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'Operation Sindoor'

Benchmark For Modern Warfare: Rajnath



REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said Operation Sindoor highlighted the importance of operational preparedness, integrated planning and precision in modern warfare, as he stressed the need to strengthen India's defence capabilities against evolving security challenges.

Addressing participants of Exercise Tarang Shakti 2026 at Air Force Station Jodhpur, Singh, said future military power would depend on the speed of detecting threats, understanding situations, making decisions and acting.

"Future military power will be defined less by the number of platforms we possess. It will be determined by the speed of sensing, understanding, deciding, and acting," he said.

The Defence Minister said Operation Sindoor demonstrated the Indian Air Force's ability to conduct precise,

calibrated and effective operations in furtherance of national security objectives. "The operation underlined the importance of credible deterrence and the effective application of air power in a complex security environment," he said.

Singh said modern warfare was expanding beyond land, sea and air to include space, cyber, the electromagnetic spectrum and the information domain, with drones, artificial intelligence, electronic warfare and long-range precision weapons increasingly shaping military operations.

Stressing self-reliance, Rajnath said India must develop indigenous capabilities to design, manufacture, maintain and upgrade critical defence technologies, while building partnerships with trusted countries. "The defence relationships of the future will be about technology and trust, not just about platforms," he said.

He highlighted **●P-06**

■ GCC Summit 2026

J&K Open, Ready For Global Capability Centres: LG Sinha

Says GCC Can Become Vital Part Of Jammu Kashmir's Industrial Ecosystem

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir is "open and ready" for Global Capability Centres (GCCs), Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said Saturday, expressing full confidence that in the next 10 years GCCs can become a vital part of the Union Territory's industrial ecosystem.

"I see Global Capability Centres in the same spirit of courage and confluence and together they can generate a strength far beyond their separate capabilities," LG Sinha said while addressing the Valedictory Session of the J&K Global Capability Centre (GCC) Summit 2026.

He said that Jammu Kashmir is poised to emerge as a significant destination for Global Capability Centres, driven by its young talent, improving infrastructure, investor-friendly policies and growing innovation ecosystem.

Congratulating IIM Jammu, NASSCOM, partner institutions and the administration for successfully organising the two-day summit, the Lieutenant Governor urged participants to reflect on a key question about why companies seeking their next talent hub, innovation centre and capacity destination should Jammu Kashmir be their preferred choice and work together with a strong resolve to make it a reality.



Drawing inspiration from the world's highest railway arch bridge over the Chenab River, the Lieutenant Governor said that Jammu Kashmir today reflects the confidence and ambition required to pursue transformational goals. He observed that the Chenab itself, formed through the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers, symbolises the spirit of collaboration. In a similar manner, GCCs bring together the global expertise, capital and technology of multinational enterprises with the talent, aspirations and imagination of Jammu Kashmir's youth to create new opportunities for growth and innovation.

The Lieutenant Governor noted that India is home to more than 2,100 GCCs employing over 19 Lakh professionals and contributing substantially to exports. He highlighted that an increasing number of GCCs are expanding beyond metropolitan centres into Tier-II and Tier-III cities, demonstrating that India's talent pool is now widely distributed across the country. He said that this presents both an opportunity and a responsibility for Jammu **●P-06**

■ STRONG FINANCIAL SUPPORT, LOWER OPERATING COSTS, SPECIAL INCENTIVES FOR pioneering multinational investors, the return of local talent, first-mover advantages for early GCC entrants and opportunities in niche sectors such as agri-tech, tourism-tech and handicraft digitisation position Jammu Kashmir as an attractive GCC destination."

Gulmarg Receives Fresh Snowfall



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Light rain lashed parts of Kashmir on Saturday, while higher reaches, including Gulmarg, witnessed fresh light snowfall as the Meteorological Centre Srinagar forecast generally dry weather across Jammu and Kashmir for most days over the coming week.

According to the weather department, a brief spell of light rain is likely at scattered to many places on Saturday, with light snowfall over higher reaches.

The department has forecast generally dry weather on October 11 and 12.

According to the forecast accessed, on October 13 and 14, the weather is likely to remain generally cloudy, with light rain and thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds at many places. Higher reaches may receive light snowfall during this period.

The weather is expected to remain generally dry on October 15 and 16, although brief spells of light rain may occur at a few places.

From October 17 to 22, the weather is likely to remain generally dry across Jammu and Kashmir, according to the forecast.

Meanwhile, **●P-06**

INDIA Bloc's Protest Over SIR 'Baseless': LoP Sharma

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Sunil Sharma on Saturday termed the INDIA bloc's proposed protest over alleged electoral irregularities "baseless", accusing opposition parties of politicising the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and attempting to create unrest in the country.

Speaking to media persons, Sharma, defended the Election Commission of India (ECI), saying it is a constitutional institution and that questioning the poll body in this manner was not good for democracy.

"The Chief Election Commissioner is a constitutional institution of India. It is not a person; it is an institution," he said.

On the SIR exercise, the senior BJP leader said electoral rolls needed to be updated by removing the names of



deceased and ineligible voters and correcting errors. The process, he argued, was necessary to ensure that only eligible Indian citizens remained on the lists.

The LoP asserted that citizens were alert and would not allow the country to witness situations similar to those in Nepal and Bangladesh.

Reacting to PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's reported comparison of Kashmir with Delhi, he said the situation in Kashmir had changed, **●P-06**

New Media Policy To Be Framed Within 4 Months: Sakina Itoo

Calls For Responsible Journalism, Accountability On Social Media

JAHANGEER GANAIE

KULGAM: The Jammu and Kashmir government has set a four-month deadline to formulate a comprehensive new media policy, Minister for Health and Medical Education Sakina Itoo announced, signalling a significant regulatory shift for the Union Territory's rapidly evolving media landscape.

"Healthy criticism is always welcome, but targeting someone's dignity without reason is unacceptable," the Minister said, stressing that constructive criticism should be distinguished from personal attacks.

On media-related issues, Itoo said the government would formulate a new media policy within the next four months.



She said the policy would seek to address issues concerning the media landscape while underlining the importance of professional standards, responsible reporting and accountability in the use of digital platforms.

She said professional journalism must be respected, adding that those who misuse social media should also be held

accountable for their actions.

Itoo said that there is need for responsible communication and the need to maintain a balance between freedom of expression and accountability.

The Minister emphasised that criticism remains an important part of public discourse, while maintaining that it should be exercised responsibly and without unnecessarily harming an individual's dignity.

She reiterated that the government's focus on skill development was aimed at creating opportunities for educated youth to become economically independent and contribute to the region's development.

Asserting that the government aims to make youngsters self-reliant by **●P-06**

CAT Directs J&K Govt To Examine Regularisation Claims Of 12 Rej Employees

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT), Srinagar Bench, has directed the Jammu and Kashmir government to examine the regularisation claims of 12 Rehbar-e-Janglaat employees in accordance with its existing policy and relevant government orders, and issue a reasoned decision, preferably within eight weeks.

The direction comes as a significant development for the employees, who completed five years of service in 2022 but have been awaiting regularisation under the government's policy.

The Tribunal directed the competent authorities to consider the applicants' claims in light of Government Order No. 155-FST of 2017 and subsequent orders governing the regularisation of Rehbar-e-

Janglaat employees. Kashmirtravel guide

Under Clause VIII of the 2017 policy, employees completing five years of satisfactory and continuous service are eligible for consideration for regularisation, subject to fulfilment of the prescribed

THE TRIBUNAL, however, did not order the immediate regularisation of the employees.

conditions.

The applicants maintained that despite completing the stipulated service period, their cases had not been settled, prompting them to approach the Tribunal for relief.

While examining the matter, the Tribunal took note of the government's **●P-06**

'J&K Will Always Remain Part Of India': New Delhi Rebukes Pakistan At UN

GMK NEWS NETWORK

UNITED NATIONS: India hit back at Pakistan at the United Nations, saying it was "regrettable" that Islamabad continued to misuse the world body's platform to spread "lies and falsehoods" about the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Exercising its Right of Reply in the Fourth Committee of the UN General Assembly on Friday under the agenda item on decolonisation, India said Jammu and Kashmir "is and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India".

Mewar said that in the last few months, the Pakistani armed forces and their proxies had killed dozens of innocent civilians who were



agitating for their basic rights, freedoms and basic necessities.

Member of Parliament Mahima Kumari Mewar delivered India's response after a statement by Pakistani

about the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir," she said.

Mewar said a country like Pakistan, with an "established" record of military dictatorship, sham elections, incarceration of popular elected leaders, religious extremism and sponsoring terrorism as an instrument of state policy, should in future refrain from "preaching homilies" at the platform.

India also called on Pakistan to stop what it described as grave and ongoing human rights violations in the areas illegally occupied by it, where, it said, the population was in open revolt against Pakistan's military occupation, repression, brutality and illegal exploitation of resources.

Houthi Hit Saudi Capital's Airport

AGENCIES

RIYADH: Several people have been injured in an attack on an international airport in the Saudi capital, reports say, just days after Yemen's Houthi rebels claimed two successful attacks on the hub.

King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh was evacuated after a loud blast was heard on Saturday, two international news agencies have reported.

More than a dozen ambulances were seen rushing to the airport, according to Reuters, citing an eyewitness. Saudi authorities have not commented, while the airport told passengers to check with their airline before travelling there.

The attack comes a day after authorities said three Saudi nationals, including a pilot, were killed in two attacks by the Iran-backed Houthis the day prior.

Another three people were killed in Houthi attacks on two Saudi airports on 6 and 7 October.

A source at a local hospital told news agency **●P-06**

CM Calls For Future-Ready Education Beyond Examinations

Says Critical Thinking, Digital Literacy Must Be Integral To Learning



GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Saturday called for a future-ready education system that prepares children for life beyond examinations, equipping them with critical thinking, digital literacy, adaptability and a strong sense of responsibility.

The Chief Minister was addressing the School Leader of the Year 2026 Summit & Awards in New Delhi, which brought together leading educators, school principals and institutional heads to

celebrate excellence, innovation and leadership in K-12 education.

Emphasising the role of school leaders in nation-building, Omar Abdullah said principals and headteachers do much more than administer schools. They shape the learning environment, values, aspirations and future of young minds. Strong leadership, he said, is fundamental to building safe, inclusive, innovative and student-centric institutions.

The Chief Minister underscored that education must focus on the **●P-06**

3rd Edition of Kashmir Marathon: Div Com reviews Preparations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg Saturday chaired a meeting to review the preparations for the 3rd Edition of the Kashmir Marathon, taking stock of the arrangements being made by the nodal Tourism Department and other stakeholder departments for the smooth and successful conduct of the event.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Director Tourism, and officers from the departments of Information, PHE, KPDCL, R&B, SMC, YSS, Health, JKTDC, Hospitality and Protocol, SSCL, SRTC, Agriculture, Sports Council, LCMA, SDRF, Police, Fire and Emergency Services, and other concerned departments.

During the meeting, it was informed that the Kashmir Marathon will be held on October 25, with a three-day Marathon Expo scheduled to be organised at Polo Ground. The event has attracted significant international participation, with 67 foreign nationals from 12 countries having registered so far.

Both the full marathon, covering 42.19 kilometres, and the half marathon, spanning 21.09 kilometres, will be conducted on the same day in the morning. To ensure the safety and well-being of participants, 17 aid stations will be established along the marathon route to provide necessary assistance.

Addressing the meeting, the Div Com directed



all concerned departments to nominate nodal officers to ensure effective inter-departmental coordination and timely execution of assigned responsibilities.

Emphasising the need to enhance the visual appeal of the marathon route, he called for beautification through the placement of potted flowers. He also directed the Roads and Buildings Department to conduct a thorough inspection of the route and ensure that all potholes are filled to provide a smooth and safe running surface. The concerned authorities were further instructed to undertake the pruning of trees along the marathon loop.

Highlighting the importance of maintaining the scenic beauty of Srinagar, the Divisional Commissioner stressed the need to ensure cleanliness around Dal Lake. He also directed the deployment of volunteers at appropriate locations and the establishment of medical camps with adequate staff to address any health-related emergencies

during the event. Meanwhile, the Traffic Police was directed to publicise designated parking locations well in advance to facilitate participants and ensure the smooth regulation of vehicular movement on the day of the marathon. The Srinagar Municipal Corporation and Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited were directed to ensure the proper functioning of streetlights along the marathon route. The Sports Council was instructed to make lighting arrangements at Polo Ground for the smooth conduct of the event.

The SMC was further directed to ensure proper cleanliness and sanitation along the marathon route and at the inaugural venue.

The Divisional Commissioner emphasised that close coordination among all stakeholder departments and timely completion of preparatory measures would be essential for the successful organisation of the 3rd Edition of the Kashmir Marathon.

JKCPJ Marks World Mental Health Day with Chapter 7 of ‘Let’s Connect’

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Marking World Mental Health Day, the JK Centre for Peace and Justice Foundation (JKCPJ) organised Chapter 7 of its community-based initiative, Let’s Connect, at Bagh-e-Shagufa, Nigeen, Srinagar, bringing young people together for a day centred on mental well-being, meaningful conversations, and human connection.

The gathering aimed to highlight the importance of creating safe, inclusive, and non-judgmental spaces where young people can express themselves, share experiences, and feel heard. In a world where conversations around mental health are increasingly necessary, the initiative emphasised that emotional well-being is not merely an individual responsibility but also a collective one, shaped by the communities and relationships we build.

Observed globally on October 10, World Mental Health Day serves as an opportunity to raise awareness, challenge stigma, and



encourage conversations around mental health. Through Let’s Connect, JKCPJ seeks to take this conversation beyond a single day by creating opportunities for young people to connect with themselves and others in an environment rooted in empathy, trust, and mutual understanding.

Speaking on the occasion, Nadir Ali, Director of JKCPJ, highlighted the importance of building communities where mental well-being is treated as an everyday priority rather than an occasional conversation.

“Mental health cannot be addressed through

awareness alone; we must also create spaces where people feel safe enough to speak, listen, and be themselves without the fear of judgment. Through Let’s Connect, we want to remind young people that they do not have to navigate every challenge alone. Sometimes, a meaningful conversation and the feeling of being understood can be an important first step towards seeking support,” Ali said.

Reflecting on the experience, Aleefa, a participant, spoke about the value of having a space where individuals can express themselves freely. “We often ask people

how they are doing, but we rarely pause to understand what they might actually be going through. Spaces like Let’s Connect give us the opportunity to speak without feeling judged and to listen without feeling the need to have all the answers. It reminds us that our feelings matter and that being heard can make a difference,” Aleefa said.

Fadil, another participant, emphasised the importance of human connection in conversations around mental well-being.

“In our everyday lives, we sometimes get so caught up in our own routines that we forget the importance

of simply being present for one another. Let’s Connect reminds us that we do not always need to offer solutions or advice; sometimes, listening, understanding, and making someone feel less alone is enough to begin with,” Fadil said.

Let’s Connect is a community initiative of JKCPJ designed to bring people together through conversations, creative engagement, reflection, and peer connection. The initiative seeks to encourage emotional awareness, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and foster a culture in which seeking support is viewed without stigma.

With Chapter 7, the initiative continued its effort to establish spaces where mental well-being is approached through everyday acts of listening, empathy, and understanding. The gathering at Bagh-e-Shagufa served as a reminder that while World Mental Health Day provides an important moment to reflect, the responsibility to care for mental well-being extends throughout the year.

Budgam admin bids farewell to outgoing DC, ADDC, ACR



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: A farewell function was Saturday organised at District Budgam to bid farewell to Deputy Commissioner Budgam Athar Aamir Khan, Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Vivek Agarwal, and Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Afroza Bano, on their transfer to new assignments.

The function was attended by SSP Budgam Hariprasad KK, ADC Budgam Mehraj-ud-Din Shah, and senior officers and officials of the district administration, who appreciated the dedicated services and contributions of the outgoing officers during their tenure in the district.

SSP Budgam, in his remarks, appreciated the close coordination and cooperation extended by the outgoing officers to the police administration. He said their leadership and collaborative approach contributed significantly towards strengthening inter-departmental coordination and ensuring

effective delivery of public services.

ADC Budgam appreciated the guidance and support extended by the outgoing Deputy Commissioner and other officers. He said their commitment to public service, accessibility and focus on timely resolution of public issues had left a positive impact on the district administration.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Budgam expressed gratitude to all officers and officials for their cooperation and teamwork during his tenure. Appreciating their dedication and commitment towards official duties, he described the district administration as “one of the finest teams” he had the opportunity to work with.

“The achievements made during my tenure are a result of the collective efforts, hard work and professional commitment of the entire team. I sincerely appreciate every officer and official for their dedication, teamwork and willingness to go the extra mile in the interest of public service,” he said.

District Admin Anantnag bids Warm Farewell to ADDC

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: The District Administration Anantnag Saturday accorded a warm and heartfelt farewell to Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Anantnag, Vikas Ahlawat, at the DC Office Complex, in recognition of his dedicated service, commitment to public welfare and valuable contributions to the administration.

The farewell function was attended by Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, ADC Muzamil Ahmad Beigh, Assistant commissioner revenue Tariq Ahmad Malik, SDM Pahalgam, Chief Planning Officer (CPO), besides other district officers and officials of the DC Office Complex.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner, appreciated the dedication, professionalism and commitment demonstrated by Vikas Ahlawat during his tenure in the district. He described his work ethic and dedication

to public service as a guiding light for fellow officers, stating that his sincerity, hard work and administrative capabilities had set a positive example for others to follow.

The DC also acknowledged his valuable contribution towards strengthening administrative efficiency, ensuring effective implementation of developmental initiatives and addressing public concerns. He expressed confidence that Ahlawat would continue to serve with the same zeal, commitment and professionalism in his new assignment.

Other officers present on the occasion also lauded the contributions of Vikas Ahlawat and appreciated his cooperative approach, administrative acumen and dedication to duty. They observed that working with him had been a valuable learning experience and that his hard work, leadership and commitment would be remembered by the officers and officials of the district.

Info Dept Kulgam organises seminar on Social Media Ethics

DC calls for responsible use of social media

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Information Department Kulgam, in collaboration with Government Degree College (GDC) Kulgam, Saturday organised a seminar on “Social Media Ethics” under the Youth Engagement/Empowerment Plan at GDC Kulgam to sensitise students about the responsible and ethical use of social media.

Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, was the Chief Guest at the event.

The programme commenced with a street play organised by the Information Department and performed by local artists, highlighting the importance of responsible online behaviour and awareness about the potential risks



associated with social media.

Following the street play, District Information Officer (DIO) Kulgam, Showkat Hussain Ganie, delivered the inaugural address, highlighting the importance of social media ethics and responsible online behaviour. He emphasised the need to use social media judiciously, verify information before sharing and avoid spreading misinformation.

Following his address, the DIO delivered a presentation and led an interactive session debating and

highlighting various issues related to social media, including responsible posting, appropriate online behaviour, AI use, digital etiquette and the importance of exercising caution while sharing information on digital platforms.

Prof. Adil Bashir Bhat, GDC Kulgam presented the expert talk on digital literacy.

Principal, GDC Kulgam, Prof. Dr. Mohd Abass Shah addressed the gathering, stressing the importance of digital literacy, online safety and ethical conduct in the digital space.

KVK Anantnag organises Awareness Workshop on Farmers’ Rights



GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Anantnag, SKUAST-Kashmir, in collaboration with the Directorate of Extension, SKUAST-K and PPV&FRA Branch Office, Palampur, organised a one-day Awareness-cum-Training Workshop on the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers’ Rights (PPV&FR) Act.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large gathering of progressive farmers, women farmers, agricultural entrepreneurs, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), scientists and departmental officials, reflecting growing awareness about the importance

of protecting farmers’ innovations and conserving Kashmir’s rich agricultural biodiversity.

The programme was graced by Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-K, as Chief Guest, alongside distinguished academicians, senior scientists and officers from various line departments.

In her address, Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth underscored the vital contribution of farming communities in preserving indigenous genetic resources and maintaining agricultural diversity. She emphasised that traditional crop varieties represent not only a valuable biological resource but also the collective wisdom,

cultural heritage and resilience of generations of farmers. She called for strengthening awareness, documentation and registration of farmers’ varieties to ensure that their contributions receive due recognition and protection under the law.

Dr. Ishtiyaq A. Khan, Senior Scientist & Head, KVK Anantnag, highlighted the indispensable role of farmers as custodians of traditional agricultural knowledge and valuable genetic resources. He emphasised the need for greater institutional support, scientific documentation and legal recognition of indigenous crop varieties conserved by farming communities over generations.

DC Kulgam discusses arrangements for Veshow Festival-2026

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Saturday chaired a meeting at Mini Secretariat Kulgam to discuss arrangements for the upcoming Veshow Festival-2026.

During the meeting, department wise responsibilities were fixed and the need for coordinated efforts among

all concerned departments to ensure the successful organisation of the annual festival was emphasized. The officers were directed to make necessary arrangements well in advance and ensure the availability of all facilities, logistics, services for the visiting public.

The concerned departments were instructed to establish stalls showcasing government schemes, depart-

mental activities, services, local products, handicrafts and other initiatives.

Emphasis was laid on promoting the district’s cultural heritage, literary activities, trade, art and crafts, local cuisine and entrepreneurial potential through the festival. The concerned departments were asked to ensure active participation and fulfil their assigned responsibilities in a timely manner.

District Admin Ganderbal bids Warm Farewell to DC Jatin Kishore

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: The District Administration Ganderbal Saturday accorded a warm and affectionate farewell to Deputy Commissioner, Jatin Kishore, on his transfer from Ganderbal to Budgam, with officers and officials expressing their appreciation for his leadership, dedication and significant contributions towards the development and welfare of the district during his tenure as Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal.

During the farewell function, officers from various departments lauded his administrative acumen, professional commitment and people-centric approach, recalling his efforts towards strengthening governance, expediting developmental works and ensuring effective delivery of public services. They appreciated his leadership in fostering coordination among departments and addressing public grievances with



sincerity and promptness.

The officers particularly appreciated his role in the successful conduct of the Mata Kheer Bhawan Mela and the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, highlighting the comprehensive arrangements, meticulous planning and effective inter-departmental coordination that ensured the smooth conduct of these major religious events. His emphasis on the convenience, safety and welfare of pilgrims was also acknowledged.

His contributions towards the implementation and monitoring of Centrally Sponsored Schemes, flagship government programmes and developmental initiatives

were also appreciated. The speakers highlighted his focus on administrative efficiency, accountability, transparency and timely execution of works, besides his efforts to ensure that the benefits of various government schemes reached eligible beneficiaries.

The officers described his tenure as one marked by dedicated public service, responsive governance and a strong commitment to the overall progress of Ganderbal. They also recalled his approachable nature, leadership qualities and ability to motivate officers and officials to work collectively towards common developmental goals.

DC B'pora inaugurates Second 'Waqar Knowledge and Youth Empowerment Centre'

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Saturday inaugurated the second Waqar Knowledge and Youth Empowerment Centre at Arin, established by the District Administration Bandipora with the support of the Indian Army to promote education, career guidance and youth empowerment.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by guest of honour Irfan Ahmad Lone, who qualified the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2025 with All India Rank 957, besides senior officers of the district administration and the Indian Army, students, youth and a large number of local residents.

Addressing the gathering, Irfan Ahmad Lone, a specially abled resident of Mirpora, Naidkhai, Sonawari, shared



his journey of overcoming challenges while pursuing his academic and professional goals. An alumnus of Hindu College, University of Delhi, and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), he encouraged youth to remain determined, work hard and smart, and never lose hope despite failures and adversities.

Appreciating the District Administration Bandipora for establishing such platforms, he said the centres could play a vital role in guiding young people towards education, employment and other constructive opportunities.

Speaking on the occasion,

the Deputy Commissioner said that Irfan Ahmad Lone’s achievements and determination were an inspiration for all, demonstrating how consistency and perseverance could help overcome challenges and achieve goals despite adverse circumstances.

The Deputy Commissioner formally dedicated the centre to the people of Arin and thanked the Indian Army for its valuable support in establishing the facility. She urged local residents to take ownership of the centre and ensure its proper maintenance and effective functioning for the benefit of the community.

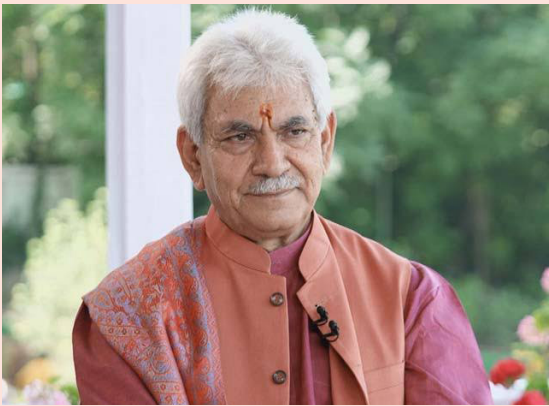
NEWS

LG Sinha greets people on Navratri

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Saturday extended his heartiest greetings to the people on the eve of Navratri, which commences tomorrow, October 11, 2026.

In a message, the Lieutenant Governor said: "Greetings and warm wishes to everyone on the auspicious occasion of Navratri. As the nine sacred days of prayers of Maa Durga begin, we celebrate the eternal triumph of truth, righteousness and virtue over evil. May Goddess Durga shower her divine blessings upon every family, bestowing good health, happiness and prosperity."



ness and virtue over evil. May Goddess Durga shower her divine blessings upon every family, bestowing good health, happiness and prosperity."

Shift in funding norms of Jal Jeevan Mission

J&K left to raise Rs 2354 crore for retrofitting schemes

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The change in funding norms under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) has left Jammu & Kashmir with a major financial challenge, as the Union Territory will have to arrange Rs 2354 crore to complete 1426 retrofitting schemes.

Under the framework of JJM-2, retrofitting projects - schemes taken up for improvement and upgradation of water supply systems built before the launch of the Mission - will no longer receive central assistance, compelling the UT to mobilize resources on its own. "For retrofitting schemes numbering 1,426, balance cost of Rs 2354 crore is required. Jal Shakti Department (JSD) can complete all the

schemes during the current financial year if funds are made available," documents accessed state.

Under Jal Jeevan Mission-1, retrofitting schemes were centrally funded with a 90:10 cost-sharing pattern for Jammu & Kashmir (90% central share, 10% UT share). Retrofitting schemes involve the upgradation and improvement of existing water supply systems that were built before the launch of the Mission.

According to documents, the Jal Shakti Department has repeatedly approached the Finance Department since September 2025, and again under Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) in March 2026, seeking absorption of funds likely to be surrendered under SASCI.

This year, the department requested augmentation of the UT Capex and suggested provision of Rs 500 crore within the approved allocation of the PHE sector by reducing the UT (CSS) share, citing reduced requirement therein.

The Finance Department, however, advised waiting for the outcome of the House Committee's investigation report. The House Committee initially conveyed it was finalizing its report, but later declared itself functively office-meaning it had ceased to hold authority after its term expired on May 31, 2026.

In August 2026, JSD again proposed allocation of Rs 1700 crore under SASCI, but no releases have been made so far—(KNO)

Chief Justice interacts with Judicial Officers

Addresses Kashmir Advocates Association at Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Justice High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Dr. Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati, Saturday interacted with judicial officers in the Conference Hall of the District Court Complex, Srinagar, and later attended a felicitation programme organised by the Kashmir Advocates Association.

During the interaction with judicial officers, Chief Justice emphasised the importance of discharging judicial responsibilities fearlessly, compassionately and with unwavering commitment to the rule of law. He highlighted the vital role of the judiciary in safeguarding citizens' rights, ensuring access to justice and maintaining public confidence in the justice delivery system.

Chief Justice stressed that collective responsibility, mutual trust and institutional harmony were essential for strengthening the functioning of courts. He encouraged judicial officers to work collaboratively, uphold the highest standards of judicial conduct and foster a peaceful and conducive working environment.



duct and foster a peaceful and conducive working environment.

He expressed satisfaction with the professional competence and dedication of judicial officers serving in the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and underscored the importance of continuous learning and guidance from senior judicial officers.

At the outset, Naseer Ahmad Dar, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, welcomed the Chief Justice on behalf of the judicial officers of the district.

He expressed gratitude for the interaction and reaffirmed the commitment of the District Judiciary, Srinagar, to quality adjudication, timely disposal of cases and reduction of pendency.

Later, the Kashmir Advocates Association organised a felicitation programme at the District Court Complex, Srinagar, to welcome the Chief Justice.

Speaking on the occasion, Adv. Waseem Gul, President of the Kashmir Advocates Association, extended a warm welcome to the Chief Justice on behalf of the legal fraternity and also welcomed the newly appointed Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar.

Highlighting the role of the District Court as the first accessible forum of justice for ordinary citizens, the Association President emphasised the importance of a constructive partnership between the Bench and the Bar.

Police intensify crackdown against drug traffickers, 2 held in Anantnag

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday arrested 02 drug peddlers in separate NDPS cases in Anantnag and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

In a statement issued, a police spokesperson said in the first incident, a police party of Police Post Bus Stand, while conducting routine patrolling at Prem Gali, Bus Stand Anantnag, apprehended a suspected

person identified as Bilal Ahmad Magloo son of Manzoor Ahmad Magloo resident of Wagay Mohallah, Achabal. During his search, charas was recovered from his possession.

He said that in another incident, during the evening hours, a police party of Police Station Dooru apprehended a person, identified as Mohd Sabir Bumla resident of Hangipora, at Kapran, Dooru. During his search, approximately 07 grams of heroin was recovered from his possession.

"Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at the respective police stations, and further investigation has been initiated," he said.

J&K Police remains committed to intensifying its efforts against drug trafficking and dismantling the drug network. The public is urged to cooperate with police and share credible information about drug-related activities to help build a drug-free society.

Baramulla Police Unravel Multiple Theft Cases in Pattan, Kreeri

SSP Underscores Community Vigilance, Institutional Accessibility

IRFAN TILGAMI

BARAMULLA: In a concerted drive against property offenses across north Kashmir, the District Police Baramulla achieved a substantial breakthrough, successfully resolving several theft cases registered within the twin administrative subdivisions of Pattan and Kreeri.

Addressing an official media briefing convened at Pattan, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Baramulla, Gurinder Pal Singh, delineated the operational outcomes, confirming the conclusive disposal of five major property theft investigations. Of these, three cases were investigated and solved by Police Station



Pattan, while the remaining two were cracked by the operational detail at Police Station Kreeri.

The briefing was attended by key supervisory and operational officers of the sub-division, including the Sub-Divisional Police Officer

Pattan, SDPO Kreeri, SHO Pattan, SHO Kreeri, the In-Charge Police Post (DO) Mirgund, alongside accompanying territorial formations.

Lauding the coordinated investigative work that led to the recovery and

tracing of stolen property, SSP Gurinderpal Singh emphasized the critical imperative of an unhindered institutional interface between civil society and the law enforcement apparatus. He reaffirmed that multi-tiered administrative avenues remain fully accessible to the public for grievance redressal and localized security concerns.

"Our core mandate is anchored in public safety and welfare. Citizens should harbor no reservations in bringing institutional or civic grievances to our notice. Multi-echelon access points spanning from the jurisdictional SHO and SDPO to the offices of the SSP and

the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) remain open to ensure swift, accountable intervention," the SSP stated.

Underscoring that responsive policing is contingent upon actionable public trust, the district police chief noted that sustained community surveillance and early intelligence-sharing remain vital to preempting organized property theft and maintaining district-wide tranquility.

He reiterated the department's firm commitment to zero-tolerance enforcement against criminal infractions while sustaining citizen-centric outreach across Baramulla.

J&K Police recover huge cache of arms, ammunition in Sopore

Big blow to terror networks; recoveries include 2 rifles, 4 pistols, 11 grenades, 3 IEDs



WARIS FAYAZ

SOPORE: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition in North Kashmir's Sopore area.

An official said that recoveries include two assault rifles, four pistols, 11 hand grenades and three improvised explosive devices (IEDs). "It's a huge blow to terror networks in Sopore," the official added.

While sharing the details, the officer said, "Sopore Police on a tip-off launched a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in the Mukaam Cherhar forest falling under the jurisdiction of Police Station Bomal this morning."

He said, "During the search, a blue barrel and a bag were found concealed beneath a large boulder. The Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) was subsequently called to the spot for examination and safe handling of the suspected explosive material."

"The recovered cache included an AK-47 and an AK-76 assault rifle, along with seven magazines and ammunition. Four pistols, four magazines and ammunition were also seized. The recovery

further included a Multi Grenade Launcher (MGL) with five rounds, 11 hand grenades, three IEDs fitted with remote controls, eight detonators and two timers. Other material, including a Y-SMS set, prima cords, wires, battery cells, IED-related components and miscellaneous accessories, were also recovered," the official added.

He said the material has been taken into possession in accordance with legal procedures and necessary safety precautions. "In this connection, FIR No. 66/2026 has been registered at Police Station Bomal under Sections 13, 18, 20 and 23 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), Sections 7/25 of the Arms Act and Section 5 of the Explosive Substances Act," the official said, adding, "Further investigation is underway to establish the source of the recovered material, and identify those involved in concealing the cache and ascertain possible terrorist linkages."

"Recovery of arms and ammunition is a significant achievement in the ongoing counter-terrorism efforts in the area," the official added—(KNO)

Rainawari residents left high and dry as water crisis stretches beyond week

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Residents of Dewath Wali Pora in Srinagar's Rainawari have been grappling with a water shortage for more than a week, with regular supply yet to be restored despite repeated assurances from Public Health Engineering (PHE) officials.

Locals said that water is supplied only for a brief spell between 7 am and 8 am, while taps remain dry throughout the evening, forcing households to manage their daily needs with limited water.

Residents said the disruption followed maintenance work announced by the department on September 27. They said that despite bringing the issue to the attention of the concerned PHE staff, including the local lineman and inspector, the problem remains unresolved. "We approached the concerned staff and were assured that the matter would be resolved, but nothing has changed. We are still facing the same problem, with water available only for an hour in the morning and no supply in the evening," local resident Numan Rafiq told KNO. Residents questioned the delay in restoring an essential service, saying repeated assurances had done little to ease their daily struggle for water.—(KNO)

Mawlid-e-Masood SAW celebrated at Nowhatta shrine

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Mawlid-e-Masood (SAW) was celebrated with religious fervour and devotion at Ziyarat Qutb Alam Hazrat Bahauddin Ganj Baksh (RA) in Qutubdinpora, Nowhatta, Srinagar, with devotees gathering to mark the auspicious occasion.

In a statement issued, a spokesperson said Mawlid-e-Masood SAW, was celebrated with religious fervour, devotion and enthusiasm at Ziyarat Qutb Alam Hazrat Bahauddin Ganj Baksh (RA), Qutubdinpora, Nowhatta, Srinagar. He said on the auspicious occasion, the Valley's renowned Maulood Khwan and religious preacher, Janab Al-Haj Syed Mohammad Ashraf Kamli, recited the Maulood, filling the spiritual gathering with devotion and reverence for Prophet Muhammad SAW.

Satish Sharma lays foundation stones for development projects in Chhamb

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FS&CA), Information Technology (IT), Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, Saturday laid foundation stones for five important infrastructure projects aimed at strengthening the rural connectivity, improving veterinary healthcare and addressing the developmental needs of local communities.

The projects included construction of road connecting New Mattoo with Old Mattoo, road from Panjtoot to Thanger Pattian, a culvert at Kacharial, veterinary hospital at Millan Di-Khui in Panchayat Samwan and link road connecting Bandowala with Upper Pallanwala. The initiatives are aimed at improving the road connectivity, facilitating access to essential services, supporting agricultural and allied activities, and improving the overall quality of life of people in the area.

The Minister said that infrastructure development remains a key priority, with emphasis on projects that directly address the day-to-day concerns of people and strengthen the foundations of rural development.



oment. He said that well-connected villages, accessible healthcare facilities and dependable public infrastructure are essential for balanced regional growth and the economic well-being of rural communities.

Laying the foundation stone for the road connecting New Mattoo with Old Mattoo, Satish Sharma emphasised the importance of strengthening internal road networks to facilitate smoother movement and improve connectivity between adjoining habitations. The project is expected to make daily commuting more convenient for the residents and improve access to educational institutions, healthcare facilities, markets and other essential services.

The Minister also laid the foundation stone for road from Panjtoot to Thanger Pattian. He said that better road connectivity helps farmers transport agricultural produce, facilitates the movement of people and goods, and contributes to the overall socio-economic development of rural areas.

socio-economic development of rural areas.

Emphasising the need to ensure that development reaches every habitation, Satish Sharma observed that roads are vital links between communities and opportunities. He said that sustained investment in rural connectivity would help address the local infrastructure gaps, reduce difficulties faced by residents and strengthen the region's development potential.

While laying foundation stone for the culvert at Kacharial, the Minister underscored the importance of strengthening the local infrastructure to ensure safer and smoother movement. The construction of the culvert is expected to improve accessibility and facilitate the movement of residents and commuters, particularly during adverse weather conditions. He stressed that such infrastructure interventions play an important role in improving the public convenience and ensuring more reliable connectivity.

Anxiety, depression top mental health concerns in Kashmir: Experts

Say prolonged stress, unemployment, family pressures main factors

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances and substance use are among the common mental health problems reported by patients visiting hospital outpatient departments in Kashmir, with psychiatrists expressing concern over the growing psychological pressures faced by adolescents and young people.

Experts say prolonged psychosocial stress, economic uncertainty, unemployment, family and societal expectations, academic competition and excessive screen time are among the factors contributing to the mental health burden in the region.

Dr Yasir Hassan Rather, Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, said that anxiety disorders, clinical depression, sleep disturbances, substance-related problems and stress-related conditions were among the most frequently encountered mental health issues in hospital OPDs.

"In the Kashmiri context, prolonged psychosocial stress, economic uncertainty, unemployment, family pressures and societal expectations can contribute to the increasing mental health burden. Among adolescents, academic and career-related pressures, excessive screen time and substance use are additional concerns," he said.

Dr Rather said young people were increasingly exposed to social media-related stress, unhealthy comparisons, pressure to maintain a perfect appearance, body-image concerns and the fear of missing out. He added that cyberbullying, online harassment and contact with cyber predators could further compromise their safety and psychological well-being.

"Bullying, exclusion, humiliation, peer pressure and difficulties in maintaining friendships at school can contribute to anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and social withdrawal," he added. The psychiatrist said that mental health problems and substance use were closely linked and required greater public awareness, timely identification and appropriate professional intervention. He urged parents, teachers and caregivers to remain attentive to warning signs such as sudden changes in mood or behaviour, social isolation, declining academic performance, disturbed sleep and expressions of hopelessness.

"Any indication of self-harm or suicidal thoughts must be taken seriously and addressed with immediate, compassionate support and urgent professional help," Dr Rather said. He said stigma remained a major barrier, forcing many people to suffer silently rather than seek professional assistance. "The message on World Mental Health Day is that mental health conditions are treatable, early intervention matters, and seeking help from a mental health professional should be seen as a sign of strength, not weakness," he added.

Psychiatrist Dr Abrar Guroo said this year's World Mental Health Day theme, "Lived Experiences Heard: Real Voices, Real Change," highlighted the importance of incorporating the experiences of patients and their families into the planning and delivery of mental health services.

"In Kashmir, we often discuss mental health through statistics and expert opinions, but people who have lived through these conditions and their families know best what helps, what hurts and what is missing," he said. Dr Guroo said mental health services should be designed not only around clinical requirements but also around the practical experiences of patients, their families and caregivers.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Kashmir's Handicrafts Need More Than Promises

Nearly 4.45 lakh people in Jammu and Kashmir depend on the handicrafts and handloom sector for their livelihoods. Behind this figure lies the story of generations of artisans whose hands have kept Kashmir's cultural identity alive, often at the cost of their own economic security. Their skills have earned international admiration, but recognition alone cannot guarantee them a dignified livelihood. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's emphasis on strengthening the handicrafts and handloom sector is, therefore, significant. His announcement of measures aimed at improving artisan incomes, protecting traditional crafts and opening new markets brings an important question into focus: can Kashmir's rich craft heritage be converted into lasting economic security for the people who sustain it? For centuries, Kashmir's artisans have produced some of the finest handicrafts in the world. Pashmina, papier-mâché, carpets, walnut wood carving, crewl embroidery and traditional handloom products are not merely commodities. They represent the history, imagination and cultural character of Kashmir. Yet, the people responsible for preserving this heritage frequently struggle to secure fair returns for their labour. The irony is difficult to ignore. Kashmiri handicrafts command admiration in international markets, but many artisans remain trapped between rising production costs, limited bargaining power and the uncertain availability of buyers. In several cases, the greatest share of the final selling price goes to intermediaries, while the artisan who creates the product receives only a fraction of its value. This is where government intervention must go beyond announcements and translate into tangible change.

The proposed fivefold increase in Geographical Indication (GI) certification capacity could be an important step towards protecting the authenticity of Kashmir's traditional products. GI recognition can help distinguish genuine Kashmiri crafts from imitations and strengthen their identity in competitive markets. But certification must be accompanied by effective monitoring, consumer awareness and strict action against the sale of counterfeit products under the name of Kashmir.

A certificate has little meaning for an artisan if it does not improve the price received for a genuine product. The real test will be whether GI recognition reaches the workshop, the loom and the household where these crafts are produced.

Similarly, the proposed Unity Malls in Srinagar and Jammu, estimated to cost Rs 200 crore, could create new opportunities for local artisans and traditional craft producers. If properly planned and managed, these centres could provide a platform for authentic Kashmiri products, attract buyers and strengthen the connection between artisans and markets.

However, infrastructure alone cannot revive a struggling industry. The success of these malls will depend on how much space is reserved for genuine artisans, whether participation remains affordable, and whether products are sold under transparent arrangements that ensure fair returns to their creators. Such centres must not become merely another layer between the artisan and the customer. The government must also recognise that the future of handicrafts depends on the survival of the artisan's household. Many traditional skills are being threatened because younger generations see little financial security in pursuing the occupations of their parents and grandparents. When a craftsman cannot meet household expenses through years of specialised work, appeals to preserve heritage become difficult to sustain.

Regular access to affordable credit, modern design training, digital marketing, e-commerce platforms and direct links with domestic and overseas buyers can help change this reality. Artisans also need timely payments, protection from exploitation and social security that reflects the uncertain nature of their work. Special attention must be given to women artisans, home-based workers and economically weaker families who often remain invisible in the formal market. The government should consider establishing a transparent mechanism to assess artisan incomes and monitor the impact of its schemes. The number of certifications issued, exhibitions organised or outlets opened may indicate administrative activity, but the more meaningful indicators are improved earnings, growing demand for authentic products and the number of families able to continue their traditional occupations with dignity.

There is also a need to connect Kashmir's handicrafts with its tourism economy. Visitors should be encouraged to purchase authentic products directly from recognised artisans and producer groups. Tourist markets, hotels, cultural centres and online platforms can become important channels for expanding sales, provided authenticity and fair pricing remain central to the arrangement. Kashmir's handicraft sector should not be viewed merely as a cultural attraction or a source of decorative products. It is a major livelihood network supporting hundreds of thousands of people, and its health has a direct bearing on household incomes, employment and the preservation of inherited skills. The figure of 4.45 lakh people dependent on this sector should serve as a reminder of the responsibility involved. Each artisan represents a family, a tradition and a body of knowledge that cannot easily be recreated once lost. The government's stated initiatives offer an opportunity to address longstanding concerns, but their value will ultimately be measured by the difference they make in the lives of artisans. Kashmir does not lack craftsmanship, creativity or international recognition. What it needs is a system that ensures the people behind its celebrated products receive a fair share of the wealth their skills generate. Preserving handicrafts means preserving more than objects of beauty. It means protecting the dignity of those who make them, sustaining the knowledge passed down through generations and ensuring that Kashmir's cultural pride does not become an inheritance remembered only in museums and photographs. If the hands that create Kashmir's heritage are forced to abandon their craft for want of a livelihood, the loss will be far greater than economic. It will be a loss of identity itself.

■ Hearing The Unheard

Why Awareness Isn't Enough Anymore

With Billions Affected Directly Or Indirectly By Mental Health Challenges, This Year's Theme Calls For Greater Understanding, Accessible Care, And Meaningful Participation In Decisions That Shape People's Lives.



SHOIAB MOHAMMAD BHAT

Every year, World Mental Health Day is celebrated on October 10, aimed at increasing people's awareness of their mental well-being. The theme of 2026 is "Lived Experiences Heard: Real Voices, Real Change." The theme stresses the significance of hearing out people who have had experience with mental illnesses and getting their input in creating health-care policy and services.

Mental well-being is an important component of well-being. It plays a role in how individuals cope with emotions, socialize, react to problems, and handle day-to-day tasks. Emotional problems, however, are not always obvious. An individual can still go to work, attend classes, and take care of his or her family even though they are struggling.

Understanding the Global Mental Health Situation

The magnitude of the problem can be understood through the recent estimates made by the World Health Organization (WHO). The number of people with a mental disorder in the year 2023 was roughly 1.2 billion individuals, which is almost one in seven people in the world. Young people also require particular attention. WHO reports that approximately one in seven adolescents aged 10–19 experiences a mental disorder. Academic pressure, bullying, family difficulties, social isolation, and uncertainty about the future can affect their emotional well-being.

The results of WHO publications, World Mental Health Today, and Mental Health Atlas 2024 reveal advances but point out serious shortcomings in the sphere of provision of services for mental health problems around the world. These documents were prepared before the United Nations High-Level Meeting on noncommunicable diseases and mental health and well-being promotion organized in New York on September 25, 2025.

Moreover, the findings demonstrate different impacts of mental health problems

on women and men. While the prevalence of mental problems is different depending on sex and the type of disorder, the majority of people suffering from mental problems are women. The most common mental disorders among both women and men are anxiety and depression disorders.

Suicide Prevention Requires Greater Attention

Suicide remains one of the most serious public health concerns worldwide. According to WHO estimates, approximately 727,000 people died by suicide in 2021. Suicide is a leading cause of death among young people across countries and socioeconomic settings. Despite international efforts, progress in reducing suicide mortality remains too slow to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of reducing suicide rates by one-third by 2030. Based on the trajectory reported by WHO, the expected reduction is only around 12 per cent by that deadline. This gap highlights the urgent need for stronger prevention measures, early identification and accessible mental health services.

The prevention of suicide requires collaboration among the family, educational institutions, health care professionals, communities and even governments. Those who are undergoing intense emotional distress should receive proper assistance without discrimination and stigmatization. Proper communication and education will also help people identify when they require assistance.

Why Lived Experiences Matter

The 2026 theme highlights an important gap in the way mental health services are planned. People may be invited to share their personal stories, yet their views are sometimes missing when important decisions are made. The 2026 theme underscores the issue of exclusion in planning for mental health services. The individuals can be given an opportunity to tell their stories; however, their perspectives are not taken into account in decision-making.

According to the WHO's Mental Health Atlas 2024, there are still gaps that exist in terms of mental health policies, services, and resources among nations. The findings highlight the importance of enhancing community-based care and involving people with lived experiences in service planning and evaluation.

Individuals who have experienced challenges with their mental health can highlight barriers that other people fail to



notice. It is possible to understand why the treatment was hard to access, why the person felt alienated, or why the service did not work properly.

Listening should therefore go beyond awareness events. People should have opportunities to participate in planning, delivering and evaluating mental health services. Their involvement must be voluntary, and their privacy should always be respected.

India's Mental Health Challenge

India also needs sustained efforts to improve mental health awareness and access to treatment. The National Mental Health Survey of India, conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) in 2015–2016, estimated that 10.6 per cent of adults were experiencing mental morbidity at the time of the survey. The study also identified substantial treatment gaps across mental health conditions.

These figures come from an older survey and should not be treated as current estimates for 2026. However, they remain an important reference point for understanding the challenges facing mental healthcare in India.

Stigma, lack of awareness, financial constraints, and lack of access to competent professionals hinder individuals from getting help. Improvement of healthcare systems, provision of accurate information and connection between communities and competent professionals is part of the efforts in solving such challenges.

The Environmental Cost Of Himalayan Pilgrimage



LALIT GARG

The Himalayas are not merely a range of mountains; they are the foundation of India's cultural consciousness, spiritual faith and natural life. Their lofty peaks bear the memories of ancient penance and meditation, their rivers sustain the lives of millions, and their valleys have been home to countless sacred shrines that have drawn devotees for centuries. Himachal Pradesh, along with the wider Himalayan region, is blessed with numerous important Hindu pilgrimage sites. Visiting these sacred places is an expression of faith for millions. Unfortunately, in recent years, the distinction between pilgrimage and tourism has increasingly blurred.

Entertainment, recreation and consumer-driven lifestyles are gradually overshadowing spiritual contemplation, placing an ever-growing burden on the fragile Himalayan environment. The Himalayas possess a unique natural beauty, but their ecological sensitivity is also their greatest vulnerability. The soil in high-altitude regions is thin, vegetation regenerates slowly, and waste decomposes far more slowly than it does in the plains. Yet, thousands and even millions of people converge on these environmentally delicate areas. Long queues of vehicles, mounting pressure on parking facilities, unplanned expansion of hotels and roadside eateries, plastic bottles, food wrappers, polythene bags and disposable products are steadily damaging the natural beauty and ecological balance of the mountains.

Reports indicating that more than 800 tonnes of waste had been collected during the Char Dham Yatra by mid-September this year bring the gravity of the crisis into sharp focus. The accumulation of 50.30 tonnes of waste in the highly sensitive Kedarnath region between

April and August is particularly alarming. These figures deserve serious attention because a plastic bottle discarded at a high altitude is not simply a piece of litter. It can remain in the environment for years, threatening the soil, water sources and wildlife. The irony is profound: people visit these sacred places seeking inner purification, restraint and renunciation, yet leave behind a trail of waste. Can such a journey truly be called a pilgrimage? A pilgrimage is not merely about reaching a temple; it is also an inward journey that transforms the human being. If we bow our heads before a deity and then throw plastic into the very mountains whose sanctity brought us there, our faith remains incomplete.

In this context, the 'Carry Me Back' campaign offers an encouraging ray of hope. Nearly 5,000 pilgrims reportedly carried back more than 12 tonnes of compressed plastic waste from an approximately 18-kilometre stretch. This demonstrates that when pilgrims are made active participants in environmental protection, they can make a substantial difference. The initiative is not merely about collecting rubbish; it seeks to transform the very mindset with which people undertake pilgrimages. Such campaigns should be expanded and implemented across Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and other Himalayan pilgrimage destinations. The experience of the Amarnath Yatra also offers valuable lessons. The expansion of reusable utensils and water-refilling facilities reportedly helped reduce waste per pilgrim by 15 per cent, even as the number of pilgrims increased by 17 per cent. This demonstrates that environmental pressure can be reduced when convenient, practical and scientifically designed alternatives are made available. Appeals to pilgrims alone are not enough. Administrations must establish systems in which environmentally responsible behaviour becomes the easiest and most natural choice.

The uncontrolled increase in crowds at religious and tourist destinations in Himachal Pradesh is part of this larger crisis. During peak seasons, Shimla, Manali, Dharamshala, Chamunda, Jwalamukhi, Chintpurni, Naina Devi



and other destinations face mounting pressure on transportation, water supply, sewage systems, solid-waste management and local resources. Mountain regions cannot withstand the same level of human pressure as cities in the plains. Therefore, the popularity of a pilgrimage or tourist destination should not be measured merely by how many people it attracts.

The time has come to replace the assumption that 'more tourists mean more development' with a more responsible principle: the more ecologically sensitive a destination is, the more carefully tourism must be managed. Every pilgrimage and tourist destination should undergo a scientific assessment of its carrying capacity, and the number of daily visitors should be regulated accordingly, taking seasonal conditions into account. Single-use plastics must be effectively restricted, water-refilling stations expanded, and deposit-and-return systems introduced for bottles and packaging. Waste should be segregated at source, while shopkeepers, hotel operators and vendors must be held accountable for the waste they generate.

Most importantly, the mindset of pilgrims must change. The mountains are not playgrounds for our amusement; they are a priceless natural heritage that belongs to future generations. The river beside which we offer our prayers sustains millions of people living downstream. The forests we capture in our photographs maintain the ecological balance of the mountains. And when we revere a mountain as Devbhoomi,

the land of the gods, throwing plastic on its slopes is an insult to the very faith we profess. Episodes of extreme rainfall, floods, landslides and avalanches in Nepal and across the Himalayan region have repeatedly warned us that interference with fragile mountain ecosystems can have grave consequences. It would not be scientifically sound to attribute every natural disaster directly to tourism or pollution. Nevertheless, unplanned construction, excessive human pressure, forest degradation and inadequate waste management can intensify the vulnerability of mountainous regions and aggravate the consequences of extreme weather events.

Today, the Himalayas are increasingly becoming a landscape of mounting environmental concerns. Over the past few decades, particularly in Himalayan states, natural resources have been exploited indiscriminately in the name of development, while religious tourism has contributed to pollution on a substantial scale. Construction activities that disregard environmental regulations and ecological realities have further compounded the risks of floods and landslides. This raises a fundamental question: what should be the true measure of development in mountain states? Where construction is genuinely necessary, it must be undertaken through scientific planning, strict environmental safeguards and designs capable of withstanding the region's natural hazards. Unfortunately, large structures have often been erected in the name of

promoting tourism and pilgrimage without adequately considering their vulnerability to floods and landslides or their impact on the environment. In many instances, the caution and accountability expected from government authorities have been lacking. Development that endangers human lives and destroys the natural foundations of a region cannot be called sustainable progress.

The Himalayas give us an extraordinary range of gifts, water, forests, biodiversity, climate regulation, cultural heritage and spiritual inspiration. In return, our responsibility extends far beyond offering prayers at their sacred shrines. We must also protect the natural world that makes these places sacred. If a pilgrim can carry a bottle of water up a mountain, there is no reason why the empty bottle cannot be carried back down. This simple act of responsibility can become the foundation of a much larger transformation. Faith and environmental protection are not opposing forces; they are complementary expressions of the same sense of reverence.

The true spirit of a pilgrimage is fulfilled only when a devotee returns from a temple carrying not just sacred offerings, but also a renewed commitment to protecting nature. Governments must create effective systems, local communities must participate actively, and pilgrims must pledge to bring their waste back with them. Only through such collective responsibility can the sanctity of the Himalayas be preserved.

Calling the Himalayas Devbhoomi is not enough to protect them. Their sanctity can be preserved only when we treat them with the reverence, restraint and responsibility that a divine land deserves. A pilgrimage must purify not only the pilgrim's heart but also the pilgrim's conduct towards nature. Let every journey to the Himalayas become a commitment to leave the mountains cleaner, the rivers purer and the environment safer than we found them. That is the true meaning of pilgrimage, an expression of gratitude towards nature, and our moral obligation to generations yet to come.

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Don't Normalise The Abnormal

How Abusive Language, Street Harassment, And Objectification Are Degrading Kashmir's Culture



SHAHID PARVAIZ YATOO

It was a routine Monday morning on campus when I stepped onto the college grounds, only to be met by a group of three young men casually hurling explicit slurs at one another and laughing off the profanity as standard banter. Moments later, one of them stepped forward and attempted to forcibly hand an object to an unknown female student who was repeatedly and visibly refusing.

Later that same day, aboard an overcrowded smart bus, the atmosphere shifted from uncomfortable to heart-breaking. A female passenger broke down in tears, crying out that a male commuter had been harassing her. Just a few meters away, oblivious or indifferent, two young boys continued to exchange loud, abusive language while onlookers, including children and elders, sat in silence.

These everyday encounters point to a troubling societal shift: the normalization of friendly abusive culture and the growing insecurity of women in public spaces. Harassment and casual profanity are entirely foreign to our Tehzeeb, our values, and the essence of Kashmiriyat. Our cultural heritage is deeply rooted in mutual respect, dignity, and moral restraint that once served as a guiding light for humanity.

Having worked closely with thousands of students through student welfare and youth initiatives, I frequently receive complaints from female students facing persistent boundary violations. In one instance, a female student reported that a male peer continually stalked and pressured her into a relationship despite her clear refusal,

ultimately escalating to sexual harassment. In another case, male students created a private messaging group to share unauthorized photographs of their female batchmates to generate derogatory memes; we immediately escalated the matter to college authorities to ensure intervention. On numerous occasions, young women have reported having their phone numbers harvested to receive unsolicited and inappropriate messages.

While there is a formal legal architecture to address these violations, and as a student of Public Administration and Cyber Security, I consistently advocate for reporting such incidents to the Cyber Police and relevant administrative bodies, a deeply concerning pattern persists: most victims are terrified to pursue legal recourse or even make the incident public.

The root cause lies in societal hypocrisy. The same society that casually adopts westernized slurs and trivializes street harassment turns around to judge, scrutinize, and socially isolate the victim. Fearing social stigma and public humiliation, young women feel compelled to remain silent. This public silence and victim-blaming grant offenders total immunity, reinforcing their belief that their predatory behavior is acceptable.

We must reflect on our cultural roots. In earlier times, whether traveling in buses, walking through neighborhoods, or gathering at home, Kashmiris relied on gentle discourse and the wisdom of our elders (pranan hinz kathi) to express emotion or even anger. When a child made a mistake, elders invoked blessings and mercy rather than resorting to profanity. Today, we witness a rapid erosion of this etiquette. While slang existed in small pockets historically, its daily, unchecked usage and the creation of explicit new vocabulary mark a drastic departure.

This shift is heavily fueled by unmonitored social media access. Slang spreads like wildfire (yikun reh tukun tekir) through peer groups, rapidly objectifying women in everyday



language. It is a stark irony that a society which once did not tolerate a child uttering a single disrespectful word in front of an elder is now casually adopting explicit profanity in everyday life.

Some may dismiss traditional norms as conservative, but preserving moral boundaries and basic public decency is not conservative; it is essential human etiquette. Modernization does not mean adopting abusive language or tolerating public harassment on our streets. The proliferation of short-form 10-second reels and local digital comedy shows, where crude jokes and gutter language are normalized for cheap laughs, has contributed to a form of brain rot that desensitizes the public.

While street harassment remains rampant offline, digital platforms have magnified the issue exponentially. Women who attempt to post educational or meaningful content online are frequently subjected to relentless trolling, gender-based character assassination, moral policing, and explicit threats. Consequently, many female voices are forced to deactivate their accounts, self-censor, and retreat entirely from public discourse, effectively depriving them of their fundamental Right to Life and Personal Liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution.

In recent years, our region has witnessed a disturbing surge in gender-based crimes, exploitation rackets, and cases of abuse perpetrated by fake faith healers. Yet, public reaction often defaults to moral policing rather than systemic accountability.

When tragic incidents occur, such as the recent high-profile violence against women reported across the country, the immediate societal reaction is to question why the victim was out past dusk, rather than confronting the predatory mindsets that render public spaces unsafe.

When elders attempt to correct youth using abusive language or playing vulgar media in public, the response is often devoid of shame, met with dismissive remarks like "cze chya mani Kabri wasun" (Do you have to enter my grave?).

The scale of gendered abuse in Jammu & Kashmir is clearly reflected in official statistics. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data submitted to Parliament reveals that registered crimes against women in the Union Territory stood at 3,405 in 2020, peaked at 3,937 in 2021, and remained consistently high with 3,716 in 2022, 3,653 in 2023, and 3,366 in 2024. Crucially, offences under IPC Section 354 (BNS Section 74), which explicitly cover outraging a woman's modesty through street harassment, verbal abuse, and

catcalling, form the largest single share of these offences, representing nearly half of all reported cases. Parallely, Lok Sabha data confirms a steady rise in cybercrimes, proving that harassment has migrated heavily into digital spaces. Yet, as the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) highlights, formal statistics capture only a fraction of the reality, while everyday street catcalling and comment-section abuse remain buried under social stigma and enforced silence.

Victims of street harassment and digital abuse are not without legal defense; our legal framework offers explicit protections. The Constitution of India guarantees the Right to Live with Dignity under Article 21. Under penal law, IPC Section 509 (BNS Section 79) specifically criminalizes words, gestures, or abusive language intended to insult a woman's modesty, while IPC Section 354D (BNS Section 78) protects against both physical and cyber-stalking. Furthermore, the Information Technology Act (Sections 66E and 67) provides strict penalties for publishing obscene content and violating privacy. Citizens can report digital abuse through the official National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (cybercrime.gov.in), dial the 181 Women Helpline, or contact local Cyber Police units. The law exists; what is urgently required is dismantling the social stigma that prevents victims from utilizing these legal remedies.

Remaining silent in the face of normalized abuse is equivalent to consent. It is the collective responsibility of families, educators, community leaders, and content creators to actively challenge and call out abusive language in real time. We must stop asking women to adapt to harassment and instead reclaim respect in both physical and digital spaces. Before we preach "Protect Your Daughter," we must first commit to educating our sons.

The author actively works on youth advocacy, public policy, and student welfare in Kashmir. He can be mailed at shahidparvaizyatoo@gmail.com

GCC Summit - New Socio-Economic Opportunities For J&K

OMKAR DATTATRAY

It is no hearsay, no exaggeration, but a total and undiluted as well as concentrated truth that the Meadeen GCC summit will heap economic opportunities on Jammu and Kashmir and will boost the economic growth of this region. A historic opportunity knocks at the door of J&K, which will transform this Himalayan region into an emerging hub of technology, innovation, investment and skilled employment. Jammu and Kashmir stands at an important crossroads in its economic journey. Blessed with natural beauty, a rich cultural heritage, an educated and aspirational younger generation, and enormous potential in tourism, agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, and handicrafts, the UT now has an opportunity to diversify its economic foundations and create new avenues of prosperity.

The J&K Global Capability Centre (GCC) Summit 2026, scheduled for 9–10 October 2026 at IIM Jammu, represents an important initiative in this direction. Organised by IIM Jammu in collaboration with the government of Jammu and Kashmir, with NASSCOM as its knowledge partner, the summit aims to attract investments, generate skilled employment and establish Jammu & Kashmir as an emerging destination for technology-driven enterprises. More than 300 delegates, including policymakers' industry leaders, investors, and academic experts, are arriving to participate in the first-ever GCC summit at IIM Jagti Jammu.

The summit is significant because it offers J & K an opportunity to look beyond traditional economic activities and participate in the rapidly expanding global digital economy. Its success, however, will ultimately depend on whether the discussions lead to actual investment, new business employment opportunities and sustainable economic development. Before examining its economic implications, it is important to understand what a Global Capability Centre actually is? A Global Capability Centre is a facility established by a company to undertake specialised business operations, technology development, research, analytics and other strategic functions. These centres often serve the company's operations across multiple countries.

Unlike a conventional outsourcing arrangement, a GCC generally operates as an integral part of the parent company's organisational structure. India has emerged as a major destination for such centres because of its large talent pool, technological capabilities established business ecosystem and



comparatively competitive operating costs. The summit organisers identify India's GCC ecosystem as a substantial source of employment and export earnings, with opportunities increasingly extending beyond traditional metropolitan centres to Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. This changing geographical pattern creates an opportunity for Jammu & Kashmir. For decades, the principal destinations for India's technology industry have included Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Chennai, Mumbai and Gurugram. However, companies are increasingly interested in exploring additional locations that can provide skilled employees, reliable infrastructure, competitive costs, and a supportive business environment. Jammu & Kashmir can seek to benefit from this diversification. The GCC Summit is therefore not merely another business conference. It is an opportunity to introduce J&K to an expanding segment of the global economy and develop a credible strategy for attracting technology-intensive investment.

Why the GCC Summit is important for J&K- The economic challenges confronting Jammu & Kashmir require a comprehensive and forward-looking response. Traditional sectors such as tourism, horticulture, agriculture, handicrafts and government services remain important sources of economic activity. Nevertheless, the region also needs industries capable of generating high-value employment, attracting private investment and providing sustainable career opportunities to educated young people. A well-developed GCC ecosystem could contribute to these objectives in several ways. First, it could attract companies that bring capital, technology and professional expertise into the region. Second, it could create employment opportunities for graduates in computer science, engineering, manage-

ment, commerce, mathematics, and other disciplines.

Third, it could encourage the establishment of supporting enterprises, including cybersecurity firms, software-development companies, professional training institutions and business-service providers. Fourth, it could help diversify the economy by reducing excessive dependence on a limited number of traditional sectors. Finally, it could strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's integration with India's national technology ecosystem and international business networks. The Summit's stated agenda includes investment promotion, policy facilitation, workforce development, technology and innovation and the preparation of a roadmap for developing J&K as a GCC destination. These objectives are particularly relevant at a time when young people increasingly aspire to careers that offer professional growth, financial independence, and exposure to international business. The central challenge is to convert these aspirations into opportunities within Jammu and Kashmir itself.

The greatest potential benefit of the GCC initiative lies in its capacity to create skilled employment. Unemployment and underemployment among educated young people remain important concerns for Jammu and Kashmir. However, the availability of educational qualifications does not automatically translate into suitable employment. The establishment of GCCs could gradually change this situation. Many positions could offer young professionals opportunities to develop specialised skills and gain experience working with international organisations.

One of the most social benefits would be the possibility of reducing employment-driven migration. When qualified young

people leave J&K due to a shortage of jobs, the region loses not only talent but also a part of its future entrepreneurial capacity. Many young professionals who migrate establish their careers elsewhere, while their families remain in Jammu, Srinagar or other places in J&K. When GCCs and relevant technology businesses develop locally, some of these professionals may be able to build successful careers without permanently leaving their home region. The objective should be to create a growing ecosystem of high-quality employment rather than to treat the summit as an instant solution to unemployment.

The decision to host the summit at IIM Jammu is strategically important. Jammu has several characteristics that could support the development of a technology and business-services ecosystem. The presence of IIM Jammu provides an institutional platform for discussions involving business leaders, policymakers, management professionals and academic experts. The summit could help position Jammu as a potential destination for companies seeking to expand beyond India's largest technology centres.

Although the summit is going on in Jammu at present, its benefits should extend throughout the UT. J&K have different geographical, economic, and institutional characteristics. Both should have an opportunity to participate in the emerging digital economy. Srinagar, with its educational institutions, professional workforce, urban infrastructure and established business community, could potentially support GCC operations. One of the associated features is the digital economy. It offers an important advantage: not every professional must work in a large metropolitan office. Certain technology and business functions can be undertaken remotely or through distributed teams, provided the necessary infrastructure, security and operational arrangements are in place. This would create opportunities for qualified young men and women living outside Jammu and Srinagar. The broader objective is to make the digital economy accessible to talented people across this region irrespective of their geographical location.

Artificial intelligence, machine learning, cloud computing, automation and data analytics are transforming the way companies operate. GCCs increasingly undertake sophisticated functions that go beyond routine back-office activities. Depending on the company, they may contribute to product development, research, technology strategy, and the design of new digital services. The region could develop specialised capabilities in selected fields. Potential areas include arti-

ficial intelligence, cybersecurity, financial technology, cloud computing, Data analytics, Engineering & research. One of the principal questions confronting the GCC initiative is whether J&K's existing workforce possesses the specialised skills required by prospective employers. IIM Jammu and other educational institutions could help facilitate dialogue between industry and academia. The summit's focus on talent development and workforce transformation provides an appropriate platform for advancing these priorities.

The long-term success of the GCC initiative will depend as much on the quality of local talent as on the number of investors attracted to Jammu and Kashmir. Another major benefit could be the expansion of private investment. GCCs could bring investment into office infrastructure, information technology, telecommunications, employee training, and professional services.

Besides the above, it will create opportunities for local entrepreneurs and startups; GCCs can strengthen tourism and other traditional sectors. Tourism, horticulture and agriculture, and handicrafts will get a boost by the implementation of the initiatives of the GCC summit. Economics, diversification & resilience are other plus points of GCC. The need is that the GCC summit 2026 should yield measurable results. Connectivity and infrastructure are the foundations of success. The choice of IIM Jammu as the venue for holding the GCC summit provides an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between academia and industry. The emerging technology sector could also create new opportunities for women in the region, thus ensuring inclusive growth and development.

The real test of the GCC summit will begin after the discussions conclude. A successful summit must produce an actionable programme with clearly defined responsibilities, deadlines, and measurable outcomes. The GCC Summit should be understood within the larger objective of building a diversified, productive and opportunity-rich economy. The GCC summit 2026 comes at a time when J&K needs fresh economic opportunities, greater private sector participation and sustainable employment for its educated youth. In short, by bringing together policymakers, investors, technology leaders and educational institutions, the summit can help open new chapter in the regions economic and social development.

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BJP Owes Answers On Unemployment In J&K, Not Excuses: Sadhotra

AGENCIES

JAMMU: National Conference Additional General Secretary and former minister Ajay Kumar Sadhotra on Saturday accused the BJP of failing to address unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir during the period from 2014 to 2024, saying the party owed answers to educated youth over recruitment delays and limited employment opportunities. Addressing a meeting at Janipur Ward No. 37, near Gurdwara, in the Jammu North Assembly constituency, Sadhotra alleged that the BJP had failed to create meaningful employment opportunities despite repeated promises. He said thousands of educated young people had spent years preparing for competitive examinations and acquiring professional qualifications but continued to face uncertainty over recruitment and employment prospects. “Thousands of young men and

women spent their most productive years preparing for competitive examinations, acquiring professional qualifications and waiting for recruitment opportunities. What did the BJP give them? Promises, delays, uncertainty and, in several instances, controversies surrounding recruitment,” he said. Sadhotra alleged that successive BJP-backed political arrangements between 2014 and 2024 had failed to establish a credible employment system in Jammu and Kashmir. He said unemployment was not merely an economic concern but also had wider social implications, particularly for young people facing prolonged uncertainty about their future. Expressing concern over frustration among unemployed youth, the NC leader said prolonged joblessness and repeated recruitment delays could leave vulnerable young people exposed to substance abuse and other harmful influences. “The most painful consequence

of this neglect is the frustration and despair among our youth,” he said, adding that families were also bearing the consequences of uncertain employment prospects. Sadhotra accused the BJP of prioritising political slogans over employment generation and said young people needed transparent recruitment, private-sector growth, skill development opportunities and an administration responsive to their aspirations. He alleged that the BJP’s claims about the benefits of a double-engine government had not translated into adequate employment opportunities. The NC leader said employment remained central to his party’s development agenda and maintained that the government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah was working towards addressing the concerns of unemployed youth. He said the National Conference supported transparent and accountable recruitment processes,

strengthening local industries and encouraging investment to enable young people to pursue careers within Jammu and Kashmir. During the meeting, several women joined the National Conference in the presence of party leaders and workers. Welcoming them into the party, Sadhotra said their participation reflected growing support for the NC’s policies and approach towards public welfare. Ayesha Gupta, in-charge of the NC Women’s Wing for Jammu North Assembly constituency, and Anju Mehra, co-in-charge, also addressed the gathering. They raised concerns regarding sanitation, health, hygiene and the functioning of public services, stressing the need to improve basic civic amenities in densely populated localities. Sadhotra assured the participants that the issues raised by residents would be taken up with the

authorities concerned for appropriate action. He said the National Conference would continue engaging with people at the grassroots level and highlighting their concerns before the relevant authorities. The meeting was organised by Anju Mehra, Rita Gupta, Chand Gupta and Surekha Sharma. Among those who addressed the gathering were Sandeep Singh Manhas, Vishwajeet Singh Sambyal, Veer Ji Bhat, Rajinder Singh, Priyanka Dogra, Poonam Sharma, Wahida Kousar, Shailu Sharma, Seema Bhat, Pushp Jandial, Amit Singh Jamwal, Sangram Singh Manhas, Kewal Sharma, Rajinder Banial, Sonu Pangotra, Sandya Chib, Mona Gupta, Rani Kumari, Yashpal Dogra, Chintamani Goswami, Ashwani Gupta and Priya Rani. The allegations made by Sadhotra were not accompanied by recruitment figures in the statement, and the BJP’s response was not available. (KNS)

Youth Empowerment Programme Implementation Reviewed In Kishtwar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KISHTWAR: Additional Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pawan Kotwal (Nodal Officer YEP) Saturday chaired a meeting to review the implementation and progress of various activities under the Youth Engagement Programme. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held regarding registration of different sectors on the Youth Empowerment Portal, uploading of sector-wise Annual Action Plans and scheduling of activities and events aimed at youth engagement and empowerment. The ADC directed all concerned sectoral officers to initiate uploading of their respective activities and events on the portal, ensure timely submission of Annual Action Plans and accelerate the creation of Youth IDs to achieve maximum registration and participation of eligible youth across the district. He further stressed the need for inter-departmental coordination, proactive involvement of all stakeholders and regular monitoring of progress to ensure effective implementation of the programme. The ADC emphasised that youth empowerment remains a key priority of the District Administration and directed all departments to ensure timely compliance with the instructions for achieving the objectives of the programme. The meeting was attended by CEO KDA Kaiser Bhawani; GM DIC Mohsin Raza; ACD Manoj Kumar; DSEO Sudesh Kumar Sharma; DYSSO Jaffer Haider Sheikh; CHO Sajid Mustafa; CEO Sanjay Dogra, besides other officers and officials from concerned departments.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

'Operation Sindoor'

indigenous systems including the Tejas fighter aircraft, Akash air defence system and helicopters such as Dhruv, Rudra and Prachand. He also referred to the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft programme as an important step towards developing fifth-generation stealth fighter technology. The Defence Minister said India must be capable of acting independently when required while cooperating effectively with other nations where interests and responsibilities converge. Describing the spirit of Tarang Shakti, he said, “Different nations. Different aircraft. Different experiences. But one sky. That is the message of Tarang Shakti.” Singh called upon the Indian Air Force to incorporate lessons from the exercise into its training, tactics, technology, doctrine and future capability development—(KNO)

J&K Open And

Kashmir to strengthen its institutions, infrastructure and innovation ecosystem. Emphasising the future direction of the GCC sector, the Lieutenant Governor said that the journey of GCCs has evolved from questions of cost efficiency to excellence and capability. He expressed confidence that Jammu Kashmir can evolve from being a destination for capability centres to becoming a hub for unique global innovations originating from the region. The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted the rapid transformation of Jammu Kashmir under the leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. He said the major infrastructure developments, enhanced connectivity is supporting the rising industrial investments and the remarkable growth of the startup ecosystem. “The industrial revolution we are witnessing today in parts of the Jammu division and the Kashmir Valley is a living symbol of the new Jammu Kashmir. In 2020, there were only 69 startups and that number has now risen to 1,305, a growth of over 1,800%. When the energy of young, ambitious graduates from IIM Jammu, IIT Jammu, NIT Srinagar and other universities of Jammu Kashmir is added to these figures, you see a ready workforce emerging,” he said. The Lieutenant Governor identified six key advantages that position Jammu Kashmir as an attractive GCC destination including strong financial support, lower operating costs, special incentives for pioneering multinational investors, the return of local talent, first-mover advantages for early GCC entrants and opportunities in niche sectors such as agri-tech, tourism-tech and handicraft digitisation. Outlining a four-pillar roadmap for the next five years, the Lieutenant Governor stressed talent development through industry-academia partnerships, building trust through credible implementation, leveraging Jammu Kashmir’s unique destination advantages and promoting inclusive growth through a hub-

and-spoke development model. Expressing confidence in J&K’s future, the Lieutenant Governor said that GCCs can become an integral pillar of Jammu Kashmir’s industrial ecosystem over the next decade. He stated that the foundation laid during the summit can help build a new, aspirational and innovation-driven Jammu Kashmir that is fully prepared to welcome Global Capability Centres from across the world. Shri Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary, J&K; Padma Bhushan Shri Rajendra Singh Pawar, Chairman, NIIT; Prof. BS Sahay, Director IIM Jammu; Shri Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, Secretary, Labour & Employment Department, J&K; Prof. Jabir Ali, Dean, Faculty and Research, IIM Jammu; Prof. Nitin Upadhyay, Dean Academics, IIM Jammu; Dr. Sandeep Ananthanarayanan, CEO, CITaG, IIM Jammu; experts, policy makers, industry leaders, senior officials, faculty and students in large number attended the valedictory session.

Gulmarg Receives

the Meteorological Centre has advised farmers to continue harvesting and ensure the safe storage of harvested apples and paddy. It has also warned of the possibility of thunderstorms and gusty winds on October 10 and October 13-14—(KNO)

INDIA Bloc’s Protest

claiming that peace had improved the region’s atmosphere for tourism. “Today, everyone would like to become this Kashmir, where there is peace,” he said, adding that he would welcome a similar atmosphere in Delhi. Referring to the reported assault on a Kashmiri youth in Delhi, LoP Sharma condemned the violence and praised the youth for speaking against instability in the country. “The youth’s stand reflected concern for India,” he said, adding that the country should not face the kind of unrest witnessed in neighbouring countries—(KNO)

New Media Policy

developing their skills, Itoo said that educated unemployed youth are facing depression and they need to be pulled out from the quagmire of uncertainty. Itoo, said the government wants to help young people acquire practical skills so that they can become self-reliant and explore alternative avenues of livelihood instead of depending solely on conventional government jobs. “Many young people remain idle at home due to a lack of employment opportunities, which can lead to frustration and depression,” she added. Itoo stressed the need to connect educated youth with skill development programmes that can improve their employability, encourage entrepreneurship and enable them to earn a livelihood through their own efforts. The minister said equipping young people with relevant skills is important

for addressing unemployment-related challenges and ensuring their productive participation in society.—(KNO)

CAT Directs J&K

earlier decisions concerning the creation and adjustment of posts in the Forest Department. These included the creation of 333 additional Forest Guard posts in 2017 and the subsequent adjustment of 234 supernumerary posts against available vacancies in 2021. The developments were considered relevant to the applicants’ claims for regularisation under the existing policy framework. Newsupdates. Importantly, the Tribunal also directed the authorities to consider the applicability of the Supreme Court judgment in Rupesh R. Gaonkar and Others versus State of Goa and Others while deciding the matter. It observed that the benefit of the judgment should be extended to the applicants if their cases are covered by the ruling and no legal impediment exists. The Tribunal, however, did not order the immediate regularisation of the employees. Instead, it directed the competent authorities to examine their individual eligibility and claims in accordance with the applicable rules, government orders and judicial precedents. The authorities have been asked to pass a reasoned order, explaining the decision taken on the applicants’ claims, preferably within eight weeks from the date of service of the certified copy of the Tribunal’s order. The direction places the responsibility on the government to assess the pending claims and communicate its decision within the stipulated timeframe. The matter assumes significance for Rehbar-e-Janglaat employees who have been seeking regularisation after completing the service period prescribed under the government’s 2017 policy. The Tribunal’s directions have provided the 12 applicants an opportunity for formal reconsideration of their claims, although their regularisation will depend on their eligibility and the applicable legal provisions.

Houthis Hit Saudi

AFP that dozens of people had been wounded in the suspected attack on Saturday. While there has been no official confirmation of an attack, western embassies in Saudi Arabia have warned their citizens away from the airport. Several Gulf airlines said they had cancelled their flights to and from the airport, with Kuwait Airways citing the “security situation” there. All flights to Riyadh have either been diverted or cancelled, aviation tracker Flightradar shows. The suspected attack comes during a marked escalation in renewed fighting between Yemen’s Saudi-backed government forces and the Houthis, who control most of the country’s north-west.

The Houthis say they are targeting Saudi Arabia over its support for government forces in Yemen’s civil war. The conflict worsened after the Houthis seized strategically important stretches of the Red Sea coast in a rapid offensive. That included the port of Mokha on the Bab al-Mandab Strait, which is the narrowest point of the Red Sea and a choke-point for global shipping. Yemeni pro-government forces have since said they had “secured” the strait at the southern end of the Red Sea. CM Calls For Future holistic development of every child, going beyond academic achievement to nurture creativity, communication, collaboration, problem-solving abilities and digital competence. He stressed that schools must prepare students to meet emerging challenges with confidence and responsibility. Highlighting the opportunities presented by technology and Artificial Intelligence, the Chief Minister emphasised the need to adopt these tools responsibly to improve learning outcomes, personalise education and support teachers, while ensuring that technology complements rather than replaces the human element of education. He also stressed the importance of continuous professional development for teachers and school leaders, noting that exposure to innovative teaching methods, exchange of best practices and opportunities for collaboration are essential to strengthening educational institutions. Omar Abdullah called for an inclusive approach to educational excellence, emphasising that quality education must reach children in rural, remote and underserved communities as well as those in urban areas. He said governments, educators, institutions, parents and communities must work collectively to address the diverse academic, social and developmental needs of children. The Chief Minister also highlighted the importance of meaningful collaboration among educational institutions, both within India and internationally, to promote innovation, share successful models and strengthen the quality of education. He observed that recognition of exemplary school leadership helps foster a culture of excellence, encouraging other institutions to learn from successful practices and adapt them to their own contexts. On the occasion, the Chief Minister felicitated the heads of several educational institutions in recognition of their contributions. Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology’s Achyuta Samanta; Executive Chairman, Association of Indian Principals, (AIP), Dalip Sharma; CTO, AIP and CEO, City Innovates Kashish Jhamb and Managing Director, Macmillan Education India, Rajesh Pasari, were among those present. Chancellors and senior officials from Indian and international universities, officials from Austrade, school founders, directors, principals and heads of schools from across the country also attended the summit.

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■ Healing at the Frontier

Army Conducts Medical Camp at Kralweth, Benefiting Over 500 Residents

IRFAN TILGAMI

BARAMULLA: Reinforcing its enduring commitment to civil-military cooperation and community welfare, the Indian Army’s 29 Rashtriya Rifles (RR) organized a comprehensive mega medical camp at Kralweth, Kunzer, providing free medical consultations, essential diagnostics, and medicines to 522 local residents.

The outreach initiative was designed to alleviate healthcare access challenges faced by remote and rural households in North Kashmir’s Kralweth Village, where geographic isolation and financial constraints frequently limit access to primary and specialized medical facilities.

A specialized medical team comprising military medical officers and combat nursing assistants conducted on-site clinical evaluations throughout the day. Services included the screening and treatment of chronic illnesses, seasonal and respiratory disorders, orthopaedic, gynaecological and dedicated pediatric



and geriatric care. Following consultations, patients received free, high-grade pharmaceuticals and tailored treatment plans. Alongside primary care delivery, the army medical staff conducted interactive awareness modules focused on preventative healthcare, hygiene, balanced nutrition, and lifestyle disease management.

The camp drew widespread participation from Kralweth and adjoining villages, earning deep appreciation from local leaders and residents alike.

Commending the initiative, former Block Development Council (BDC) Chairman Kunzer, Aftab Beigh, stated that the Indian Army has consistently stepped forward to support the people of Jammu & Kashmir in times of need. Expressing

his gratitude, Beigh lauded the officers and personnel of the 29 Rashtriya Rifles for organizing the medical camp and bringing critical healthcare services directly to the grassroots.

Echoing similar sentiments, another local resident highlighted the battalion’s ongoing community engagement, noting that the 29 RR has always remained accessible and readily available to assist the people of the area whenever the need arises.

The initiative marks another constructive step in strengthening the enduring bond of trust, solidarity, and mutual respect between the armed forces and the local population and also proving that determination, discipline, and empathy remain the hallmark of the Indian Army’s 29 RR.

SMC Bids Farewell to Commissioner Faz Lul Haseeb, IAS

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) accorded a warm and dignified farewell to Commissioner Shri Faz Lul Haseeb, IAS, in recognition of his dedicated service, exemplary professionalism, and valuable contributions to the Corporation.

During his tenure, Shri Haseeb made significant contributions to strengthening civic administration, improving municipal services, and advancing initiatives aimed at enhancing urban infrastructure and the overall quality of life in Srinagar. His effective leadership, professional approach, and unwavering commitment to public service were widely appreciated by his colleagues and officers of the Corporation.

The farewell ceremony, held at the SMC Headquarters, was attended by Joint Commissioner (Administration) Ms. Nuzhat Qureshi, JKAS; Joint Commissioner Suhail Ul Islam, JKAS; Joint Commissioner (Works) Hamid Iqbal Mir, Secretary SMC Tahir Ahmad, JKAS; Rafiq Ahmad Shah, JKAS; Health Officer Dr. Fauzia Habib; Sajad Ahmad Kawoosa, SE, City Drainage Circle; and other senior officers of the Corporation.



On the occasion, the officers shared their views and expressed their appreciation for Shri Haseeb’s leadership, administrative guidance, and valuable contributions to the functioning of the Corporation. They acknowledged his commitment to public service and highlighted the initiatives undertaken during his tenure to strengthen municipal governance, enhance civic infrastructure, and improve service delivery.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Haseeb expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to serve the Corporation and acknowledged the cooperation and support extended by the officers and staff during his tenure.

He expressed confidence that the Srinagar Municipal Corporation would continue to make progress in fulfilling its mandate of delivering efficient civic services, strengthening urban governance, and ensuring better civic amenities for the citizens of Srinagar.

The Srinagar Municipal Corporation placed on record its sincere appreciation for the contributions and services rendered by Shri Faz Lul Haseeb, IAS, and extended its best wishes for success in his future assignments. The Corporation expressed confidence that he would continue to serve with distinction and make meaningful contributions to public administration.

Govt mulls demand-driven subjects in J&K colleges

J&K witnesses 17% increase in student enrolment: Sakina Itoo

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: The government is considering introducing only those subjects in colleges across Jammu and Kashmir that are purely driven by student demand.

Education Minister Sakina Itoo while speaking to reporters here said, “The Higher Education Department (HED) is trying to introduce only those subjects in colleges that stu-

demed by the students.”

“However, in past two years we have tried to provide faculty to every college as per the subjects taught in those institutions. There are still some colleges that require more faculty,” she said.

Sakina Itoo added that “Many colleges in Jammu and Kashmir didn’t had buildings but the ruling NC government is ensuring to provide every possible infrastructure to the students.”



dents want to study.”

“We are trying to introduce subjects like agriculture, horticulture, tourism, music and several others in the colleges of Jammu and Kashmir. The progress has been initiated in this regard,” she said.

The Minister further said, “There was a mushrooming growth of colleges in Jammu and Kashmir but there was no faculty in those institutions and there were no such subjects that were

“I think there are very few colleges that have been approved but have not been developed yet and mostly it has occurred because of the land dispute and placement issues,” she said.

The minister further informed that in the ongoing academic year, J&K have seen 17 percent increase in student enrolment. “The government is working hard on upgrading the infrastructure in colleges.”—(KNO)



Government of Jammu & Kashmir(UT)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION PULWAMA.

Phone:-01933-295302,

E-tenders (In single cover system) from qualified contractors registered with the J&K UT Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/ Central Governments are invited for Snow Clearance (Stage-wise) on a Percentage Rate basis for a contract period of one year that may be extended to three years depending on the performance of the successful bidder

TENDER NOTICE

E-NIT No :- Fresh148 / EEP/RNB/of 2026-2027/ 7716-26

Dated: 08 /10/2026

Restoration of road surface under the jurisdiction of PW (RnB) Sub-Division Rajpora on emergency basis by way of Snow clearance (Stage contract-13-16) for the year 2026-2027

Stage No	Name of RoadStage.	Road Length (Kms)	Stage Length (Kms)	Earnest Money	Class of Contractor	Tender fee cost
stage-13	Achagoze block to Gujjarbasti including High School link	2.50	35.64	5000.00	DEE to AAY	500.00
	Main road Abahama to draklaran	0.24				
	Achagoze Khaidoor and Kharchhak road	1.40				
	Pmsgy road to Chachi mohalla	1.40				
	Aditrag main road to airtel tower link	0.50				
	Main road khaigam to yousmarg link ic sonbaner link	0.57				
	Khaigam main road to hospital link	0.30				
	Main road chuthal nagbal to Gorsi mohalla link	0.52				
	Primary school bajard mohalla link	0.25				
	Baamnoo to Aribagh road	1.10				
	Abhama Pakherpora road including Jamia masjid link	3.50				
	Aditrag main road to teedwah mohalla	0.70				
	IR Bamnoo	0.65				
stage-14	Chuthal Inderwani link road	1.30	29.45	5000.00	DEE to Aay	500.00
	Main road Bagander to Masjid - Masjid link	0.53				
	Main road khaigam to Yaar Mohammad link	0.50				
	Main road Bagandar to trodien via kangni	1.50				
	Kandipathri to Namblan	1.15				
	Kandipathri Primary school road ic allied links	0.71				
	Ziyarat sharief sangerwani to bajard mohalla link	0.50				
	UPS Inderwali to chotawali link road	0.60				
	Main road nderwali to water tank	1.12				
	Main road aditrag to Chan mohalla	0.30				
	Main road aditrag to kangni via kalis mohalla	1.00				
	Main road to chanabanjer bamnoo	1.00				
	Achgoze to baamno link	1.00				
stage-16	RR Camp Abhama , Police Post Sangerwani	1.00	29.71	5000.00	DEE to AAY	500.00
	Main road nderwali to Kasana mohalla	0.60				
	IR Achgoze	1.00				
	Laam Mohalla, Toosi Mohalla, Nichandajan via RR camp Abhama	2.70				
	Bagandar Forest hut to GM Teedwah	0.50				
	Lassidabn Kanikoot road via hakla mohalla	2.50				
	Kanikoot parry Mohalla Link road	1.50				
	Interior roads of Abhama near HSS Abhama	1.00				
	Putrigam Kachipora Link	0.50				
	Main Road Kamrazipora To Tujan Road including allied links	0.66				
	Kenigam crossing road to charipora ic allied links	2.20				
	Dhankard-Chonthibal And Bellow Chanpora Road.	2.10				
	Rahmoo bongam to lower fresipora	1.50				
stage-15	Tujan bonpora new colony moqdam mohalla herpora and allied links	1.60	24.01	5000.00	DEE to Aay	500.00
	Akhal Pachhar road	1.14				
	Thokerpora Mirgund Road	0.69				
	Rum Reshi Road Rohmoo	0.52				
	Main Road Mirgund To Jamia Masjid and allied links	0.72				
	Mirgund interior links	0.18				
	Aabshahar Mohalla Rohmoo	0.98				
	IR Gulshanabad Rajpora	0.39				
	Aastan Sharief Rohmoo To Wani Mohalla	0.31				
	Tujan ziyarat Shareef link road	0.60				
	Aglar kandi to kenigam via gangee road	0.88				
	IR Gujjerbasti Kenigam	0.50				
	Aglar kandi to kumar mohalla ic all allied links	1.20				
stage-16	Akhal school link road	0.30	29.71	5000.00	DEE to AAY	500.00
	IR Sehpora	0.20				
	Dar Mohalla akhal link roads	0.25				
	Gazi link rohmoo	0.30				
	Main road rohmoo tilsar to ahangar mohalla	0.36				
	Main road rohmoo tilsar to bhagat mohalla	0.73				
	Rohmoo bonpora road	0.54				
	Link road to Govt PS Rohmoo B	0.39				
	New colony Rohmoo link	0.23				
	PHC link rohmoo	0.32				
	Dhobi & teeli mohalla link Rohmoo	0.48				
	Road from PHC link rohmoo to police post	0.47				
	Jamia Masjid Akhal to H/O Ab Rashid	0.21				
stage-16	Main road tilsar to mal wudar	0.45	29.71	5000.00	DEE to AAY	500.00
	Kumar mohalla Link Hanjan Payeen	0.13				
	IR Kachipora	0.28				
	Kachipora to Romshi link	0.70				
	Chontliward road Kamrazipora	0.34				
	Kamrazipora Karpora road	1.50				
	Link roads new colony rohmoo	0.10				
	Police Post Rohmoo , RR Camp Rahmoo	0.50				
	jamia Masjid Astanpora to San waeni Rohmoo	0.60				
	Main road rohmoo pakherpora to house of MD yousuf mir	0.20				
	Rajpora to Gulshanabad	1.00				
	Kenigam crossing road to charipora	2.20				
	Main road keller to bonkha Bamnoo	2.40				

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, 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.iktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

1. Date of Issue of Tender Notice	08 /10/2026
2. Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 08 /10/2026 10:00 A.M.
3. Bid submission Start Date	08 /10/2026 from 10.00 AM
4. Bid Submission End Date	21 /10/2026 upto 4.00 P.M
5. Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	22/10/2026 at 11.00 AM in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama

In light of Circular issued by Finance department Vide No:FD-code/290/2026 Dated 22.05.2026 and circular issued by worthy Chief Engineer PW(R&B)Department South Kashmir Vide order No:CE/R&B/SK/WS/2095-2111 Dated: 05.06.2026 ,the following conditions are mentioned below:-

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document/Tender Fee of Rs 500/= to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099 ,IFSC: JAKA0LALANG).

2. All the bidders must deposit Earnest money /Bid security of Rs 5000/- in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKA0LALANG) mentioning Name/NIT sno.

3. The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security of Rs 10000/- to be deposited in Cash in Pulwama MC Holding Account Executive Engineer R&B Pulwama Bearing Account no. 0054010200003470 ,IFSC: JAKA0GOLDEN), which shall be released after successful completion of DLP / maintenance period..

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web site www.iktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Div. Pulwama

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids

Head Draftsman DIPK-6573-26 DT: 10/10/2026 Technical Officer Executive Engineer, R&B Division Pulwama

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CMYK

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People underrate Shai Hope: Roston hails WI skipper after record chase against India

AGENCIES

RANCHI: West Indies all-rounder Roston Chase believes their skipper Shai Hope remains an "underrated" cricketer despite his remarkable consistency in white-ball cricket, saying the captain's ability to shut out criticism, remain focused and deliver for his team sets him apart.

With the IPL mini-auction scheduled for December, Hope, who has been ignored by the franchises since his 2024 stint with Delhi Capitals, has strengthened his case with a prolific run across formats, scoring three centuries in his last four innings in ODIs and T20Is.

His latest statement came in Ranchi on Thursday, when he struck his second T20I hundred off just 45 balls to spearhead the West Indies' record chase of 250 against India, sealing a victory with nine balls to spare and leveling the five-match series 1-1.

It was the West Indies' highest successful chase in T20 internationals and the highest successful run-chase against India in the format. Sherfane Rutherford provided the perfect foil with an explosive 86, but it was Hope's commanding innings that anchored the pursuit after the visitors lost two early wickets.

"I think people underrate Shai Hope a lot," Chase said after the victory. "He is a guy who can block out a lot of noise and focus



on what he has to do. I think that is his special skill because, when everything seems to be going wrong, he is still out there giving his best and performing for the team. I think that is his hallmark.

"He is a great player. He probably doesn't have the same record in red-ball cricket, but people also play down his statistics and record, especially in T20 cricket.

"Everyone knows he is great in 50-over cricket, but even then, people sometimes don't give him enough credit. They always say he either bats too slowly or bats for himself.

"I am always happy when I see him do well because I know he is a very professional guy. He puts in the hard work, and he is the ultimate professional. He tries to tick every box and do the right things all the time.

"So, whenever he puts in these performances, I am very happy for him."

Hope's latest exploits carry added significance given the criticism he has faced over his strike rate, particularly in T20 cricket.

Having played just one IPL season, for Delhi Capitals in 2024, he has gone unsold at subsequent auctions.

His strike rate also came under scrutiny during the T20 World Cup, particularly in the virtual quarter-final against India, when he scored 32 off 33 balls at the top of the order as the West Indies posted 195 for four at Eden Gardens in Kolkata. India chased down the target with four balls to spare on their way to winning the title. Chase also credited Hope's improvement in power-hitting to the hard work, particularly in the gym and during

range-hitting sessions.

"Firstly, he has done a lot of gym work to make himself stronger and more powerful, particularly when it comes to hitting the ball over the ropes and striking it better.

"I think he also practises a lot of range-hitting to get into those strong positions and get his body accustomed to hitting the ball from those positions.

"I think that has worked for him over the past couple of years, during which he has been working on it tremendously."

Chase said the team had never held specific discussions about Hope's strike rate following that defeat but pointed out that individual performances must be viewed in context.

"No, we never had any discussions about it because every day at the office is not going to be a good day.

"Some days, you are middling the ball and finding the gaps. On other days, you are middling it, but the ball goes straight to the fielders. And sometimes, you are not even middling it.

"It is just one of those things. We put that behind us and try to move on."

Hope has carried his ODI form seamlessly into T20 internationals, switching from the middle order in 50-over cricket to an opening role in the shortest format while displaying a greater range of attacking strokes. (PTI)

Star power meets exuberance of youth as 92nd Ranji Trophy season kicks off from Sunday

IANIS

NEW DELHI: The 92nd edition of the Ranji Trophy begins from Sunday, with much-needed star power meeting the exuberance of youth in India's premier domestic red-ball competition. The first round will see a handful of high-profile India internationals feature before joining the India A squad for the shadow three-game red-ball tour of New Zealand.

With everyone's attention on India's T20 World Cup defence at home, the Ranji Trophy happenings initially flew under the radar before exploding on to the spotlight as Jammu & Kashmir clinched their historic maiden title triumph in Hubballi – led by Aaqib Nabi's 60 scalps, which led to him getting an international debut against the West Indies in Guwahati ODI last month.

As J&K prepare to defend their crown and whether they will be able to do it will make for an interesting watch. The Paras Dogra-led side will be aiming to bounce back against Madhya Pradesh in Srinagar after suffering a defeat to Rest of India in the Irani Cup.

The opening round of the 2026/27 season is set to be a blockbuster. KL Rahul (Kar-



nataka), Yashasvi Jaiswal (Mumbai), Ravindra Jadeja (Saurashtra), Mohammed Siraj (Hyderabad), Manav Suthar (Rajasthan), Washington Sundar (Tamil Nadu), Mukesh Kumar and Akash Deep (Bengal) are set to feature in the first round for their respective teams.

For some, the Ranji Trophy will be a crucial window for pressing claims for being back in national reckoning – like for Mumbai's Sarfaraz Khan and Karnataka's Karun Nair. Youngsters such as Mumbai's Ayush Mhatre and Jharkhand's left-handed opener Shikhar Mohan will look to enhance their reputation in red-ball cricket.

Veteran fast bowler Mohammed Shami, who toiled hard to claim 37 wickets last season, is also back in action. Shami, who along with Mukesh and Akash, will be in Bengal, who take

on Delhi in Kalyani, will be eager to break back into the Test set-up after seeing his India new-ball partner Bhuvneshwar Kumar earn a T20I recall for the upcoming tour of New Zealand.

Delhi, meanwhile, restart their race for red-ball glory by sporting a revamped support staff following the appointments of former India wicketkeeper-batter Vijay Dahiya as head coach and Rajkumar Sharma, childhood coach of batting stalwart Virat Kohli, as the team mentor.

Eyes of the four-member selection panel will also be on Vidarbha's Harsh Dubey, Praful Hinge, Yash Rathod, and Uttar Pradesh leg-spinner Zeeshan Ansari. Seasoned campaigners such as Umesh Yadav (Punjab), Harshal Patel (Gujarat), Mandeep Singh and Hanuma Vihari (both Tripura) will shoulder vital mentorship roles.

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates Multipurpose Indoor Sports Hall at GDC Frisal

GMK SPORTS DESK

KULGAM: Education, Social Welfare, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, Saturday inaugurated Multipurpose Indoor Sports Hall at Government Degree College (GDC), Frisal.

The occasion marked a significant milestone in the college's efforts to promote sports, physical fitness and the holistic development of students with the facility coming up at the estimated cost of Rs.1.94 crore.

The ceremony was attended by MLA Devsar Peerzada Feroze Ahmad Shah, Secretary in Higher Education Department Shafoqat Iqbal, Nodal Principal Kashmir Division Colleges, Dr. Seema Naz, DPO, Zahoor Ahmad Kaifi, CEO, Kulgam Fayaz, Ahmad Mir, CMO, Dr. Showkat Ahmad Parry, Principals GDC,



Frisal, D. H. Pora & Kilam, DSWO Rameez Ahmad Ganie BDO, and senior officers of the Higher Education Department, faculty members, local residents and students.

Speaking on the occasion, Sakeena Itoo highlighted the importance of quality educational infrastructure and the role of sports in shaping confident, disciplined and responsible citizens. She called upon the College management to engage the students in a

sports activities and other positive endeavours and channelise their potential in right direction so that they excel in their studies and contribute towards the best of the society.

Sakeena Itoo said that Multipurpose Indoor Sports Hall provided improved facilities for indoor games and encourage greater participation in sporting activities of the students.

MLA Devsar also addressed the gathering,



emphasising the importance of educational institutions in empowering young people and creating opportunities for academic and extracurricular excellence. MLA also announced Digital X-Ray Machine worth Rs. 24 lakh for Primary Health Center (PHC) Frisal.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Dr. Fayaz Ahmad Butt, Principal, GDC Frisal, welcomed the distinguished guests and expressed gratitude to the Minister and other digni-

taries for their presence. He highlighted the importance of sports infrastructure in fostering discipline, teamwork, physical well-being and the all-round development of students.

The programme also featured cultural performances by students. The programme also included the felicitation of students for their achievements, recognizing their dedication and bringing attention to the importance of encouraging young talent.

IANIS

JHANSI: Hockey Association of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Hockey Jammu & Kashmir secured easy wins while Arunachal and Rajasthan prevailed over fighting opponents on an opening day marked by one-sided scorelines, late drama and a goal-fest in Division 'B' in the 16th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship 2026, which began in Jhansi on Saturday.

In a Pool A match, Odisha set the tone for the tournament with an 18-1 rout of Hockey Uttarakhand. Aryan Xess and Sudeep Chirmako each scored four, with Xess finding the net in the 3rd and 4th quarters. Akash Soreng, Ajay Ekka, Anmol Ekka and Deepak Minz each scored twice, while Rohit Kullu, Ritik Lakra and Prasant Barla also scored. Vishal Kumar scored Uttarakhand's consolation goal in the 34th minute.



Also in the same pool, Chhattisgarh scored in every quarter except the first to secure an 8-0 thrashing of Assam, with Vishnu Yadav opening the account in the 4th minute. Sandeep Kumar (27, 40), Tarun Yadav (32, 46) and Sonu Nishad (57, 60) each scored twice, and Karan Kumar Sahu also scored. Assam failed to score.

In Pool B, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu Hockey took control early through Nagendra Kumar (5, 36) and Kushal Bopaiiah (11), and Sunil Yadav (31) and Mohd Idris (48) added to the lead. Hari Rama (26) scored Goa's only goal in the 5-1 win. Arunachal scored

through Jay Prakash Patel (20), Premdada Giri (33), Ujjwal (35) and Pacha Tharun Kumar (36), with Abhinav Singh (55) also on the scoresheet. Telangana's goals came from Mohd Affan Khan (6) and R Aiyappa (41) as they went down 4-2.

In Division 'C', Andhra Pradesh scored steadily in their 8-0 rout of Gujarat in a Pool B match, with Hemanth Kumar Dodium Subramanyam scoring a hat-trick (26, 39, 49). Nadiemint Akhil (43, 46), Metta Sai Kumar (15), Lekkala Hitesh Rao (31), Manchala Bhanuprakash Reddy (41) and Shaik Mohammad Rafi (28) also scored.

Premier League: Liverpool host unbeaten Man City; Spurs chase first win as Matchweek 6 begins

IANIS

LONDON: The Premier League returns from the international break with a blockbuster clash between Liverpool and Manchester City at Anfield headlining Matchweek 6, as the visitors look to maintain their perfect start to the 2026/27 season while several other clubs aim to reverse their early struggles.

Manchester City are the only team to have won all five of their opening league matches and will travel to Anfield on Sunday looking to extend their winning run. Liverpool, meanwhile, have drawn both their home games this season and will be keen to secure a statement victory against one of their fiercest rivals.

City won both league meetings against Liverpool last season, marking the first time they had recorded successive victories over the Merseyside club since 1937. The visitors could also win consecutive league matches at Anfield for the first time since January 1953, according to Jio Star.

The contest carries additional significance, as it will be the first Premier League meeting between the clubs without either Jurgen Klopp or Pep Guardiola in the



dugout since March 2015. Erling Haaland and Alexander Isak have been among the leading attacking threats this season, with the Manchester City striker scoring five goals and Liverpool forward Isak netting four.

Elsewhere, Arsenal will look to bounce back from their 3-0 defeat to Brighton when they host Leeds United. The loss was Arsenal's heaviest since May 2023, but Mikel Arteta's side have generally responded well to setbacks, having lost consecutive league matches only once since the start of 2024.

Arsenal have won nine of their last 10 Premier League meetings with Leeds, including each of the last seven. Leeds, however, arrive

unbeaten in five matches, with two wins and three draws, marking their best start to a top-flight campaign since 2001/02.

Aston Villa face Brentford, who enter the weekend on a seven-match unbeaten league run, the longest active streak in the division. Villa have struggled in front of goal and have lost both their home league games this season. Brentford also boasts the league's highest expected goals tally from set pieces, making their threat from dead-ball situations a key factor in the contest.

Chelsea host Bournemouth in another fixture that could have a significant impact on the early-season standings. Chelsea have conceded 12 goals, the most

in the division, while their five league matches under Xabi Alonso have produced 22 goals, with 10 scored and 12 conceded.

Bournemouth have yet to win in their opening five matches but have been strong on their travels in 2026, collecting 20 away points, behind only Arsenal and Manchester City.

Tottenham Hotspur will seek their first league victory of the campaign when they travel to Manchester United. Spurs have failed to win any of their opening five matches and face a United side that is also searching for consistency after going three games without a victory.

United have registered the most shots in the league this season, with 113, but their expected goals per shot remains among the division's lowest. Tottenham have also struggled when conceding first, having gone 37 consecutive Premier League matches without a win after falling behind.

Crystal Palace host Nottingham Forest, with the visitors aiming to continue their impressive away form. Forest have won all four of their away league matches against London clubs in 2026 and have scored at least twice in each of their last seven away league games.

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Movies
Schedule

SUNDAY
11 OCTOBER 2026

DRISHYAM: THE CONCLUSION (UA 16+)
HINDI ATMOS
10:45 AM | 01:45 PM
04:45 PM | 07:45 PM
HINDI
12:00 PM | 03:00 PM
06:00 PM

THE VVAAN (UA 16+)
HINDI
11:20 AM

DORAEMON THE MOVIE: NEW NOBITA AND THE CASTLE OF THE UNDERSEA DEVIL (U)
HINDI
04:35 PM

THE SOCIAL RECKONING (A)
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
02:10 PM

OTHER MOMMY (A)
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
06:50 PM

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