acknowledged the support she has received from the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), her state government, JSW and Indian Railways, with which she is employed.

"TOPS is supporting me so much, and my state government is supporting me so much. JSW and Indian Railways — I'm working in the Railways — are also supporting me so much. That's why I came here,

and now I'm so happy. I'm not facing any struggles nowadays, so I'm happy," she said.

Her success comes after years of struggle for Vithya and her family. Recalling the challenges they faced while growing up, she said their family had lived in a rented house and faced questions about the future of the three daughters.

"Before, we were staying in a rented house. When we were growing up, people used to say, 'The children are getting older, what are you going to do?' Even my grandmother and father were told, 'You have three girls, so what are you going to do with them?'" she said.

Vithya's father worked as a driver and earned around Rs 15,000, but continued to support his daughters despite the financial difficulties.

"He is a driver. He used to earn around Rs 15,000, so we didn't have much. Even the shoes used to cost Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000 back in 2009. He still spent that money on us. When my twin sister and I were doing two sports together, everything — dresses, shoes and equipment — cost too much, but he managed to do it. That's why we are here," Vithya said.

The 28-year-old also

credited her coach for believing she could break the 55-second barrier, admitting that she herself did not initially believe it was possible. "No, I didn't believe it. Only my coach believed it. I believe in my coach, so whatever he says, I do. For so many years, I have been doing what he has told me to do. That's what happened," she said.

Vithya won the bronze medal in the women's 400 metres hurdles final with a personal best time of 54.75 seconds, thereby beating the previous national record of 55.42 seconds, which had been set by PT Usha at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

At the 2023 Asian Games, Vithya achieved the same result as Usha and also secured a bronze medal. Three years later, she at last went beyond the mark, which had been one of the longest-standing records in Indian athletics.

Although the Indian athlete stayed in the running for a medal throughout the race, she was unable to equal the late burst of Mariam Kareem from the UAE, who won the gold medal with a Games record time of 54.31 seconds; Adelina Zems of Kazakhstan secured silver with a personal best of 54.58 seconds.

Lakshya Raichandani's unbeaten 210 put India U19 in firm command against Australia U19

IAN S

RAJKOT: Carrying his rich white-ball form seamlessly into red-ball cricket, opener Lakshya Raichandani produced a masterclass in endurance and strokeplay by slamming an unbeaten 210 as India Under-19 took total control of the first Youth Test against Australia Under-19 by finishing day two at a formidable 430/8.

In response to Australia Under-19's first-innings total of 217, India Under-19 managed to take a commanding 213-run lead at the Niranjan Shah Stadium, thanks to Raichandani's marathon 256-ball knock, laced with 20 boundaries and four sixes.

Raichandani found a brilliant ally in local lad



Mohit Ulva, with the duo completely deflating the Australian attack through an unbroken ninth-wicket stand of 137 runs. Ulva launched a blistering assault on the tired visitors by racing to 58 not out off just 56 deliveries, a knock featuring five boundar-

ies and four maximums, before stumps arrived.

Resuming the day from eight for no loss, India Under-19 faced early tremors on a surface that gradually eased out, as Sagar Virk and Kushagra Ojha fell early. But skipper Yashbardhan Singh Chau-

han joined Raichandani to stitch a crucial 124-run third-wicket partnership that steadied the innings.

While Raichandani set a brisk pace to reach his half-century in 69 balls, Chauhan exercised initial patience before accelerating smoothly to score 54 off 81 balls with seven hits to the fence. With temperatures soaring and the Australian bowlers tiring, both batters looked set for hundreds before Barton took out Chauhan to break the stand.

Australia Under-19 briefly clawed their way back into contention as Connor Gregory and Green tightened the screws by taking out India Under-19 batters. Despite the falling wickets at the other end, Raichandani held firm and found

support in Ayaan Akram, who came into the side as a replacement for injured Pranav Ragavendra, by adding 51 runs for the seventh wicket.

Gregory removed Akram and Ishan Om in quick succession to briefly shift the momentum back toward Australia Under-19. But any hopes the visitors had of wrapping up the India Under-19 innings were dashed as Raichandani and Ulva snatched control back with a dazzling late-afternoon counter-attack.

Raichandani brought up his magnificent double-century with a boundary towards the closing stages of the day. The Australian Under-19 bowling attack was made to toil endlessly, as they used seven bowling options.

Asian Games: Kapil thrashes Kim Gichae in men's 90kg QF to confirm India's sixth boxing medal

IAN S

NISHIO: Indian boxer Kapil Pokhariya registered a thumping 5-0 win over South Korea's Kim Gichae in the men's 90kg quarterfinal at the Nishio Gymnasium here on Monday.

Kapil was the far superior boxer in the bout, winning the votes of all five judges in his favour, with four of them giving him a 30-27 ruling, while one gave him a 30-26 card. Kapil's dominance assured India of their sixth boxing medal at the ongoing game.

The Indian pugilist clinched the first round 5-0 with his fierce punches landing on target. Kapil kept bossing the second round too with his hits and also inflicted a standing count against Kim to take it 5-0. Kapil made some clever and occasional hits in the third round, knowing that he had done enough in the previous two rounds to win the bout and move into the semis.

He will now face 2025 World Championships gold medallist Turabek Khabibullaev in the semi-final.



India have had a fruitful campaign so far in boxing at the Asiad. All three boxers in action today won their respective bouts, with Priya Ghanghas and Lovlina Borgohain winning their respective bouts. Priya assured herself of a medal in the women's 60kg category after a unanimous 5-0 win over Tajikistan's Mijgona Samadova in the quarterfinals.

Earlier in the day, Lovlina confirmed herself of a medal as well with a strong 5-0 win in the women's 75kg quarterfinal against Korea's Seong Suyeon.

India got assured of

three medals on Sunday as well when Ankush Panghal, Parveen Hooda and Narender won their bouts.

Ankush, the current Commonwealth Games champion, assured India of their first boxing medal at the ongoing Games after defeating Tajikistan's Nekruz Salimov in the men's 80kg quarterfinals by a unanimous decision of 5-0.

Meanwhile, Parveen also booked herself a medal in the women's 65kg category after defeating Uzbekistan's Navbakhor Khamidova by 5-0 in the quarterfinal.

Kapil backs Indian golfers to make mark at Asian Games

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Legendary cricketer and DP World Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) president Kapil Dev on Monday backed India's golfers to make their mark at the Asian Games in Japan, urging the six-member contingent to play fearlessly and draw inspiration from the honour of representing the country.

Kapil extended his best wishes to the Indian men's and women's teams ahead of the golf competition, which will feature Yuvraj Sandhu, Saptak Talwar and Veer Ahlawat in the men's section and Aditi Ashok, Diksha Dagar and Pranavi Urs in the women's event.

"Representing India at the Asian Games is the highest honour. I extend my best wishes to Veer, Saptak, Yuvraj, Aditi, Diksha and Pranavi as they prepare to compete for the country in Japan," Kapil said in a statement issued by the PGTI.

"Each of them has earned this opportunity

through determination, discipline and consistently strong performances. They possess the talent, experience and temperament to perform successfully on this major international stage," he added.

Kapil, who captained India to their maiden ODI World Cup triumph in 1983, also called on the golfers to embrace the pressure of representing the country and approach the competition with confidence.

"My message to them is simple: believe in yourselves, play fearlessly and give it everything you have. The responsibility of representing the country should inspire you to raise your game," he said.

"Stay focused, trust your preparation and play every shot with pride. The entire Indian golfing fraternity is behind you. Go out there, compete hard and make India proud," Kapil added.

The Indian men's trio will be making its Asian Games debut, with all three having considerable experience on international tours.

Ethan Mbappé banned for 3 Champions League games for elbowing opponent in Lille's loss to Betis



AGENCIES

NYON: Ethan Mbappé will serve a three-game ban in the Champions League for his red card in an opening loss against Real Betis, UEFA said Monday.

Mbappé had been

charged with "assaulting another player" for striking Betis defender Natan with an elbow during the Spanish side's 3-2 win at Lille three weeks ago. Natan had appeared to say something as he passed

behind Mbappé, whose reaction was spotted on video review.

It was just a third career game in the Champions League for the 19-year-old younger brother of Real Madrid star Kylian Mbappé.

Ethan Mbappé faced a mandatory ban for Lille's visit to Arsenal on Oct. 13 and now also will miss hosting Galatasaray and an away game at Bodo/Glimt. He can return Nov. 25 when Lille hosts Bayern Munich.

Mbappé is currently with the France Under-21 team playing qualifying games for the European Championship, being co-hosted in June by Albania and Serbia.

British Indian schoolgirl Bodhana Sivanandan crowned youngest chess grandmaster

AGENCIES

LONDON: Indian-origin chess prodigy Bodhana Sivanandan has been crowned the youngest Woman Grandmaster (WGM) while representing England at the 46th Chess Olympiad in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

The 11-year-old London schoolgirl is the youngest chess player in history to earn the WGM title after becoming the youngest person to represent England internationally in any sport, when she played for the English Chess Federation at age nine.

The International Chess Federation (FIDE) confirmed her latest milestone after she played all 11 rounds on England's top board — a position assigned to the team's top player — and finished the tourna-



ment with eight points on Sunday.

"I'm happy to do it, but I want to keep going and keep making history as well, instead of just stopping here," Bodhana told FIDE.

Her success over the weekend has earned her a second International Master (IM) norm, which takes her another step closer to becoming an international master.

"I like travelling and also because I do full-time school as well, it links to loads of

school subjects, so it's really useful there as well," said the schoolgirl, who lives with her family in Harrow in north-west London.

Bodhana is famously a self-taught genius, having first picked up chess during the COVID pandemic lockdown when her father Siva's friend was going back to India and gave her some bags which contained a chessboard.

Last month, she became Britain's youngest-ever Women's Chess Champion at the 2026 British Chess Championships in Coventry and has been topping records as one of the youngest players on the circuit for the past few years now. In the faster formats of the game, Bodhana is already the UK Open Women's Blitz Champion and joint British Women's Rapid Champion.

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SCHEDULE

29 SEPTEMBER 2026

TUESDAY

THE VVAAN

HINDI

11:00 AM

05:40 PM

UA 16+

MIRZAPUR: THE MOVIE

HINDI

01:50 PM

05:40 PM

A

AVENGERS : ENDGAME ENCORE

3D ENGLISH MS - INFINITY VISION WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLE

11:00 AM

02:40 PM

06:20 PM

UA 16+

HEART OF THE BEAST

ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

12:05 PM

03:25 PM

08:30 PM

UA 16+

TASRUFDAAR

DJINNS OF KASHMIR

KASHMIRI , URDU WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

02:20 PM

UA 13+

TICKETS AT FLAT

₹99 & 199

EXCLUDING

AVENGERS : ENDGAME ENCORE