

Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
Year Of Publication

Office of Chief Minister, J&K
@CM_JnK



Chief Minister chaired a comprehensive review of Anant-nag's development, winter preparedness and public service delivery, directing departments to expedite ongoing projects and ensure timely resolution of public grievances.

Srinagar • Friday 23, October 2026 • Vol: 17 • Issue No: 250 • Pages: 08 • Price: ₹ 2/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

J&K Bank Q2 Results

Net Profit Rises 11% To Rs 546 Crore, Asset Quality Improves



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Bank on Thursday reported a 10.6 per cent rise in net profit to 546.36 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, driven by earnings growth and improvement in asset quality.

The bank earned 494.11 crore net profit in the year-ago period.

Sequentially, its profits surged 28.8 per cent from 424.18 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal year,

a bank spokesperson said.

The bank announced the financial results after its Board of Directors reviewed and approved the quarterly and half-yearly figures at a meeting held at its corporate headquarters here on Thursday.

Its net interest income rose 5 per cent during the quarter to 1,502 crore. The lender's other income more than doubled to 314.90 crore from 153.76 cr a year ago.

The Bank's Net Interest Income (NII) rose 5% YoY during the quarter •P-06

'Chrysanthemum Garden' Kashmir's Autumn Tourism Gets New Attraction

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Seeking to extend Kashmir's tourism appeal beyond the spring tulip season, the Floriculture Department

has developed the Chrysanthemum Garden as a major autumn attraction, with around 3.5 lakh plants planted this year and flowering expected to continue until •P-06

MEA Steps Up Efforts To Bring Stranded Indian Umrah Pilgrims Back From Saudi

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: The Indian Embassy in Riyadh and the Consulate in Jeddah are working with airlines and tour operators to bring stranded Umrah pilgrims home from Saudi Arabia, where continuing attacks on civilian infrastructure have disrupted travel and claimed lives.

India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Thursday that about 3,000 stranded Umrah pilgrims had returned to India on available flights over the past week.

The Indian missions are coordinating with airlines, tour operators and community volunteers to facilitate the return of those still awaiting flights.

"Arrangements are being discussed to facilitate the return of other Umrah pilgrims at the earliest," the ministry said.

It added that the embassy and consulate were extending all possible welfare assistance, while 24-hour control rooms had been established to help Indian nationals.

Regular advisories are also being issued as the regional security situation remains uncertain.



The efforts come as India confirmed that one of its nationals was among two people killed in Wednesday's attack on King Fahd International Airport in Dammam.

Two other Indian nationals were injured. The Indian Embassy said it was gathering further details and contacting the affected families.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and loved ones of the deceased, and we wish a speedy recovery for the injured," the embassy said in a statement.

Saudi Arabia's General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) confirmed that the

attack Wednesday evening killed one Indian resident and one Saudi citizen.

Eight people were injured, including two Indians, two Yemenis, two Bangladeshis, one Nepalese and one Saudi citizen, the authority said. Their injuries ranged from minor to critical, and they were receiving treatment at hospitals.

GACA said operations at King Fahd International Airport had resumed and air traffic had returned to normal. The authority is coordinating with other agencies to assess the damage, verify the safety of airport •P-06

New Delhi Condemns Attacks On Saudi Infrastructure

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: New Delhi on Thursday strongly condemned the continued attacks on civilian and energy infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, including the attack on King Fahd International Airport in Dammam and Saudi Aramco's Shaybah oil field on October 21, which resulted in civilian casualties.

In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said one Indian national was killed and two others were injured in the attack on Dammam airport, while another Indian national was injured in the attack on the Shaybah oil field.

"We convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and wish speedy recovery to those injured," the MEA said, adding that the Indian Embassy in Riyadh was in contact with Saudi authorities and would provide all possible assistance.

The ministry said: "We also reiterate that the attacks on civilian and critical infrastructure are completely unacceptable and must cease immediately. We stand in solidarity with the people and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in safeguarding its sovereignty, and hope that peace and normalcy would return to the region at the earliest."

he Indian •P-06

CM Inaugurates 3-Day Kashmir Marathon Exposition



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday inaugurated the three-day exposition of the Kashmir Marathon-2026 at Polo View, Srinagar, marking the final leg of preparations for the much-anticipated third edition of the event scheduled to be held on October 25 (Sunday).

The Chief Minister inspected various stalls and counters set •P-06

NC Afraid Of Losing Panchayat Polls: LoP Sharma

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma on Thursday accused the National Conference-led government of delaying Panchayat and municipal elections out of fear of defeat, saying the polls would be a litmus test for Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's government.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a BJP programme, the LoP Sharma said NC is reluctant to allow •P-06

J&K Bank Serving To Empower YOUR BANK SINCE 1938 JAMMU & KASHMIR BANK LIMITED CIN : L65110JK1938SGC000048 <td colspan="2"> J&K Bank Credit Cards Simplifying your Credit Needs CELEBRATING 88 YEARS OF EMPOWERMENT TOGETHER THROUGH GENERATIONS SINCE 1938 EMINENT Rupay J&K Bank ATM CARD ATM CARD VISA <td colspan="2"> Scan QR Code to view Financial Results </td></td>		J&K Bank Credit Cards Simplifying your Credit Needs CELEBRATING 88 YEARS OF EMPOWERMENT TOGETHER THROUGH GENERATIONS SINCE 1938 EMINENT Rupay J&K Bank ATM CARD ATM CARD VISA <td colspan="2"> Scan QR Code to view Financial Results </td>		Scan QR Code to view Financial Results																			
FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 30 TH SEPTEMBER, 2026																							
KEY RATIOS Year-on-year (YOY)		Operating Profit Growth		26.74 %		Gross NPA		2.23 %		Net NPA		0.51 %		Capital Adequacy Ratio		16.57 %		Provision Coverage Ratio		91.76 %		(₹ in Lakh)	
S. No.	PARTICULARS	STANDALONE						CONSOLIDATED															
		QUARTER ENDED			HALF YEAR ENDED			QUARTER ENDED			HALF YEAR ENDED			YEAR ENDED									
		30.09.2026	30.06.2026	30.09.2025	30.09.2026	30.09.2025	31.03.2026	30.09.2026	30.06.2026	30.09.2025	30.09.2026	30.09.2025	31.03.2026										
		(REVIEWED)	(REVIEWED)	(REVIEWED)	(REVIEWED)	(REVIEWED)	(AUDITED)	(REVIEWED)	(REVIEWED)	(REVIEWED)	(REVIEWED)	(REVIEWED)	(AUDITED)										
1	Total income from operations (net)	4,04,199	3,76,002	3,44,558	7,80,201	6,96,264	14,08,505	4,04,706	3,76,496	3,44,913	7,81,202	6,97,027	14,10,138										
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	71,680	61,924	63,355	1,33,604	1,29,130	2,95,788	71,807	62,080	63,468	1,33,887	1,29,404	2,96,358										
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period before Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	71,680	61,924	63,355	1,33,604	1,29,130	2,95,788	71,807	62,080	63,468	1,33,887	1,29,404	2,96,358										
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	54,636	42,418	49,411	97,054	97,895	2,36,348	55,270	42,880	49,492	98,150	97,945	2,35,951										
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period {Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)}	Refer Note No. 2						Refer Note No. 2															
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013	11,013										
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of previous year																						
8	Securities Premium Account	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950	2,91,950										
9	Net Worth	16,10,751	15,57,738	13,95,624	16,10,751	13,95,624	15,04,586	16,02,444	15,36,769	13,71,248	16,02,444	13,71,248	14,97,916										
10	Paid up Debt Capital/Outstanding Debt	2,38,100	2,38,100	2,38,100	2,38,100	2,38,100	2,38,100																
11	Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares	-	-	-	-	-	-																
12	Debt Equity Ratio	0.15	0.15	0.17	0.15	0.17	0.16																
13	Total Debts to total assets	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.02																
14	Operating Margin (%)	19.52%	18.70%	18.07%	19.13%	18.61%	21.20%																
15	Net Profit Margin (%)	13.52%	11.28%	14.34%	12.44%	14.06%	16.78%																
16	Earnings Per Share (before extraordinary items) (₹1/- each) for continuing and discontinued operations																						
	Basic : (* not annualized)	4.96*	3.85*	4.49*	8.81*	8.89*	21.46	5.02*	3.89*	4.49*	8.90*	8.89*	21.42										
	Diluted : (* not annualized)	4.96*	3.85*	4.49*	8.81*	8.89*	21.46	5.02*	3.89*	4.49*	8.90*	8.89*	21.42										
17	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-																
18	Debenture Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-																
NOTE : 1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarter and year ended Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 and Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the quarter and year ended Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites. www.nseindia.com, www.bseindia.com and on Bank's website https://jkb.bank.in/Investor/financial-information/financial-results 2. Information relating to Total comprehensive Income and Other Comprehensive Income is not furnished as Ind AS is not yet made applicable to Banks.																							
Place : Srinagar Dated : 22 nd October, 2026				DIPK-NB-1933/26 DATED:22/10/2026				For and on behalf of the Board AMITAVA CHATTERJEE Managing Director & CEO DIN : 07082989															

Div Com Jammu reviews arrangements for Annual Darbar Move

Stresses Inter-Departmental Coordination, Traffic Management



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Vikas Kundal, Thursday chaired a meeting of senior officers to review arrangements for the Annual Darbar Move from Srinagar to Jammu for 2026-27. The meeting focused on ensuring seamless resumption of official functioning at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu, as the Darbar Move offices are scheduled to reopen on November 02, 2026.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner reviewed arrangements for accommodation, healthcare, road connectivity, traffic regulation, power and water supply, sanitation, street lighting and other essential civic amenities required for the smooth functioning of Darbar Move offices.

Reviewing accommodation arrangements, the concerned officers briefed the Chair on the availabil-

ity of accommodation for government departments and officials. The Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned authorities to address any shortfall through appropriate arrangements and ensure the availability of adequate facilities.

The meeting also reviewed healthcare preparedness along the Jammu-Ramban National Highway. The concerned health authorities briefed the Chair on the availability of medical staff, healthcare facilities and ambulance services to respond to emergencies during the Darbar Move period.

Taking stock of road connectivity and traffic management, the Divisional Commissioner stressed the need for timely repairs of damaged road stretches and potholes, particularly at locations prone to traffic congestion and accidents. The concerned road-owning agencies were directed

to undertake repairs on a sustained basis, set daily targets and submit regular progress updates.

The meeting also discussed traffic bottlenecks at identified locations. The concerned agencies were directed to expedite necessary repairs, improve road conditions and maintain close coordination with Traffic Police to ensure smooth and uninterrupted vehicular movement.

The recurring vulnerability to landslides at Ramban and other stretches of the National Highway was also discussed. The concerned highway authority informed the meeting that traffic was presently moving on two lanes and that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) was being prepared for a long-term solution. It was emphasised that any future intervention at the vulnerable locations must be guided by a thorough scientific and engineering assessment.

MLA Sajjad Shaheen lays foundation stone of ₹1.96 crore Lamber Road

GMK NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN: Member Legislative Assembly Banihal-Gool Sajjad Shaheen, Thursday laid the foundation stone of a road project connecting Lamber GujarNar with National Highway-44.

The project, estimated to cost of ₹1.96 crore, is being constructed by the Public Works Department (R&B).

The project addresses a longstanding demand of residents of Lamber and adjoining villages, who have faced difficulties due to the absence of direct road connectivity with the National Highway. Upon completion, the road is



expected to reduce travel distance, improve accessibility and facilitate the movement of people and essential commodities.

Speaking on the occasion, the MLA stressed the

importance of strengthening road infrastructure in remote and mountainous areas to improve public convenience and access to essential services. He said efforts are underway

to address infrastructure gaps through road, bridge and other development projects across the Banihal-Gool constituency.

He also referred to road projects sanctioned under PMGSY-IV, including Ramsoo-Sarbagni, Makerkote-Dardahi and Livra-Gagarnag, with a combined estimated cost of ₹64.74 crore. He highlighted other initiatives aimed at improving bridge connectivity, educational infrastructure, power supply, healthcare facilities and sports infrastructure.

The MLA further referred to the Model Higher Secondary School project at Banihal, for

which the foundation stone was recently laid, besides proposals for 58 playgrounds, seven mini-stadiums and an indoor stadium to promote sports among local youth. He emphasised the need for timely execution of sanctioned works and coordinated efforts by the concerned departments to ensure that development benefits reach people in remote and far-flung areas.

Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B) Mohammad Iqbal Ganai; Assistant Engineer Nasir Ahmad Wani; senior officials and prominent residents of Lamber and adjoining villages were present on the occasion.

KVK B'pora organises programme on natural farming for officials



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA : Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Bandipora-1, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir), organised a training programme on Natural Farming for officials from the Department of Agriculture and other government departments at its campus in Potushai.

The programme aimed to familiarise participants with the principles and practices of natural farming, promote sustainable agricultural technologies and highlight the use of locally available resources to reduce dependence on external agricultural inputs.

Head, KVK Bandipora-1, Dr. Tariq Sultan, delivered a detailed technical presentation on natural farming, highlighting its fundamental principles, scientific approaches and significance in promoting sustainable agriculture.

He elaborated on the importance of maintaining soil health, enhancing soil fertility, promoting beneficial soil microorganisms and reducing dependence on chemical fertilisers and pesticides through the effective utilisation of locally available natural resources.

As part of the programme, Dr. Sultan conducted practical demonstrations on the preparation and use of Jeevamrit, Ghanjeevamrit and Beejamrit, explaining their preparation methods, agricultural significance and role in natural farming.

The training programme provided a platform for technical interaction and knowledge exchange, enabling participating officials to gain practical exposure to natural farming formulations and understand their relevance to sustainable agricultural practices.

ing sustainable agriculture. He elaborated on the importance of maintaining soil health, enhancing soil fertility, promoting beneficial soil microorganisms and reducing dependence on chemical fertilisers and pesticides through the effective utilisation of locally available natural resources.

As part of the programme, Dr. Sultan conducted practical demonstrations on the preparation and use of Jeevamrit, Ghanjeevamrit and Beejamrit, explaining their preparation methods, agricultural significance and role in natural farming.

The training programme provided a platform for technical interaction and knowledge exchange, enabling participating officials to gain practical exposure to natural farming formulations and understand their relevance to sustainable agricultural practices.

DDC Kupwara reviews progress of NH-701 Construction Work

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Abhishek Sharma, Thursday convened a meeting of officers to review the ongoing construction work on the Rafiabab-Kupwara-Chowkibal-Tangdhar-Chamkote (RKCTC) section of National Highway-701 (NH-701) and resolve bottlenecks slowing down project execution.

During the meeting, the DDC reviewed key impediments affecting work progress, including pending land revenue records, mutation attestations, structure clearances, and the shifting of utility lines.

Addressing land-related



matters, the DDC directed the Tehsildars of Langate, Kupwara, Drugmulla, and Trehgam to immediately clear all pending revenue documents and attest mutations to avoid any delay in handing over land to construction teams. The officers were instructed to submit compliance certificates in this regard without delay.

On the relocation of utilities along the highway alignment, Executive

Engineers from the Jal Shakti (PHE) Department and the Power Development Department (PDD) were asked to shift water pipelines and electric poles expeditiously. The DDC also reviewed the availability of construction material, directing the District Mineral Officer (DMO) and concerned Tehsildars to ensure adequate supply of muck, soil, and RBM while strictly adhering to statutory guidelines.

Festive Enforcement Drive FDA Conducts 274 Inspections, lifts 213 Food Samples

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Food & Drugs Administration (FDA), J&K intensified food safety inspections across all districts in view of the festive season to ensure compliance with the prescribed food safety standards.

As part of the ongoing Festive Enforcement Drive, 274 inspections have been conducted and 213 food samples lifted for laboratory analysis.

The drive focuses on checking the quality and safety of edible oils, ghee, sweets, khoya, paneer, milk and milk products, and other food items commonly consumed during the festive season.

During the drive, Food Business Operators (FBOs) are being directed to comply with the prescribed requirements

relating to food hygiene, sanitation, storage and handling. They have also been instructed to maintain hygienic conditions at their establishments in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011.

The FDA, J&K, reiterated that all Food Business Operators must comply with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and its rules and regulations. Any violation shall be dealt with in accordance with law. The Festive Enforcement Drive will continue across the Union Territory through regular inspections and sampling to monitor compliance with food safety standards and protect public health during the festive season.

DC Shopian chairs CLU Meeting, reviews Cases for timely disposal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, Thursday chaired a meeting regarding Change of Land Use (CLU) cases at the Mini-Secretariat, Shopian.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the cases pertaining to Change of Land Use and emphasised the need for their thorough scrutiny in accordance with the prescribed rules, regulations and established guidelines. He stressed upon the concerned officers to ensure transparency, maintain proper documentation and adhere to

the stipulated procedures while examining the cases.

The DC directed the officers concerned to expedite the processing of pending cases and ensure their timely disposal as per the applicable norms. He underscored the importance of inter-departmental coordination and accountability to facilitate a smooth, transparent and efficient process.

The meeting was attended by ACR Shakoor Ahmed Dar, GM, DIC, Shurjil Naik, Chief Agriculture officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Xens, Tehsildars and other line Depts associated with the processing of CLU cases.

DDC Kupwara conducts Major Health Review Pushes for Winter Readiness, High Care Standards

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Abhishek Sharma chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the overall functioning, institutional readiness, and healthcare delivery mechanisms of the Health Department across the district.

The meeting was attended by Principal, Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara, Prof. (Dr.) Khurshed Ahmad Wani; Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Handwara; Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) of Lolab and Karnah; Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Kupwara; Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Kupwara, along with other senior district and sectoral officers.

During the meeting, Principal GMC Handwara presented a detailed overview outlining the

operational status, institutional capacity, patient care facilities, and current staff positioning at GMC Handwara. Taking stock of institutional safety, the DDC impressed upon the Principal to immediately conduct a comprehensive fire safety audit across all associated facilities to ensure patient and infrastructure security.

Reviewing the primary and secondary healthcare sector, the CMO briefed the chair on manpower allocation, healthcare outreach, and facility-wise progress. The DDC laid strong emphasis on quality assurance, directing health administrators to rigorously fulfill parameters required for National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) and LaQshya certifications to upgrade maternal and newborn care standards.

In view of the approaching harsh winter season, the DDC underscored the

urgency of robust winter preparedness, noting that rural and high-altitude health centers often witness heightened patient influx and logistical constraints. He sought ground-level feedback from SDM Karnah regarding the specific medical requirements of the snow-bound subdivision and instructed the CMO to ensure optimum rationalization of medical and paramedical staff, alongside uninterrupted stocking of essential drugs, heating arrangements, and critical medical supplies.

While evaluating preventive healthcare programs, the DDC voiced serious displeasure over the underwhelming progress of Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screening in certain health blocks. He directed the CMO to immediately seek explanations from the concerned block authorities and roll out corrective measures without delay.

Awareness-cum-training programme on POSH Act 2013 held in Tangdar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: The SANKALP-Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW), Mission Shakti, Department of Social Welfare, Kupwara in collaboration with Tehsil Legal Service Authority Karnah Thursday organised an Awareness-cum-Training Programme on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) and the SHE-Box Portal at Dak Bungalow, Tangdar.

The programme witnessed the active participation of a large number of women and men, along with representatives from various departments, including Health, Police, Education, Roads and Buildings (R&B), ICDS, Social Welfare, and other stakeholders.

Resource persons deputed by the Tehsil Legal Services Authority (TLSA) sensitised the participants about the provisions of the POSH Act, the prevention and redressal



of sexual harassment at workplaces, and the importance of ensuring safe and dignified working environments for women.

The participants were also informed about the SHE-Box Portal, an online platform for reporting and addressing complaints of sexual harassment at the workplace. Various participating departments were sensitised regarding registration on the portal and the constitution of Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs), wherever applicable, to strengthen institutional mechanisms for addressing workplace harassment.

The District Programme Officer, Aijaz Ahmad Bhat who is also holding the charge of District Social

Welfare Officer, Kupwara, appreciated the participation of all departments, resource persons, and other stakeholders and acknowledged their support in making the programme meaningful and successful.

The District Mission Coordinator (DMC) addressed the gathering and highlighted the emphasis being placed by the Government of India and the Ministry of Women and Child Development on women's safety, dignity, and empowerment. The DMC stressed the importance of awareness, interdepartmental coordination, and effective implementation of the POSH Act to ensure safe working environments for women.

DDC Kulgam conducts inspection of JJM Water Supply schemes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kulgam (Chairman District Jal Jeevan Mission), Shahzad Alam Thursday conducted a extensive tour in Kulgam to inspect the progress of various water supply schemes (WSS) being implemented under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

The DDC conducted on-site reviews of civil, mechanical and groundwater works of WSS Lankar Pombay and Khallura, WSS Banimulla GB, WSS Banimulla, WSS Ashtal GB and WSS Laisoo GB.

During the inspection, Shahzad Alam reviewed the physical progress on the ground, evaluated



ongoing construction and installation activities, and assessed the operational readiness of the infrastructure. Interacting with the engineering team, he assessed progress against prescribed timelines and highlighted the necessity of adhering strictly to approved standards of work execution.

Reiterating the core objective of the Jal Jeevan Mission, to ensure reliable, safe, and sustainable tap drinking water to every

rural household, the DDC directed officers to expedite the pace of work and ensure strict monitoring to prevent any avoidable delays.

He further tasked the engineering staff with maintaining close oversight of ongoing projects to guarantee that the newly created infrastructure effectively fulfills its target of delivering safe drinking water to all targeted habitations across Kulgam district.

NEWS

CM Omar reviews developmental progress, implementation of govt schemes in Anantnag

Calls for faster implementation of development projects, Mission YUVA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Continuing his district-level outreach, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday chaired a high-level meeting in Anantnag to review developmental progress, winter preparedness and public service delivery, directing departments to expedite ongoing projects, improve implementation of government schemes and ensure timely redressal of public grievances.

Emphasising the need for coordinated and effective winter preparedness, the Chief Minister directed all concerned departments to put in place robust arrangements to minimise public inconvenience during the winter months. He stressed close coordination among the Roads and Buildings, Mechanical Engineering, Municipalities, Urban Local Bodies, PMGSY and other concerned agencies for timely snow clearance, directing the designation of nodal officers to ensure that no road remains unattended.

He also directed the administration to ensure adequate stocking of essential commodities, strengthen LPG buffer stocks and maintain uninterrupted emergency healthcare services in snow-bound



areas. Reviewing power supply arrangements, he stressed strict adherence to notified power curtailment schedules and prior intimation to consumers about unscheduled power cuts.

The review covered key sectors, including health, education, roads and infrastructure, youth empowerment, food and civil supplies, power and rural development. The Chief Minister issued directions to accelerate the development of industrial estates in the district and streamline the delivery of social welfare assistance to ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive their entitlements without delay.

Emphasising the need to promote youth entrepreneurship, Omar Abdullah directed banking institutions to streamline and expedite disbursements under Mission YUVA to enable young entrepreneurs to establish their enterprises.

Reviewing progress under the District CAPEX Budget 2026-27,

Centrally Sponsored Schemes and the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI), the Chief Minister called for regular fortnightly monitoring to improve physical and financial progress. He directed the district administration to ensure timely utilisation of allocated funds and prevent any lapsing of funds.

As part of the visit, the Chief Minister inaugurated public projects and laid foundation stones for new works worth ₹52 crore aimed at strengthening infrastructure and improving civic amenities in the district.

Major projects inaugurated include Jal Jeevan Mission Water Supply Schemes at Semthan (₹6.29 crore), Shoul Saruna (₹5.66 crore) and Chontipora Baghwanpora (₹5.08 crore). The Chief Minister also laid foundation stones for the Ashajipora-Donipawa road upgradation (₹3.61 crore) and a steel girder bridge over Nallah Brengi at Her-Kandiwara (₹3.18 crore).

Cheque Bounce Case

Srinagar Court Sentences Man to One Year Jail

Senior Advocate Bashir Sidiq appeared for petitioners

GMK CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR: A court in Srinagar has sentenced a man to one year of simple imprisonment in a ₹46.50 lakh cheque bounce case and directed him to pay a fine equivalent to twice the cheque amount as compensation to the complainant. Senior lawyer Bashir Sidiq appeared for the petitioners in the case.

As per the judgment, the accused was convicted for an offence punishable under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, which deals with cheque dis-

honour. The court directed that he serve his sentence at Central Jail Srinagar.

The accused was absent when the judgment was pronounced. Taking note of his absence, the court ordered the issuance of a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against him. It further directed that the judgment be communicated to him once he is brought before the court. The matter has been listed for October 24, 2026.

According to the complaint, the complainant and the accused had been involved in the sale and purchase of land and proper-

ties for several years. Their business dealings had led to a relationship of trust between them.

The complainant alleged that after the accounts were settled, ₹46.50 lakh became payable by the accused. To clear the outstanding amount, the accused issued a cheque dated May 1, 2021, bearing No. 563644 and drawn on J&K Bank's Brein Nishat branch in Srinagar.

However, when the cheque was presented for encashment, it was returned unpaid on July 28, 2021, with the bank citing the

reason "Payment Stopped by Drawer". Following the dishonour, the complainant issued a legal demand notice on August 24, 2021, asking the accused to pay the amount within the stipulated 15-day period.

The complaint stated that despite receiving the notice, the accused failed to make the payment. The complainant maintained that the cheque had been issued against a legally enforceable liability, leading to the proceedings under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act.

The court record also notes that the delay in filing the complaint had been condoned through an order dated March 9, 2022. After adjudicating the case, the court sentenced the accused to one year of simple imprisonment and imposed a fine equivalent to double the cheque amount, directing that the amount be paid as compensation to the complainant.

With the accused absent at the time of the judgment, the court ordered a non-bailable warrant and fixed October 24, 2026, as the next date in the matter.

Sopore Bypass Bridge shut for repairs till Oct 31, traffic diverted

WARIS FAYAZ

SOPORE: The Sopore bypass bridge, a key link connecting north Kashmir with Srinagar and facilitating the movement of fruit-laden trucks, has been closed for repair work until October 31, prompting traffic diversions and restrictions on daytime movement of fruit vehicles.

The closure came into effect at 8 pm on Thursday, affecting commuters, transporters and fruit traders, particularly during the peak apple transportation season.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sopore S.A. Raina, said the bridge had been closed to facilitate urgent repairs and that a detailed traffic management plan had been put in place to minimise disruption.

"Traffic coming from Srinagar will be diverted via Amargarh, Chankhan Bridge, Court Road and Fruit Mandi Crossing towards Kupwara. Vehicles travelling from Kupwara to Srinagar will be routed through Noorbagh, Main Market, Shalpora and Degree College towards Chankhan Bridge," he said.

The administration has directed fruit mandi stakeholders to ensure that fruit-laden trucks do not ply during the day. Such vehicles will be allowed to move in the evening as per

the diversion plan to ease congestion on alternative routes.

Street vendors operating along diversion routes will also be relocated, while authorities have been directed to keep footpaths clear for pedestrians.

Personnel from the Traffic Police, civil police and Municipal Council will be deployed across affected stretches to regulate traffic and prevent bottlenecks.

Mr Raina appealed to the public to cooperate with the arrangements, saying the measures were necessary to complete the repairs and restore normal traffic movement.

The closure has revived concerns over recurring disruptions on the bridge, a crucial route linking Kupwara and Srinagar and providing access to Sopore's fruit mandi, regarded as Asia's second-largest fruit market.

The bridge assumes added significance during the apple season, when thousands of fruit-laden trucks use the route to transport produce from Kashmir to markets across the country.

A two-day traffic diversion was also implemented in May as part of repair-related arrangements, highlighting concerns over the bridge's condition and the need for long-term infrastructure solutions—(KNO)

Ministry of Tribal Affairs organises Interaction Programme with ST Beneficiaries

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, organised an interaction programme with Scheduled Tribe (ST) beneficiaries and Forest Rights Act title holders of Sub-Division Khansahib in district Budgam to raise awareness about the Forest Rights Act (FRA), facilitate awareness regarding the process of filing and obtaining forest rights claims, and highlight various welfare initiatives aimed at the socio-economic development of tribal communities.

Under Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, Shambhu Nath Pal, attended the programme as the Chief Guest. Upon his arrival at the venue, he inspected stalls showcasing locally cultivated products and other items produced by members of the Scheduled Tribe community. The exhibition highlighted



the local livelihood activities, traditional skills and economic potential of the tribal population.

During the programme, Shambhu Nath Pal held detailed deliberations on the provisions of the Forest Rights Act, with particular emphasis on Community Forest Rights (CFR) and Individual Forest Rights (IFR). He sensitised the participants about the objectives and scope of the Act and explained the procedure for filing claims, documentation required, and the process involved in securing eligible forest rights under the prescribed framework.

He also interacted with the beneficiaries and emphasised the importance of awareness, proper guidance

and coordination among the concerned departments to ensure that eligible members of the Scheduled Tribe community are able to understand and access the benefits available to them under the Act.

Dr. Basharat Hussain, Secretary Tribal Affairs Advisory Board, also addressed the gathering and spoke about the significance of the Forest Rights Act and its potential to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of tribal communities. He highlighted the benefits of the Act and stressed the need to enhance awareness among eligible beneficiaries so that they could avail themselves of their entitlements in accordance with the prescribed provisions.

PAC reviews CAG audit observations of H&UDD Deptt

Salathia calls for citizen-centric, scientific waste management system



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Thursday convened a meeting at the Legislative Assembly here, under the Chairmanship of Surjeet Singh Slathia, to examine the CAG Audit Paras pertaining to the Housing and Urban Development Department.

The meeting was attended by Legislators Mubarik Gul, Shamim Firdous, Qaysar Jamshaid Lone, Ranbir Singh Pathania, Ch. Mohammad Akram, Vikram Randhawa and Tanvir Sadiq.

The Chairman observed that deficiencies flagged by the CAG including gaps in planning for ULBs, lack of stakeholder consultation in preparation of SWM Action Plans, non-assessment of

quantity and composition of waste and inadequate segregation at source need to be addressed on priority. He further noted that issues related to collection, transportation, processing, scientific disposal, adherence to SWM Rules 2016 and deficient manpower and capacity building of sanitation staff require concerted efforts at the ULB level.

The Committee held detailed deliberations on Audit Paras concerning the Solid Waste Management in Urban Local Bodies, including collection, segregation at source, transportation, processing and scientific disposal of waste. The Committee also reviewed issues relating the financial management, capacity building and implementation of waste management rules.

During the meeting, Sur-

jeet Singh Slathia, emphasized that proper utilization of public funds is essential for strengthening the democratic institutions and ensuring clean environment for citizens. He underlined the need for strict adherence to the prescribed guidelines and for time-bound implementation of Solid Waste Management projects.

The Chairman stressed on achieving 100 per cent door-to-door collection and segregation of waste at source, improvement of approach roads to dumping sites and scientific management of legacy waste, particularly along highway corridors. He emphasized on conducting Compliance Audit and Performance Audit to ensure transparency, accountability and effective outcome of urban development schemes.

Intensify efforts to make Jammu and Kashmir TB free: Biswas directs officials

Says UT among leading regions in TB screening, X-ray utilisation

JAHANGEER GANAIE

JAMMU: Commissioner Secretary, Health and Medical Education (H&ME) Department, Saugat Biswas, on Wednesday directed officials to intensify efforts towards making Jammu and Kashmir tuberculosis-free.

Chairing a review meeting on the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP), Biswas, directed the officials to focus on complete screening targets, strengthen early diagnosis and ensure comprehensive care for patients across the Union Territory.

The Commissioner Secretary called for coordinated efforts at all levels to address operational bottlenecks, improve service delivery and ensure that the benefits of the programme reach every eligible beneficiary.

While reviewing the Union Territory's performance, Biswas underscored the government's commitment to achieving the national goal of a TB-free India through a coordinated and multi-sectoral approach involving healthcare institutions, district administrations and local communities.

He noted that sustained efforts in grassroots screening, patient tracking, community participation and administrative monitoring had helped

Jammu and Kashmir emerge among the leading regions in the country in terms of population screening coverage and X-ray utilisation.

Emphasising the need to sustain this progress, the Commissioner Secretary directed officials to ensure the timely completion of active case-finding exercises and population screening targets, particularly in vulnerable areas, high-risk villages and other localities where the possibility of undetected TB cases remains a concern.

He stressed that early identification of cases was crucial to interrupting transmission, ensuring timely treatment and preventing further spread of the disease within communities.

Biswas also directed health authorities to make optimum use of available diagnostic infrastructure, including facility-based and handheld X-ray machines, to strengthen the identification of suspected TB cases and improve access to screening services, particularly in underserved and remote areas.

He called for strengthening the Differentiated TB Care framework to ensure that patients receive treatment and support according to their individual clinical risks and needs. The approach, he emphasised, should include appropriate clinical management and nutritional assistance for patients requiring additional care.

Ladakh Civil Society Calls for Moving Forward

Accuses Activist Leadership of Delaying Democratic Progress

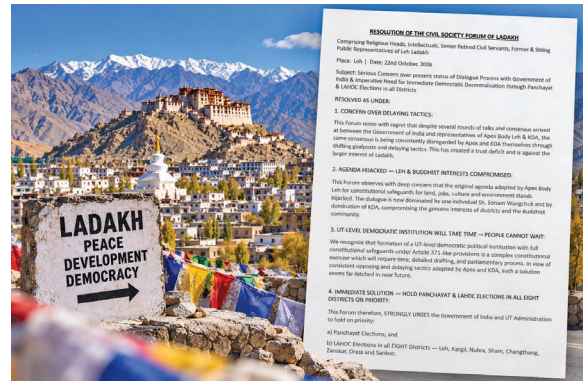
GMK NEWS NETWORK

LEH: In a significant development, the Civil Society Forum of Ladakh has called for an end to prolonged political confrontation and delays in negotiations with the Centre, accusing sections of the activist leadership of obstructing progress on democratic representation and constitutional safeguards for the Union Territory.

In a resolution adopted on October 22, the Forum, comprising religious leaders, intellectuals, retired senior civil servants and former public representatives, expressed serious concern over what it described as repeated delaying tactics by the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA).

The resolution signals growing dissatisfaction within sections of Ladakh's civil society over the direction of the ongoing agitation, with the Forum arguing that the region cannot afford to remain trapped in political uncertainty while democratic institutions remain absent.

The Forum alleged that despite several rounds of discussions and agreements reached with the Government of India, certain representatives had



repeatedly shifted their positions, creating mistrust and preventing meaningful progress.

In a pointed criticism, the resolution named activist Sonam Wangchuk and the KDA, alleging that their influence had diverted the original agenda of securing safeguards for Ladakh's land, jobs, culture and environment.

According to the Forum, what began as a constructive dialogue for constitutional protection has increasingly turned into confrontation with the Centre, potentially compromising the interests of Leh and the wider Ladakh region.

The Forum maintained that Ladakh needs functioning democratic institutions rather than an

indefinite cycle of protests, negotiations and political uncertainty.

It urged the Centre and the Union Territory administration to immediately conduct Panchayat elections and establish elected Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils across all eight proposed districts, including Leh, Kargil, Nubra, Sham, Changthang, Zaskar, Drass and Sankou.

The resolution argued that strengthening elected district councils would provide immediate protection for local interests, including land, employment, natural resources, tourism and cultural identity, while discussions on broader constitutional safeguards continue.

73 foreign runners from 12 countries to participate in Kashmir Marathon: Dir Tourism

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Seventy-three foreign athletes from 12 countries are set to participate in the third edition of the Kashmir Marathon on October 25, as Jammu and Kashmir seeks to strengthen its international profile as a sports tourism destination, with the Tourism Department expecting the total participation to cross 2,000.

Director Tourism Kashmir Syed Qamar Sajjad said 1,807 runners had registered online so far, with preparations for the event entering the final stage and on-the-spot registration opened for those who had missed the online registration deadline.

"So far, we have received around 1,807 online registrations, including 73 foreign athletes from 12 countries.

We expect the total number of participants to cross 2,000 this year," Sajjad told reporters on the sidelines of the Marathon Expo.

Highlighting the international significance of the event, he said the participation of athletes from different countries would help showcase Kashmir to a wider global audience and strengthen its image as a tourist destination.

"Such events send a message to the outside world that Kashmir is peaceful and safe for visitors. When athletes from different countries come here and participate, it creates a positive impression internationally," Sajjad said.

The Director said the government had decided to make the Kashmir Marathon an annual event to ensure continuity and pro-

mote the Valley internationally through sporting activities. "These events should take place regularly. That is why the government has included the Kashmir Marathon in its annual calendar so that Kashmir can be promoted internationally," Sajjad said.

He said the Marathon Expo, inaugurated by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, featured 20 stalls, while on-the-spot registration began after 4 pm on Thursday to provide an opportunity to runners who had not registered online.

Sajjad said the Tourism Department is coordinating with different government departments to ensure the smooth conduct of the marathon, with preparations and logistical arrangements being finalised ahead of Sunday's event.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Artists Need Policy, Not Promises

Kashmir's Dying Cultural Voice

Since 2012, Kashmiri television, music and drama have witnessed a prolonged decline, pushing thousands of artists, musicians, dramatists, writers and media professionals into economic uncertainty. A once-vibrant creative industry is gradually fading, taking with it livelihoods, talent and an important part of Kashmir's cultural identity. Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar, once a lifeline for the artistic fraternity, provided employment while preserving Kashmiri language, music, theatre and heritage. Today, shrinking production opportunities have left many artists struggling to survive, while their repeated appeals for revival appear to have received little meaningful response. Those who spent their lives preserving Kashmir's cultural heritage should not be forced to fight for their own survival. The need of the hour is not another assurance, but a concrete cultural revival policy. The authorities and Prasar Bharati must introduce a dedicated annual budget for Kashmiri-language television, music and drama, restore regular commissioning of local productions, and establish a transparent calendar for programmes that provides artists with predictable work. A fixed share of regional programming should be devoted to Kashmiri content, including original dramas, folk music, documentaries, literary programmes and recordings of traditional art forms. Open and transparent commissioning procedures must give established artists as well as emerging talent a fair opportunity, while timely payment of artists, performers and production staff should be made mandatory. The government should also constitute a representative committee involving artists' associations, broadcasters and cultural experts to assess the losses suffered by the fraternity and recommend a time-bound revival plan. Opportunities for young performers, preservation of archival recordings and support for independent Kashmiri productions must form integral parts of this policy. The objective should be clear: restore production, generate employment and protect cultural continuity. Kashmiri music, television and drama cannot be revived through ceremonial functions or occasional cultural festivals. They need sustained institutional support, assured programming and a professional ecosystem in which artists can earn a livelihood with dignity. The authorities must recognise that cultural preservation is not charity; it is a public responsibility. Every year of inaction pushes more talent away from the profession and weakens the transmission of Kashmir's artistic traditions to future generations. Kashmir's artists are not asking for favours. They are demanding a fair opportunity to work, a policy that protects their profession and institutions that respect their contribution. The time for promises is over; a time-bound action plan is now imperative.

Kashmir Marathon

The Real Wealth Of Life Lies In Good Health

AUBAID AHMAD AKHOON

Mirza Qurban Ali Beig, who was a well-known Urdu poet in the 19th century, used the pen names Qurban and later Saalik. He appropriately conveyed the importance of good health in the famous couplet: Tangdasti agar na ho Saliq, Tandrusti hazaar ne'mat hai. Even if poverty were not a problem, good health would still be one of the great blessings of life. We have known since we were children these valuable words which stress the immense importance of good health. Our parents, grandparents and old aged relatives have always repeated the traditional saying that health is wealth, but in our younger years we generally didn't grasp the real meaning of it. In childhood one is in a state of innocence and usually does not realise the value of things until one has gained experience. Nevertheless, as we grow up and face the realities of life, we start to come to appreciate the wisdom contained in these simple words. The true significance of good health is even more apparent when we consider our older family members who have to cope with the physical difficulties which are common in old age. The lessons we learn from their experiences show that wealth, property and all the material advantages cease to be very attractive when the body can no longer make use of them. A sound body allows us to work, to think, to learn, to serve our families and to carry out our duties; but without it even the most basic tasks can become difficult. In fact, a healthy body is the best environment for a sound mind, and physical well-being should therefore be one of the greatest things for which we owe gratitude to Almighty Allah. Our body is a trust, an amanah, which the Creator has given us. It is not simply a matter of personal preference to look after it, but rather a serious responsibility. Unfortunately, the lifestyles we now lead, together with excessive use of screens, unhealthy eating and an increasing unwillingness to take part in physical activity, are slowly causing us to move away from the habits that keep us healthy. We usually realise how important it is to maintain our health only when we fall ill and are forced to look again at what matters. At that point, it may already be too late, since we could have ignored the simple daily routines that would have enabled us to stay fitter and more active. **Exercise: A Small Habit with Lasting Benefits** You don't have to lift heavy weights, run long distances or spend hours in a gym in order to get physical exercise; it can start with simple and regular activities such as walking quickly, cycling, playing a sport, stretching, doing exercises suitable for your age or simply deciding to walk rather than staying seated for long periods. The key is not to put in extraordinary effort but rather to be consistent. Doing physical activity every day helps to strengthen the muscles and bones, enhances cardiovascular fitness, aids in maintaining a healthy weight and assists in regulating both blood pressure and blood sugar. It may also have a positive effect on sleep, lessen stress and lead to improved emotional well-being. It gives a chance to get away from the pressures of everyday life, clear the mind and regain a feeling of balance. It is worthwhile to start on a small scale, so long as it turns into a sustainable habit. **Let Childhood Be a Time of Play, Not Just Pressure** Parents play a special role in influencing the physical and emotional development of their children, and the habits that children acquire during their childhood generally have an impact on their way of life for many years afterwards. When parents promote outdoor play, walking, cycling and taking part in sports from an early age, it is more likely that the children will come to have a positive attitude towards physical activity. It is a sad thing that more and more children now spend a large part of their free time in front of mobile phones, tablets, computers and television screens. In a great many homes, children's academic performance has come to be the only way of judging their progress. Motivated by real worries about their children's futures, parents often fill their children's timetable with schoolwork, tuition and coaching, leaving very little room for play, exercise or recreation. It is certainly essential to have education, but it shouldn't happen at the expense of a child's general development. Children should be given the chance to run about, play, explore, interact with their peers and learn by means of experiences that go beyond what is in textbooks. Unstructured play and team sports can aid children in becoming more confident, improving their communication skills, learning to be patient, developing discipline, fostering cooperation and building resilience. They also offer valuable opportunities for children to learn how to cope with disappointment, respect the rules and work together towards common goals. Children should have a well-balanced environment in which academic learning, recreation, family interaction and emotional support all complement each other. Parents must therefore avoid the temptation to regard every free hour as time wasted. A child who is playing football in an open field is not necessarily wasting his or her time; the child might be gaining physical endurance, learning to think strategically, developing a sense of teamwork and learning how to meet challenges. The aim should be to foster in children healthy, and confident individuals rather than students who are occupied academically but physically inactive **Fitness Is Also a Step Towards a Drug-Free Society**



the pressures of everyday life, clear the mind and regain a feeling of balance. It is worthwhile to start on a small scale, so long as it turns into a sustainable habit. **Let Childhood Be a Time of Play, Not Just Pressure** Parents play a special role in influencing the physical and emotional development of their children, and the habits that children acquire during their childhood generally have an impact on their way of life for many years afterwards. When parents promote outdoor play, walking, cycling and taking part in sports from an early age, it is more likely that the children will come to have a positive attitude towards physical activity. It is a sad thing that more and more children now spend a large part of their free time in front of mobile phones, tablets, computers and television screens. In a great many homes, children's academic performance has come to be the only way of judging their progress. Motivated by real worries about their children's futures, parents often fill their children's timetable with schoolwork, tuition and coaching, leaving very little room for play, exercise or recreation. It is certainly essential to have education, but it shouldn't happen at the expense of a child's general development. Children should be given the chance to run about, play, explore, interact with their peers and learn by means of experiences that go beyond what is in textbooks. Unstructured play and team sports can aid children in becoming more confident, improving their communication skills, learning to be patient, developing discipline, fostering cooperation and building resilience. They also offer valuable opportunities for children to learn how to cope with disappointment, respect the rules and work together towards common goals. Children should have a well-balanced environment in which academic learning, recreation, family interaction and emotional support all complement each other. Parents must therefore avoid the temptation to regard every free hour as time wasted. A child who is playing football in an open field is not necessarily wasting his or her time; the child might be gaining physical endurance, learning to think strategically, developing a sense of teamwork and learning how to meet challenges. The aim should be to foster in children healthy, and confident individuals rather than students who are occupied academically but physically inactive **Fitness Is Also a Step Towards a Drug-Free Society**

It is important to run awareness campaigns concerning drug abuse, but it is impossible for slogans alone to deal with a problem which requires continuous involvement from families, educational institutions and the community as a whole. Children need to learn about the harmful effects of substance abuse through sincere talks, education suitable for their age and by looking at positive examples. They should also be given the opportunity to

The true significance of good health is even more apparent when we consider our older family members who have to cope with the physical difficulties which are common in old age.

access counselling and professional support if required. It is impossible for a sports ground on its own to get rid of drug addiction, and being physically active does not mean that a person is automatically safeguarded against all social or psychological problems. Yet accessible sporting facilities, supportive relationships and meaningful recreational opportunities can serve as useful elements of a wider prevention strategy. The responsibility is jointly undertaken by parents, teachers, educational institutions, community organisations and government departments; rather than just telling young people what they should avoid, we ought to assist them in finding worthwhile activities, healthy friendships and constructive ambitions which enrich their lives. **Kashmir Marathon: Celebrating Fitness and the Beauty of Our Valley** The special importance of the third edition of the Kashmir Marathon, which is set to take place on October 25, 2026, should be understood

in this light. The event, which is being organised by the Department of Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir, combines the values of fitness, endurance, tourism and the promotion of Kashmir's natural and cultural heritage. It appears on the calendar of the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS). foreign nationals from different countries had entered registrations for the event, indicating its increasing international appeal. The event includes both full and half-marathon races, giving runners a chance to test their endurance beside the beautiful setting of the Valley. The course features famous landscapes and landmarks of Srinagar such as Dal Lake, the Zabarwan range and the historic Mughal gardens. This kind of event is more than just a sporting contest; it is an opportunity to show Kashmir as a destination that welcomes tourists via its scenic attractions, hospitality, cultural wealth and the increasing enthusiasm for sports. The Kashmir Marathon also sends out a significant message to the local people. Since runners from other countries travel long distances just to take part in a sporting event in our valley, we should appreciate the value of the fitness culture they embody. Running involves preparation, patience, consistency and a respect for one's physical limits; qualities which can be of benefit to people well beyond the racecourse. There is no need for everybody to turn into a marathon runner; the true aim is to encourage ordinary people to take that first step on the way to a healthier life. Whether it's an individual who starts by walking every day, a student who uses an hour that would otherwise be spent on unnecessary screen time to take part in outdoor activities, or a family that incorporates exercise into its everyday routine, all of these people are helping to achieve the same goal. When the third edition of the Kashmir Marathon is taking place on October 25, we should appreciate and back this beneficial initiative. People who have registered and are properly prepared are free to take part, while those who haven't can show their support for the runners and adopt a more active lifestyle themselves. It is also important to bear in mind that intense exercise calls for proper preparation, and anyone with any relevant health issues should obtain the necessary medical advice prior to engaging in demanding physical activity. A healthy Kashmir cannot be achieved merely by the efforts of runners; it also needs parents who appreciate playing, teachers who promote participation, institutions which offer opportunities, and citizens who understand the value of exercising every day. Let us go back to the advice given by Qurban Ali Saliq Beigh and remember that good health is a blessing the value of which cannot be expressed in monetary terms. Although we do not all have great wealth, we can still work at developing healthier habits, make better choices and urge the people nearby to do the same. In fact, an individual who is healthier will have a healthier family, a healthier family will in turn make society healthier, and a healthier society forms the basis of a stronger nation.

The author can be mailed at akhoon. aubaid@gmail.com

Additive Manufacturing In India

Next Generation Digital Manufacturing

PIB Backgrounder

In May 2024, a rocket Agnibaan – SORTed lifted off from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh featuring a single-piece, Additive Manufacturing (AM) printed semi-cryogenic engine rocket engine. The event demonstrated the country's competitive advancement of technology usage to become a major builder. The National Strategy for Additive Manufacturing (NSAM) is helping more such start-ups in their R&D for development of critical engine parts using AM. Nearly 2,000 kilometres away in the city of Ahmedabad, the Indian Army has a two-storey dwelling unit that was also printed by a machine. The Army has since used the same method in the Union Territory of Ladakh to produce precast defences. A rocket engine and a soldier's home look nothing alike. Both came from the same idea that is AM or 3D printing. AM is a process of creating an object by building it from layer to layer, something that is opposite of subtractive manufacturing. AM starts with a design wherein software cuts the design into hundreds or thousands of thin layers. The machine then reads each layer and builds the object, one layer on top of another. More than 40 such processes exist in the market or in research

labs. They work with plastics, metals, ceramics and materials meant for the human body. Researchers are even testing the printing of tissue from living cells. **Why AM** For over a decade India has shown it can build systems at scale in the digital world. The next step is to do the same with physical goods. A design file can travel anywhere in seconds, and a printer can turn it into a part in a town far from any large factory. That means less waiting for imports and more making at home. **The early results are already visible.** A construction printer, the Kelvin 6K Pro, has built 2,500 sq ft homes in under 30 days, using material with lower carbon content. Early figures point to 30% lower material and logistics costs and 90% lower emissions than cement-based building. In healthcare, the Technology Development Board is backing bone grafts printed from Indian bioceramic materials. Each graft can be shaped to fit one patient. A start-up named OsteoForge is working on implants made from natural silk. In electronics, centres under the national strategy have printed batteries, antennas and capacitors, and IISc has printed parts of a photonic circuit, a first anywhere in the world. **The policy behind AM**



None of this happened without an efficient policy. In February 2022, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology released the National Strategy for Additive Manufacturing. It set targets: capture 5 per cent of the global market, add nearly \$1 billion to GDP, develop 50 India-specific technologies, support 100 start-ups, create 500 products and train 1 lakh workers. **The numbers so far are encouraging.**

More than 1,54,000 people have been trained. Fifty-six start-ups have been supported. Sixty-five India-specific technologies, covering materials, machines, design methods and products, have been developed. Seven centres now help with research, training and access to machines. The effort also reaches schools. Atal Tinkering Labs get a grant of INR 20 lakh each and are equipped with 3D printers, robotics and Internet of Things kits.

A student in Grade VI can now handle a printer. That student is the future workforce. A second phase, NSAM 2.0, is being planned. It aims to produce more patents, bring down the cost of machines and materials, strengthen the electronics supply chain, back more start-ups and support the defence forces. **What after AM** The global market for these machines is projected to reach USD 149 billion by 2035. India has a chance to make the machines and materials, and not only use them. That will need three things. First, the machines and materials must become cheaper, so small firms can afford them. Second, the hospitals, builders and defence units that have tried the technology must buy it in larger numbers. Third, the training must lead to jobs, so that those 1,54,000 trained people find work in this field. India will also host ESTIC-2026, organised by CSIR, from 27 to 29 October at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. AM is one of its themes. It is a good place to ask how quickly the pilot projects can become regular production. The rocket engine and the Army home were firsts. The aim now is to make them ordinary. When a hospital prints a graft, a builder prints a house and a start-up prints an engine without anyone calling it news, India will have made AM its own. **(PIB)**

IDEAS, OPINIONS AND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED ARE WRITERS' OWN AND MAY NOT BE FOUND IN ACCORD WITH THOSE OF GOOD MORNING KASHMIR

Good Morning

Kashmir

Editor, Owner, Printer, Publisher

Javed Ashraf Shah

Associate Editors

Suhail Mir

Sulaiman Muhammed Shah

Legal Advisor

Bashir Sidiq

Bureau Chief Jammu:

Harbans Nagokay

R.N.I No: JKENG/2010/36998

Regd No: 109555

Office No: 0194-3593724

Email:

goodmorningkashmir@gmail.com

Office Address:

B-11, Budshah Flats, Jehangir Chowk, Srinagar-190001

Printed at:

Khidmat Offset Printing Press, The Bund, Srinagar

Published From:

Main Bus Stand, Near Masjid Rehmat, Lal Bazar, Srinagar - 190023

Layout Designer

Aijaz Ahmad Dar

Let The Pulpit Heal Society, Not Divide It

Why Kashmir Needs Sermons That Inspire Social Reform, Compassion And Collective Responsibility



DR. RIZWAN RUMI

A society is shaped not only by its institutions, laws and political leadership, but also by the ideas it embraces, the values it practises and the voices it chooses to listen to. In Kashmir, where religion remains an important part of everyday life, the pulpit occupies a particularly significant place in the social and moral landscape. Every Friday, thousands of people gather in mosques to listen to sermons, seeking spiritual guidance, moral clarity and direction for their lives. This gives religious scholars, particularly the Ulama and Imams, an opportunity to influence society in ways that extend far beyond the walls of a mosque.

The question worth asking is whether we are making the fullest use of this influence.

At a time when our society is confronting numerous challenges, from drug abuse among young people and growing family tensions to extravagant marriage customs, social intolerance, neglect of the elderly and the erosion of mutual respect, religious discourse can become an important instrument of constructive change. The pulpit can help awaken consciences, challenge harmful practices and encourage people to become more responsible towards their families, neighbours and communities.

This is not an argument against religious debate, nor is it an attempt to diminish the importance of theological differences. Differences in interpretation have existed throughout Islamic intellectual history. The concern arises when disagreements become a source of persistent hostility, when group identities take precedence over shared responsibilities, and when ordinary people are left with little guidance on the practical problems affecting their everyday lives.

Kashmir is already a society carrying the weight of numerous divisions and difficulties. What it needs is not another layer of bitterness, but more spaces for reflection, reconciliation and collective improvement. The pulpit can be one such space.

The Quranic call for unity and wisdom

Islam provides a clear foundation for this approach. In Surah Aal-e-Imran, verse 103, the Quran instructs believers to hold firmly together and not become divided. The verse recalls how God brought hearts together and transformed former hostility into brotherhood. Its message offers a profound reminder that unity and reconciliation are not peripheral concerns; they are central to the moral life of the community.

Similarly, Surah An-Nahl, verse 125, calls for inviting people to the way of the Lord with wisdom and good instruction. This principle has particular relevance to religious communication. A sermon is not merely an opportunity to speak; it is an opportunity to guide. The manner in which a message is delivered can determine whether it encourages reflection or provokes resentment, whether it brings people closer to moral understanding or pushes them further apart.

Religious scholarship carries responsibilities alongside its authority. Knowledge becomes socially meaningful when it helps people understand their obligations, correct their mistakes and treat others with justice. A sermon that encourages honesty in business, compassion towards the poor, respect for women, care for parents and reconciliation between estranged families can leave an impact that continues long after the congregation has dispersed.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) described religion as sincere counsel. In Sahih Muslim, Hadith 55, this principle is expressed through the Arabic word *nasihah*, referring to sincerity and well-wishing towards God, His Book, His Messenger, Muslim leaders and the wider Muslim community. This understanding of religion points towards guidance that seeks the welfare of people rather than the humiliation of opponents.

The challenge, therefore, is to ensure that religious knowledge consistently finds expression in the everyday conduct of society.



When sermons meet the realities of everyday life

Consider the growing concern surrounding drug abuse. Families dealing with addiction often face fear, embarrassment and social stigma. A young person struggling with substance dependence may need medical treatment, counselling, family support and a path towards rehabilitation. Religious leaders can play an important role by discouraging substance abuse while also reminding communities that those struggling with addiction should not be abandoned or reduced to the worst chapter of their lives.

A sermon that encourages parents to communicate with their children, urges communities to support rehabilitation and reminds young people that their lives retain value even when

agance and discourage customs that turn a joyful occasion into a financial burden. Such guidance should not be limited to general statements about simplicity; it should also address the social pressure that prevents families from practising it.

The same is true of women's rights. Islamic teachings establish rights relating to marriage, inheritance and dignity, yet social customs can sometimes obstruct the exercise of those rights. Surah An-Nisa, verse 7, explicitly recognises an obligatory share of inheritance for women. This provides a clear basis for reminding families that denying a daughter her rightful inheritance is not a harmless tradition but a violation of a right recognised by the Quran.

If sermons regularly addressed such matters, they could help families reconsider practices that have persisted for generations. A daughter should not have to surrender her rights merely to preserve family relations, nor should religious language be used to justify an injustice that religious teachings themselves prohibit.

Domestic discord, disrespect towards elderly parents, the humiliation of vulnerable people and the mistreatment of workers also deserve attention. These issues may not always generate public controversy, but they shape the moral health of a community every day. A society cannot claim to be guided by religious values while remaining indifferent to the suffering that takes

speech carries moral consequences and that faith must influence how they treat others.

Religious authority is most constructive when it gives people reasons to become more honest, patient, compassionate and responsible. It loses some of its social value when the audience leaves a gathering more concerned with the shortcomings of another group than with correcting its own conduct.

The responsibility for improving public discourse does not rest with scholars alone. Listeners, community organisations and religious institutions must also encourage thoughtful engagement rather than reward provocative rhetoric. Respectful disagreement is possible, and a mature religious culture should be able to accommodate it without sacrificing the bonds that hold a community together.

The social questions that deserve a place on the pulpit

Imagine if, over the course of a year, Friday sermons consistently addressed the concerns that affect families and communities across Kashmir. One sermon might examine the responsibility of parents to protect children from harmful influences. Another could discuss the importance of education, the dignity of labour and the need to treat workers fairly. Others could address wastefulness, environmental responsibility, care for the elderly, the rights of orphans, the importance of keeping promises and the duty to help families facing hardship.

The Quran itself repeatedly draws attention to social responsibility. Surah Al-Ma'un, for instance, condemns the neglect of orphans and the failure to encourage feeding the poor. Its message reminds believers that religious observance cannot be separated from concern for the vulnerable.

This principle has particular relevance to a society in which families may struggle with financial hardship, illness, unemployment or the cost of education. Mosques can become centres of community solidarity, helping identify families in need, connecting them with legitimate assistance and encouraging charity to be offered with dignity rather than public

and educational neglect.

Such cooperation would not diminish the role of religious scholarship. It would help ensure that spiritual guidance is informed by an understanding of the challenges people face and that communities are directed towards appropriate professional support when necessary.

Religious institutions could also encourage voluntary initiatives such as assistance for financially vulnerable students, support for families dealing with addiction, mediation in family disputes where appropriate, and discreet help for elderly people living without adequate care. These efforts should respect privacy, avoid public shaming and operate within the limits of the institutions' expertise.

There is also room for greater coordination among scholars from different backgrounds on shared social concerns. They may not agree on every theological question, but they can still work together to discourage drug abuse, support education, promote affordable marriages, protect vulnerable people and encourage peaceful coexistence. Cooperation on these matters does not require anyone to abandon sincerely held beliefs. It requires recognising that many social responsibilities are shared.

The objective should not be to turn every sermon into a discussion of social problems or to reduce the spiritual purpose of Friday prayers to a programme of community development. Worship, theology and spiritual reflection remain essential. The point is to recognise that spiritual guidance and social responsibility need not compete with each other. They can strengthen one another.

A call for reflection, not confrontation

It would be unfair to suggest that the Ulama have remained absent from social reform. Many religious scholars have contributed to education, charitable work, family guidance and community welfare, often without seeking recognition. Their work deserves acknowledgement. The appeal here is to build upon such contributions and give greater collective attention to the social potential of religious guidance.

The influence of a sermon should not be measured only by the size of the congregation or the intensity of its response. It should also be reflected in what happens afterwards. Does a person return home more respectful towards their spouse? Does a family reconsider an unjust practice? Does a businessman become more honest in his dealings? Does a community become more willing to help a struggling young person? Does a congregation become more compassionate towards people with whom its members disagree?

These may be difficult outcomes to measure, but they offer a meaningful way to think about the social value of religious discourse.

Kashmir needs religious voices that remind people of their duties alongside their rights, their responsibilities alongside their disagreements, and their common humanity alongside their differences. It needs sermons that address not only what believers should avoid, but also what they should actively do to improve the lives of others.

The pulpit has the potential to become a source of healing in a society that has too often experienced division. Its words can encourage families to choose simplicity over display, compassion over stigma, justice over inherited prejudice and dialogue over hostility. Such an approach would not weaken religion's place in society; it would demonstrate how deeply its ethical teachings can shape public life.

Ultimately, the question is not whether religious scholars should speak about social reform. It is how their considerable moral influence can be used more consistently to advance it.

Let the pulpit remind us that faith must be visible in our conduct, that religious knowledge carries a responsibility towards humanity, and that the strength of a community lies not in the intensity with which its members condemn one another, but in the sincerity with which they work to correct themselves and serve others.

Let our pulpits become places from which society learns not merely how to disagree, but how to live together; not merely how to identify the faults of others, but how to confront its own; and not merely how to speak about faith, but how to translate its teachings into justice, compassion and meaningful social change.

The author can be mailed at rizwanrumi2012@gmail.com

Every Friday, thousands of people gather in mosques to listen to sermons, seeking spiritual guidance, moral clarity and direction for their lives. This gives religious scholars, particularly the Ulama and Imams, an opportunity to influence society in ways that extend far beyond the walls of a mosque.



place within its homes and neighbourhoods.

Beyond group identities and mutual accusations

Another concern is the manner in which religious disagreements are sometimes communicated in public. Debate, clarification and the study of differing interpretations have their place in a tradition as intellectually rich as Islam. Scholars must be free to explain their understanding of religious texts and engage in serious discussion. The objective should not be to silence disagreement or demand uniformity of thought.

However, there is a meaningful difference between explaining a position and turning disagreement into hostility. When religious gatherings become occasions for attacking personalities, questioning the sincerity of entire groups or reinforcing divisions among ordinary believers, the wider purpose of moral guidance risks being overshadowed.

The Quran's call to unity should encourage scholars to reflect on the consequences of their words. The task is not necessarily to eliminate every disagreement, which may be neither possible nor desirable, but to ensure that disagreements are handled with knowledge, restraint and respect.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, as recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 6018, that whoever believes in God and the Last Day should not harm their neighbour and should speak what is good or remain silent. This teaching offers a useful standard for public religious discourse. It reminds believers that

humiliation.

Imams can also help foster a culture of educational responsibility. Parents should be encouraged to invest in their children's learning, support girls' education and create homes where curiosity and knowledge are valued. Young people should be reminded that education, professional integrity and service to society are compatible with religious commitment.

Environmental responsibility deserves similar attention. Kashmir's rivers, lakes, forests and other natural resources are not merely scenic assets; they sustain lives and livelihoods. Sermons could encourage people to avoid littering, conserve water, protect public spaces and recognise that environmental neglect affects future generations. The language of stewardship and accountability can help connect religious values with the practical task of protecting the places we inhabit.

These are not departures from religious concerns. They are opportunities to translate moral principles into everyday action.

From weekly sermons to sustained social reform

For this vision to become meaningful, it must go beyond occasional appeals. Mosques and religious institutions could encourage a more deliberate approach to community guidance, with sermons addressing different social concerns throughout the year. Local scholars could consult educators, doctors, counsellors and social workers to better understand issues such as addiction, mental health, family conflict

Asian Para Games

CM congratulates
Sheetal Devi on
winning two Gold
Medals



GMK SPORTS DESK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday congratulated ace para archer Sheetal Devi on winning two Gold Medals at the Asian Para Games 2026, bringing laurels to Jammu and Kashmir and the country.

The Chief Minister hailed her exceptional achievement in clinching Gold in both the Women's Compound

Individual Event and the Compound Mixed Team Event, describing her performance as a moment of immense pride for Jammu and Kashmir and the nation.

He lauded Sheetal Devi for her outstanding sporting excellence and wished her continued success in her future endeavours, expressing hope that she would continue to inspire aspiring sportspersons through her achievements.

China retains men's team crown,
Japan takes women's title at
table tennis Asian C'ships.

IANIS

TASHKENT: China defeated South Korea 3-0 to claim its fourth consecutive men's team title at the 2026 ITTF-ATTU Asian Championships on Thursday, while Japan rallied to beat China 3-2 in the women's team final.

Having won the men's title in 2023, 2024 and 2025, China extended its dominance despite fielding a youthful squad as part of its preparations for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Several established stars, including Wang Chuqin, Sun Yingsha and Wang Manyu, were absent from the tournament as China looked to accelerate its generational transition, reports Xinhua.

China reached the men's final with a 3-1 semifinal victory over Chinese Taipei earlier Thursday, while South Korea upset Japan, whose lineup featured world No. 1 Sora Matsushima and third-ranked Tomokazu Harimoto, by the same score.

Zhou Qihao gave China the lead in the final with

a 3-1 victory over South Korean defensive specialist Kang Dong-soo before Lin Shidong extended the advantage by sweeping Park Gyu-hyeon 3-0. Xiang Peng then sealed the title with a 3-1 win over Park Gang-hyeon.

In the women's competition, Japan rallied from 2-1 down to defeat China and claim the title, with Honoka Hashimoto winning the decisive fifth match.

Both teams had advanced to the final with 3-0 semifinal victories, China over South Korea and Japan over Chinese Taipei.

Japan struck first as defensive specialist Hashimoto swept Chen Yi in straight games, but Wang Yidi edged Miwa Harimoto in a five-game contest to level the tie.

Kuai Man then defeated Hina Hayata 3-0 to put China within one victory of the title, only for Harimoto to beat Chen in straight games and force a deciding match.

Hashimoto then completed Japan's comeback with a 3-1 victory over Wang.

70th National School Games in Taekwondo begins at GCOPE

GMK SPORTS DESK

GANDERBAL: The picturesque campus of the Government College of Physical Education (GCOPE) in Ganderbal witnessed a momentous celebration of athletic prowess, unity, and youthful energy Thursday as the 70th National School Games Taekwondo officially began. Set against the majestic backdrop of Kashmir, the prestigious championship was declared open by the Chief Guest, Senior Superintendent of Police Ganderbal, Harshal Rajesh Mahajan. Addressing the gathering of talented young athletes, coaches, and sports officials who have converged from every corner of the nation, the Chief Guest encouraged the participants to embrace the true spirit of competition, emphasizing that sports play an essential role in character building, cultural exchange, and overall personality development.

The inaugural ceremony opened with a warm and inspiring welcome address delivered by Additional Secretary to the Government, Department of Youth Services and Sports, Tinna Mahajan. In her address, she highlighted the stellar role played by the



Directorate of Youth Services and Sports in grooming sports talent among the youth and school children of Jammu and Kashmir. She further underscored the visionary leadership and tireless commitment of Director General Youth Services and Sports, Anuradha Gupta, whose earnest vision is for every participant

to take back lifetime memories, serving as cultural ambassadors of Kashmir's unmatched beauty, rich heritage, and legendary hospitality.

Adding perspective to the national scale of the event, School Games Federation of India Observer and Senior Field Officer Ajay Singh Chandel took

the stage to express his profound admiration for the flawless organization by the Directorate. Drawing comparisons from his officiating experience during the 69th National School Games, he lauded the meticulous planning and exceptional execution of the tournament. He also made special mention of the media

and publicity committee, recalling how he closely followed the live broadcasts of the preceding Wushu championships from his home in Uttar Pradesh, praising the dedicated team for bringing the action to audiences nationwide.

The ceremony also featured addresses by Principal GCOPE Ganderbal, Shaukat Hussain, highlighting the extensive arrangements put in place to host hundreds of visiting participants. The proceedings of the grand event were seamlessly and eloquently conducted by Media and Publicity Coordinator and Convener of the Media and Publicity Committee, Azhar Hajni. To uphold the highest standards of fair play and integrity, solemn oaths were administered to all participating players to compete with absolute discipline and sportsmanship, alongside a technical oath taken by officials from across the country to maintain rigorous professional decorum during officiating. With the opening formalities successfully concluded, exciting taekwondo bouts have officially kicked off across three dedicated arenas, with results and medal tallies to be shared with the media in due course.

1st T20I: Got to give credit where it's due, says Glenn Phillips after India's record chase

IANIS

CHRISTCHURCH: New Zealand batting all-rounder Glenn Phillips said credit has to be given where it was due, after India chased down 226 to record their highest successful T20I chase and win the series opener by four wickets here at the Hagley Oval.

Phillips hit an unbeaten 40-ball 82 and lifted New Zealand to 225/4, but India got home with two balls to spare, and he was gracious in his assessment of the visitors' herculean batting effort.

"You've also got to give credit to the chasing side for chasing 226. It's always a good chase and for them as well, on slightly bigger boundaries, it's something slightly different to what they're used to. You've got to give credit where credit's due sometimes," Phillips said in the post-match press conference.

He further said bowling to India's batters left little margin for error and demanded every plan in the book. "Obviously they're fantastic. You've got to have a plan C, D, E, F, G, H. You've got to have every plan under the sun. With guys like that, you've got such small room for error."

"The pitches are fantastic as well. Also, credit to them, the bounce is probably a little more than they're used to, and



they adjusted really well today. I guess we've got all our plans on the drawing board, but at the end of the day you've got to execute them."

Phillips did not believe the toss gave the chasing side a decisive edge at the venue, and felt New Zealand could have made it tougher for India with a tighter effort with the ball in the middle overs.

"I think here with big boundaries, the ball does sometimes tend to nibble

like you want to bat second every time, but I think we maybe take a couple more wickets in the middle or string a few more dots together and we put them under pressure, and they don't chase it, then it obviously looks slightly different as well."

With heavy dew settling on the Hagley Oval outfield during the late-evening game, Phillips said it was something New Zealand had to deal with at this time of the year. "It's just going to be part and parcel of it this time of year. It gets quite cold quite fast. It's fabulous, obviously, to be able to have such a big crowd here for that late game, which is fantastic. But it is just part and parcel of what we have in New Zealand this time of the year."

"I'm pretty sure the grounds try to spray repellent of some sort on there, but there's only so much I suppose you can do. I guess for the guys to go out there, we've just got to try and find a way. Whether it's with the bat or the ball, it's just trying to adapt as much as we can, especially to that dew factor."

On New Zealand's batting, Phillips lauded openers Finn Allen and Tim Seifert, whom he called the 'Bash brothers', and the partnerships that followed, while admitting the side would want to hold on to more catches.

"Obviously the way the Bash brothers go up at the top of the order is fantastic. They always get us off to a flyer. I think the way that we strung partnerships together throughout the innings is really good. Obviously, you can halt the momentum of the innings quite a lot if we lose a lot of quick wickets."

"That's probably something we're after, especially when dew comes into play. It does get tough. There's obviously no excuses in professional sport. We just have to go out there and give it our best. Obviously, India did better than us today."

Phillips ended New Zealand's innings with a switch-hit four off Bhuvneshwar Kumar, and revealed the shot was the result of hours of practice batting left-handed. "I've definitely been practicing a lot, especially the last year or so. I guess since probably the Super Smash last year where there were three left-hand bowlers and one-handed, and I thought, 'You know what, this is probably something worth experimenting with.'"

"So I have been training, even facing sidearm sticks

in the nets. The guys at the IPL last year probably got sick of me spending an hour batting and then 45 minutes batting left-handed as well. So I suppose at some stage an opportunity like that comes about and Bhuvi wasn't missing as well, which is the way Bhuvi does things anyway."

"So the last ball, why not give it a go? The hope was more to actually just get him to miss his line in length and hope that I was going to be good enough to hit it, and today I guess I was."

Phillips also backed young Bevon Jacobs, who hit his first ball for six on his way to a 16-ball 31 during their 73-run stand for the fourth wicket. "He has the confidence to go out there and play the ball as he sees it. Obviously, he's an incredibly strong fellow, and he hits it a huge, huge long way."

"But I think that's a testament to the kind of character that we've built on this side, the culture where a guy who's young, who hasn't played too many games, can come in and feel like he can play his natural game."

"If he's given his ball, he hits it, and I hope he carries on. He doesn't necessarily have to hit a six-first ball every game, but for him to be able to have that confidence to go out there and do it is, I think, a real testament to this side."

Football: Barcelona's Espart ready for
'war' in first Clasico against Real Madrid

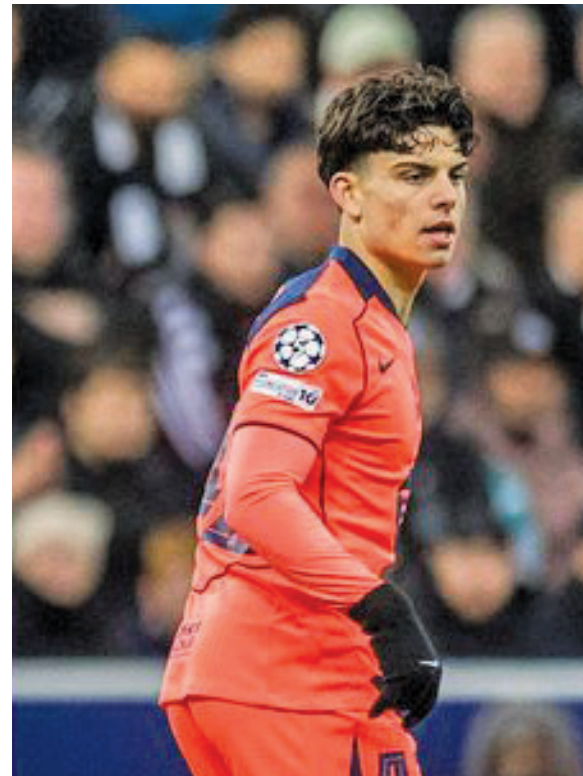
IANIS

MADRID: FC Barcelona's 19-year-old defender Xavi Espart is preparing for a baptism of fire when he makes his Clasico debut against Real Madrid on Sunday. Espart made his first-team debut last season and was an unused substitute when Barcelona beat Real Madrid 2-0 in May to clinch the league title. He has since established himself as a regular member of coach Hansi Flick's squad.

The teenager's versatility, which allows him to operate at either fullback position and contribute in attack, has helped him earn more playing time. He also scored his first Champions League goal in Tuesday's 4-2 defeat at Paris Saint-Germain, reports Xinhua.

With Eric Garcia sidelined by a muscle injury, Jules Kounde doubtful with an ankle sprain and Andreas Christensen also injured, Espart is in contention to start Sunday's potentially pivotal encounter, provided he recovers from a minor ankle problem of his own.

Speaking to Spanish newspaper Mundo Deportivo in an interview published Thursday, the



Barcelona academy graduate acknowledged the intensity of the challenge awaiting him.

"The truth is it will be a war," Espart said, insisting that his side would hold nothing back.

"We will go all out; it's a Clasico. You always have

a spectacular volley in Wednesday's 4-1 Champions League victory over RB Leipzig.

Barcelona will look to extend their perfect La Liga start and open a nine-point lead over Real Madrid when the two Spanish giants meet in the season's first Clasico at Camp Nou on Sunday.

Hansi Flick's side has won all nine of its opening league matches to establish a six-point advantage over their archrivals, with Atletico Madrid sitting second, five points off the pace.

Although nearly three-quarters of the campaign would remain after Sunday, another Barcelona victory would leave Real Madrid facing a considerable challenge to close the gap in the title race.

Real Madrid head into the match in improved form after recording successive 4-1 home victories over Sevilla in La Liga and RB Leipzig in the Champions League.

Fede Valverde have impressed in an unfamiliar right-back role, while Kylian Mbappe has rediscovered his best form and new signing Yan Diomande has shown flashes of his potential.

INOX

LIVE the MOVIE

SRINAGAR

MOVIES

Schedule

23 OCTOBER 2026

FRIDAY

DRISHYAM: THE CONCLUSION

(HINDI) (UA 16+)

06:15 PM

PEHLA PYAAR DOOSRI BAAR

(HINDI) (A)

04:30 PM

UDTA TEER

(HINDI) (UA 13+)*

03:15 PM

04:25 PM

07:15 PM

CLAYFACE

(ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE) (A)

02:05 PM

07:30 PM

CALL : 95416 13868

FOR ANY ASSISTANCE WITH TICKETS