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Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

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Heartiest greetings and best wishes to all on the occasion of Maharishi Valmiki Jayanti.

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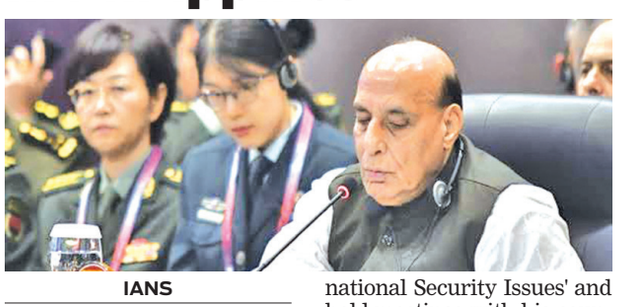


Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister



CBC 19101/13/0020/2627

Rajnath Singh To Attend ASEAN Meeting In Philippines



IANS

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will lead the Indian delegation at 13th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) - Plus in Philippines' Cebu from October 28-29, the Ministry of Defence stated on Monday. Singh will address the forum on 'Exchange of Views on Regional and International Security Issues' and hold meetings with his counterparts from participating nations on the sidelines of the event. At ADMM-Plus, he will also review the ongoing defence ties with the nations and explore ways to further strengthen strategic partnerships.

"The ADMM is the highest defence consultative and cooperative mechanism in ASEAN. ADMM-Plus is a platform for ASEAN • P-06

LG To Administer Oath To New J&K Ministers Today

Ali Sagar, Altaf Kaloo, Among Frontrunners, Satish Sharma Likely To Be Dropped

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will administer the oath of office and secrecy today morning to the legislators being inducted into the council of ministers headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

Sources said that National Conference veteran leader Ali Muhammad Sagar and legislator Altaf Ahmad Kaloo are among the frontrunners for the ministerial berths.

The swearing-in ceremony will be held at Lok Bhavan Auditorium, Srinagar on Tuesday at 10.30 am and will be attended by J&K's top politicians and bureaucrats.



FILE PHOTO

Sources disclosed that four MLAs are being inducted into the council of ministers — three from the Valley, one each from north, south • P-06

J&K Cabinet Reshuffle

Dar, Rana, Satish Sharma May Exit

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is set to reshuffle his Council of Ministers today, with three incumbent ministers—Javid Ahmad Dar, Javed Ahmed Rana and Satish Sharma, likely to be shown the door, while senior National Conference leader Ali Mohammad Sagar and Ramban MLA Arjun Singh Raju are among those being considered for induction, sources familiar with the developments told the news agency Kashmir News Trust.

The oath-taking ceremony will be held at Lok Bhavan, Srinagar, at 10:30 am on October 27, where • P-06

Kashmir Shivers As Shopian Dips Below Freezing



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Cold conditions continued across Kashmir and Ladakh on Monday, with Shopian recording the lowest minimum temperature in the Valley at minus 0.1 degrees Celsius, while Nyoma was the coldest among the reported stations in Ladakh at minus 8.4 degrees Celsius.

As per the meteorological data accessed, temperatures in Kashmir remained close to the freezing point at several places, particularly in the higher reaches and tourist destinations. • P-06

Bollywood's Singham Arrives In Kashmir



FILE PHOTO

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Bollywood actor Ajay Devgan, popular for his role as Singham, arrived in Kashmir on Monday.

As per details available, Devgan, known for playing Bajirao Singham in the 'Singham' franchise, visited Sonamarg where he was warmly welcomed at Sindh Resorts & Spa. • P-06

Return Efforts Underway

Jeddah Consulate Assures Assistance To Stranded Umrah Pilgrims

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Consulate General of India has assured all possible assistance to Indian Umrah pilgrims affected by ongoing flight disruptions, stating that efforts are underway to facilitate the early return of stranded passengers. BuyMaps

In a communication to JKNC MP Chowdhary Mohammad Ramzan, Fahad Suri, representing the Consulate General, said the Consulate was fully aware of the difficulties being faced by Indian pilgrims and was extending all • P-06



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PCCF reviews Dev Works, Forest Protection Measures across North Forest Circle

GMK NEWS NETWORK



KUPWARA: Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) and Head of Forest Force (HoFF), Jammu and Kashmir, Sarvesh Rai, undertook a two-day tour of North Kashmir on October 25 and 26 to review developmental works, forest protection measures, eco-tourism initiatives and infrastructure development across forest divisions of the North Forest Circle.

On the first day of the tour, the PCCF visited JV Forest Division, Baramulla, where he inaugurated the Trumgund Forest Check Post and inspected the ongoing construction work of the DFO office at Baramulla. He subsequently visited Langate Forest Division, where he laid the foundation stone for the second storey of the DFO office at Langate and inspected the Reshwari Eco-Tourism site.

During the visit, the PCCF emphasised the importance of developing eco-tourism in a planned and sustainable manner, with a focus on responsible visitor management, conservation of natural landscapes and creation of livelihood opportunities for local communities.

The tour further covered eco-tourism works in Bangus Valley, where the PCCF took stock of ongoing eco-development initiatives in the Dringyari–Bungus area and reviewed the progress of works being undertaken to promote responsible eco-tourism and enhance visitor amenities.

Emphasising effective implementation, he directed the concerned officers to ensure the timely and quality completion of all ongoing projects. He also stressed the need to strengthen forest protection measures, enhance field-level preparedness and intensify preventive interventions in view of the forthcoming forest fire season.

At Lakut Bangus, the PCCF inspected the Forest Staff Quarters and Jungle Training Centre and released "Mountain Trails of Kehmil," a publication highlighting trekking routes and nature-based tourism opportunities in Kehmil Forest Division. He also inaugurated the Range Office at Ramhall. The office will strengthen field-level administration and coordination, enabling more effective monitoring of forest resources and implementation of protection and developmental activities in the range.

Later in the evening, the PCCF visited the Army Headquarters at Zangli, Kupwara, where he held an interactive session with the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Army's 28 Infantry Division and other Army officers. Discussions included forest diversion proposals associated with Army requirements and their progress.

On the second day, the PCCF visited Kamraj Forest Division, Kupwara, to review field-level infrastructure, forest protection preparedness, livelihood initiatives and conservation-related activities. The visit commenced at Batpora Block, where he inaugurated the Block Officers' Hut, a facility catering to three forest beats comprising 16 compartments. The infrastructure is expected to strengthen field coordination, monitoring and protection of forest resources.

The PCCF subsequently visited Nagriwari Eco-Park at Hatmulla, where he inaugurated the Van Posh Mela, showcasing the linkages between forest conservation, traditional skills, local livelihoods and eco-tourism. A 1.5-kilometre student trekking route was also inaugurated, and students were flagged off for the trek to promote environmental awareness and appreciation of the region's natural heritage.

During the programme, the PCCF initiated Resham Vann, a mulberry plantation initiative within an existing plantation closure, aimed at promoting location-specific livelihoods through mulberry cultivation and potential linkages with Bamboo and Mulberry Clusters (BMCs). He also inspected thematic stalls showcasing traditional crafts and products made from locally sourced raw materials, including Indigofera-based crafts, wood carving and pottery. Craftspersons demonstrated the use of tools provided under the livelihood initiative of the Green India Mission (GIM), highlighting opportunities for traditional skill development, value addition and income generation.

Poplar saplings were also distributed among beneficiaries under the Social Forestry Department's agroforestry programme to encourage tree cultivation on private and agricultural lands.

Students from local schools presented an environmental debate and skit highlighting the importance of forest conservation and biodiversity protection. Appreciating their awareness and understanding of environmental issues, the PCCF felicitated the participating students and encouraged them to continue promoting conservation awareness in their communities.

A tribal heritage presentation showcased the traditional lifestyle, culture and indigenous practices of local tribal communities. Traditional beverages and a customary tribal dwelling, locally known as a Dhoka, were demonstrated, highlighting their potential to enrich eco-tourism experiences. Such structures could also serve as guidance points, rain shelters and camping facilities along trekking routes, creating livelihood opportunities while preserving tribal heritage, subject to appropriate planning and environmental safeguards.

The PCCF also attended a forest fire mock drill organised by Kamraj Forest Division to assess preparedness for the ensuing fire season. The forest fire control team demonstrated firefighting equipment, response procedures and first-aid techniques for injured personnel. The exercise highlighted the importance of timely response, field coordination, equipment readiness and staff training in mitigating forest fires.

Later, the PCCF released the Forest Protection Plan of Kamraj Forest Division for 2026–27, outlining the division's priorities and planned interventions for strengthening forest surveillance, preventing forest offences and safeguarding forest resources. He also released the booklet "A Portrait of Paradise – The Enchanting Forests of Lolab Valley," documenting the valley's ecological richness and the Forest Department's interventions in forest conservation, restoration, plantation development and eco-tourism promotion.

The two-day tour highlighted the Forest Department's focus on strengthening field infrastructure, improving forest protection and fire preparedness, promoting sustainable livelihoods and developing responsible eco-tourism opportunities while conserving the rich ecological and cultural heritage of North Kashmir.

Vigilance Awareness Week

DC Kishtwar administers Integrity Pledge in district

GMK NEWS NETWORK



KISHTWAR: Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 commenced Monday across district Kishtwar with a pledge ceremony at the Conference Hall, New DC Office Complex, Mini Secretariat Kishtwar.

Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma presided over the ceremony and administered the Integrity Pledge to officers and officials of the line departments, who reaffirmed their commitment to integrity, transparency, accountability and ethical conduct in public service.

Vigilance Awareness Week is observed annually to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. It aims to strengthen the culture of integrity, promote preventive vigilance, enhance transparency in public administration and foster public trust in governance through active citizen participation.

This year, the week is being observed from October 26 to November 1, 2026, under the theme "satyanishtha se samruddhi" (Probity for Prosperity).

During the ceremony, the Deputy Commissioner outlined the activities and guidelines issued by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) for the week-long observance. In accordance with these guidelines, all government offices in the district will focus on five key preventive vigilance parameters: disposal of pending complaints, disposal of pending cases, capacity-building programmes, digital initiatives and contract management systems.

Administering the pledge, the DC called upon all officers and officials to uphold the highest standards of honesty, impartiality and accountability in discharging their official duties. He emphasised the importance of translating the principles of integrity into everyday administrative practice and ensuring that public service delivery remains transparent, efficient and citizen-centric.

As part of the public outreach and participatory initiatives planned for the week, district and sectoral heads of the line departments concerned will organise awareness campaigns, seminars and interactive workshops focussing on the five parameters. These activities aim to sensitise officials and the public to the importance of ethical governance, encourage transparency in administrative processes and promote collective responsibility in preventing corruption.

The observance will reinforce the district administration's commitment to probity, accountability and good governance, and strengthen public confidence in the administration through sustained vigilance and transparent practices.

Among those present were Assistant Commissioner (Revenue) Mohammad Idrees Lone, Assistant Commissioner (Development) Manoj Kumar, Assistant Commissioner (Panchayat) Neeraj Sharma, Chief Medical Officer Dr Sanjay Bhat, Chief Education Officer Sanjay Dogra and Tehsildar Nirbhay Sharma, besides other officers and officials.

GMC Srinagar observes Vigilance Awareness Week

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar Monday observed Vigilance Awareness Week by organizing an Integrity Pledge ceremony on the college premises.

The pledge was administered by Masarat Hashim, Administrator Associated Hospitals Government Medical College Srinagar in the presence of officers and officials of the institution. Nausheen Mushtaq, Chief Accounts Officer was also present on the occasion.

The programme was organised to promote awareness about the importance of integrity transparency and accountability in public service. During the ceremony the officers and officials took the Integrity Pledge and reaffirmed their commitment to honesty ethical conduct and zero tolerance towards corruption in the discharge of their official duties.

Speaking on the occasion, the Administrator said that integrity and transparency are essential for efficient public service and for strengthening public confidence in government institutions. He called upon all employees to perform their duties with sincerity dedication and professionalism while maintaining the highest standards of ethics and accountability.

The programme concluded with all participants reiterating their commitment to uphold the values of integrity transparency and good governance in line with the objectives of Vigilance Awareness Week.

First-ever Bhallessa Festival concludes with mega musical night

GMK NEWS NETWORK



DODA: The first edition of the Bhallessa Festival, a two-day cultural event held on October 24 and 25, 2026, concluded with a Mega Musical Night at Helipad Ground, Gandoh, on the evening of October 25.

The festival drew enthusiastic participation from people across the Bhallessa region and celebrated the area's rich cultural heritage, artistic traditions and spirit of unity.

Among those present were Deputy Commissioner Krishan Lal, Additional Deputy Commissioner Anil Kumar Thakur, Sub-Divisional Magistrate Arun Kumar Bhutyal, Chief Planning Officer Manesh Kumar, Assistant Commissioner (Development) Din Mohammad Afaqi and Sub-Divisional Police Officer Lov Karan Taneja, besides other senior officers, dignitaries, senior citizens and a large gathering of people.

The district administration Doda, Jammu and Kashmir Police and the Indian Army collaborated with Civil Society Bhallessa to organise the two-day festival. It aimed to celebrate the region's cultural heritage, promote local traditions, showcase local talent and strengthen unity and community participation.

The Mega Musical Night featured renowned singer Bishan Dass along with local singers and artists, who enthralled the audience.

The festival featured cultural performances, live musical programmes, local talent showcases, exhibitions and a local fair, providing artists, performers, local entrepreneurs and residents an opportunity to come together and showcase the unique cultural identity of Bhallessa.

The DC appreciated Civil Society Bhallessa and the collaborating organisations for successfully organising the festival. He highlighted the importance of such events in preserving cultural heritage, bringing communities together and encouraging local youth to showcase their talent. Mr Lal added that cultural festivals have significant potential to promote tourism, generate local opportunities and strengthen the social and cultural fabric of the district.

The ADC appreciated the collective efforts of the organisers and participating organisations. He underscored the importance of preserving traditional art forms, encouraging youth participation in cultural activities and promoting harmony, brotherhood and a sense of belonging among communities.

Other dignitaries and officers also appreciated the efforts of the District Administration Doda, Jammu and Kashmir Police, the Indian Army and Civil Society Bhallessa in making the festival a successful celebration of the region's cultural identity. They said such initiatives play a vital role in nurturing local talent, preserving traditions and strengthening bonds among people.

Kulgam Police Solve Hit-and-Run Case Within Two Hours

AGENCIES



KULGAM: Police have solved a hit-and-run case in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district by arresting the alleged offending driver within two hours of the incident, officials said on Monday.

An unidentified vehicle, allegedly being driven at high speed, hit a load carrier on October 25, leaving its occupants seriously injured, they said.

The injured were initially taken to a nearby hospital and later referred to Government Medical College (GMC), Anantnag, due to the severity of their injuries.

Police registered an FIR under relevant sections of law at Kulgam police station and launched an investigation.

A police team examined CCTV footage and technical evidence to identify the vehicle involved in the accident. The suspected vehicle was traced and the accused driver, identified as Mohammad Asif Lone, a resident of Chimmer village in the DH Pora area, was arrested within two hours of the incident, officials said.

Further investigation is underway to establish the circumstances of the accident and complete the legal formalities, they added. (KNS)

DC Kupwara visits Border Village Kumkadi, reviews Winter Preparedness



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Abhishek Sharma, Monday conducted an extensive tour of the border village of Kumkadi to assess winter preparedness, review essential service delivery, developmental requirements, and address public grievances.

The DC, accompanied by the Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Kupwara, concerned Tehsildar, Naib Tehsildar, former PRI representatives and other field functionaries, interacted with local residents and presided over a public grievance redressal session. He listened to issues raised by residents and delegations and assured them that genuine developmental, healthcare and administrative concerns would be addressed on priority.

To strengthen healthcare access in remote border areas ahead of snowfall, the DC directed the Health Department to organise specialised health camps across border villages during November, providing free medical consultations, essential screenings and medicines. He also directed the Revenue Department to organise a dedicated service delivery camp at Kumkadi, with a special focus on expediting the issuance of Scheduled Tribe (ST) certificates and other revenue documents.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the tourism infrastructure being developed in the village. During the visit, he interacted with officers and personnel of the Indian Army deployed in the area and appreciated their vigilance, dedicated service and coordination with the civil administration and local residents in maintaining peace and facilitating grassroots development.

NIT Srinagar observes Vigilance Awareness Week

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar observed Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 with an integrity pledge ceremony near the Mian Faculty Block, reaffirming the institute's commitment to transparency, accountability and ethical conduct in public life.

Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 is being observed from October 26 to November 1 under the theme "Probity for Prosperity" highlighting the importance of integrity, transparency and ethical practices in public administration and good governance.

The pledge was administered in the presence of Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman and Chief Vigilance Officer and Dean Faculty Welfare, Prof. Manzoor Ahmad Ahangar. Heads of Departments, Heads of Centres, faculty members, administrative officers and other staff members participated in the ceremony.

The programme aimed to reinforce the importance of integrity, ethical governance and accountability in institutional functioning, while encouraging collective responsibility in preventing corruption.

The participants reaffirmed their commitment to upholding the highest standards of integrity, ensuring transparency in official dealings and discharging their responsibilities with honesty and accountability.

Vigilance Awareness Week is observed annually under the aegis of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) to promote integrity and ethical values in public life and strengthen efforts towards preventing corruption.

Vigilance Awareness Week begins across Shopian to promote Integrity

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SHOPIAN: Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 commenced across Shopian Monday with a series of awareness activities aimed at promoting integrity, transparency, accountability and ethical conduct among officials, stakeholders and the general public.

The Vigilance Awareness Week is being observed from October 26 to November 1, 2026, under the theme "Probity for Prosperity." As part of the opening-day activities, an Integrity Pledge was administered at Town Hall Shopian.

The event was presided by Additional Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz. CEO MC and other officers were also present on the occasion.

The participants reaffirmed their commitment to upholding honesty, integrity, transparency and accountability in the discharge of their responsibilities and contributing towards a corruption-free society.

Similar activities were also organised at various locations across Shopian, with officials, employees and members of the community participating in initiatives aimed at creating greater awareness about ethical governance, prevention of corruption and the importance of probity in public life.

Fire guts 40 shops near Jammu Railway Station, short circuit suspected

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: A fire that broke out at a market near Jammu Railway Station late Sunday night gutted around 40 shops, destroying goods worth lakhs of rupees and dealing a major blow to traders, officials said on Monday.

No casualties were reported in the blaze at Shiv Market, which broke out around 10.30 pm and was brought under control at about 3.15 am after nearly five hours of firefighting, they said.

Most of the shops gutted in the fire dealt in food supplies, dry fruits and blankets, leaving shopkeepers facing heavy losses.

Preliminary investigations suggest that a short circuit in one of the shops may have triggered the fire, which spread rapidly across the market, aided by strong winds, officials said.

The narrow approach to the market made it difficult for firefighters to reach the affected shops directly. Firefighting teams had to approach the blaze from the rear of the market to contain the flames and prevent them from spreading further, they added.

Despite sustained efforts by emergency services, the fire continued to consume merchandise and shop structures for several hours before being brought under control in the early hours of Monday.

The cause of the fire is yet to be established conclusively, and further investigation is underway, officials said. (KNS)

J&K's Shadow Wage Rate Factor falls sharply to 0.47 in 2023-24 from 1.00

RAJA SYED RATHER



SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a sharp decline in its Shadow Wage Rate Factor (SWRF) for unskilled workers during 2023–24, with the overall figure falling to 0.47 from 1.00 in the previous financial year, according to a study supported by NITI Aayog.

The findings, published in the report Reassessment of National Parameters for Appraisal of Public Investment Programmes/Projects in India, reveal significant differences between rural and urban labour markets in the Union Territory.

As per the study, the SWRF in rural Jammu and Kashmir was estimated at 0.36, considerably lower than the urban figure of 0.96.

The report places average daily earnings of unskilled workers at Rs 162 in rural areas and Rs 554 in urban areas. It also estimates that rural areas account for 81.01 per cent of the working population, compared to 18.99 per cent in urban areas.

The assessment further highlights variations in wages and economic labour costs between male and female workers.

For male unskilled labourers, the study records average daily wages of Rs 162 in rural areas and Rs 564 in urban areas. Their respective shadow wage factors stand at 0.36 and 0.96, bringing the combined figure to 0.47.

In comparison, female workers have been assigned average daily wages of Rs 343 in rural areas and Rs 498 in urban areas. Their corresponding factors are estimated at 0.78 and 0.96, with an overall SWRF of 0.81.

Historical figures presented in the study indicate considerable fluctuations in Jammu and Kashmir's labour-related economic parameters over the past five financial years.

The overall SWRF remained at 0.97 during both 2019–20 and 2020–21 before declining to 0.85 in 2021–22. It subsequently reached 1.00 in 2022–23 but dropped substantially to 0.47 in 2023–24.

A similar trend was observed in rural areas, where the factor stood at 1.00 in 2019–20, slipped to 0.96 in 2020–21 and 0.81 in 2021–22, and returned to 1.00 in 2022–23 before falling to 0.36.

The urban factor, meanwhile, was recorded at 0.87 in 2019–20 and remained at 1.00 for the next three financial years before marginally declining to 0.96 in 2023–24.

The shadow wage rate factor is an economic assessment tool used to estimate the opportunity cost of employing labour in public investment projects in relation to the applicable minimum wage. It does not represent the actual wages paid to workers.

The NITI Aayog-supported exercise seeks to improve the evaluation of government-funded projects by examining the economic value of resources, including labour, rather than relying solely on prevailing market prices.

By assessing differences across regions, gender categories and states and Union Territories, the study aims to provide policymakers with parameters for evaluating project viability, estimating economic costs and improving public investment decisions.

However, the rural wage estimates presented in the overall and gender-specific tables differ, making verification of the original figures necessary before drawing conclusions about wage disparities.

The findings underline the substantial variation in estimated labour costs between rural and urban Jammu and Kashmir and their relevance in the economic appraisal of public development projects—(KNO)

Family Seeks Repatriation

Missing for 18 months, Anantnag pilgrim reportedly spotted in Makkah

SAMEER AHMAD

ANANTNAG: In a development that has revived hope for a distressed family in south Kashmir, a 76-year-old pilgrim from Dooru, Anantnag, who went missing in Mecca nearly 18 months ago, has reportedly been spotted alive.

The pilgrim, Mohd Akbar Bhat, son of Ghulam Qadir Bhat a resident of Nathipora, Dooru, traveled to Saudi Arabia for the Umrah. Shortly after arriving in Mecca, he disappeared under unexplained circumstances.

The pilgrim had departed for Saudi Arabia on April 9, 2025, through a private tour operator named Deedar-e-Kaaba Travel Agency. According to his son, the elderly man disappeared shortly after arriving in the holy city of Mecca. Despite running from pillar to post and seeking assistance from local authorities and the tour operator, the family received no actionable help or information regarding his whereabouts for a year and a half.

According to his son, Sajad Ahmad Bhat the family has endured intense emotional turmoil over the past year and a half. "We went everywhere seeking help, but to no avail. the family had been desperately awaiting any news of his whereabouts.

A breakthrough occurred when another pilgrim from Kokernag, who visited Mecca for Umrah in September this year, spotted and recognized the elderly man in the holy city. However, when GMK attempted to contact the pilgrim for details, he declined to comment. A Family member claimed.

Meanwhile, Hilal Ahmad, Director of Deedar-e-Kaaba



Travel Agency in Anantnag, clarified that the elderly pilgrim did not travel through his travel agency, contrary to initial claims.

According to Ahmad, the pilgrim and his wife had booked their journey through the Dooru-based World Wise Travel Agency, managed by Muzaffar Ahmad a resident of the same village who personally accompanied the group to Saudi Arabia.

Detailing the efforts undertaken over the past year to locate the missing man, Ahmad said, "We have made every possible effort over the last year to trace his whereabouts, including checking local mortuaries, but to no avail." He added that formal missing reports and an FIR were lodged with local authorities in Saudi Arabia, alongside notifications sent directly to the Saudi Embassy.

Upon our return to Kashmir, we also registered a missing report at the SSP office in Anantnag and met with the Deputy Commissioner of Anantnag, where a formal case file was initiated," Ahmad stated.

Reiterating that search operations remain active, he added: "Even today, our search continues. Every pilgrim group traveling from here to Saudi Arabia for Umrah is actively assisting in looking for him."

According to the records provided, the missing pilgrim holds passport number C8586437. Following his disappearance, a formal First Information Report (FIR No. 5865524) was registered in Saudi Arabia on November 2, 2025.

Additionally, official reports have been filed with both the Indian Embassy in Riyadh and the Saudi Embassy, urging diplomatic intervention to expedite the search. The family has also approached the Jammu & Kashmir Grievance Cell, appealing for urgent, coordinated efforts to secure his safe return.

Following reports that he is alive, the family has made an earnest appeal to the Jammu & Kashmir administration and the central government to intervene diplomatically, ensure he is located, and facilitate his safe repatriation.

Srinagar Man Among Four Held with Fake Gold Coins in Banihal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A Srinagar resident was among four persons apprehended by police after fake gold coins were recovered from their possession during checking in Banihal, officials said on Monday.

An official said that the four were travelling from Jammu towards Srinagar when they were intercepted at the tunnel.

He said fake gold coins were recovered during a search and further recoveries in this regard were yet to be made.

They were identified as Aijaz Nabi, son of Ghulam Nabi, a resident of Batmaloo, Srinagar; Abdul Ahad, son of Ghulam Rasool, of Drugmulla, Kupwara; Farhat Majeed, son of Abdul Majeed, of Buhi Pora, Kupwara; and Altaf Hussain, son of Ghulam Moideen, of Hayan Tregam, Kupwara. Buy Maps

Meanwhile, police have registered FIR No. 246/2026 and further investigation into the matter is underway.—(KNO)

Sunil Sharma Condemns Kharge's 'Modi Ka Baap Bhi Jayega' Remarks

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Leader of Opposition and BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Monday condemned Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's remark about Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing the Congress leadership of frustration and desperation.

Kharge triggered a political row during an event in Patna on Sunday marking the 139th birth anniversary of Bihar's first Chief Minister, Krishna Singh. While criticizing alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and accusing the BJP of undermining democratic processes, Kharge said the Congress would send those responsible for alleged irregularities to jail. When an audience member interjected that Modi would not leave office, Kharge retorted, "Modi ka baap bhi jayega," a remark that drew sharp criticism from BJP leaders.

Reacting to the statement, Sharma said Kharge had used abusive and unconstitutional language against the Prime Minister and described the remarks as condemnable. He alleged that the statement reflected the frustration of the Congress party and the desperation of Rahul Gandhi.

Sharma said such language was not expected from a leader of Kharge's seniority and accused the Congress president of exposing what he described as the party's true nature through his remarks.

The exchange has drawn criticism from BJP leaders, while the controversy centres on Kharge's response to the audience member during his address in Patna. [KNT]

Govt committed to ensure smooth winter tourism activities in Sonamarg: Avny Lavasa



RAJA SYED RATHER

GANDERBAL: Secretary Tourism, Avny Lavasa, on Monday said that issues related to electricity supply, snow clearance and other requirements would be taken up with the Ganderbal district administration to ensure smooth tourism activities during the upcoming winter season in Sonamarg.

Talking to reporters here Lavasa, said, representatives of the Hotel and Market Association met her and raised several concerns, particularly regarding power supply and snow clearance during the winter. "These issues require coordination among multiple departments. We will take them up with the district administration and make every possible effort to support winter tourism activities and the local tourism industry," she said.

Lavasa said the government would examine the concerns raised by local stakeholders and take necessary measures to promote tourism in the area.

Regarding the sewage treatment facility, she said the plant was expected to be commissioned soon and would help ensure scientific treatment of sewage and septage waste. "The connectivity network to the plant is yet to be completed. However, waste collected through municipal suction and jetting machines will be treated at the facility," she said.

On winter tourism activities, Lavasa said the CEO has already briefed her about the proposed initiatives. "We will hold a joint meeting with the Directorate and work out a plan to promote and support winter tourism activities," she added—(KNO)

BJP Stages Protest Against Kharge's Remarks on PM Modi

Shagun Parihar Says Party 'Ashamed' of Congress

GMK NEWS NETWORK



JAMMU: BJP legislators and party workers on Monday staged a protest in Jammu against Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge over his controversial remarks concerning Prime Minister Narendra Modi, raising slogans against the Congress and its president.

The protest followed Kharge's remarks at an event in Patna marking the birth anniversary of Bihar's first Chief Minister, Shri Krishna Singh. While criticising alleged irregularities in the revision of electoral rolls, Kharge responded to an audience member who challenged his criticism of Modi by saying, "Modi ka baap bhi jayega," triggering sharp reactions from BJP leaders.

BJP legislator Shagun Parihar condemned the remarks, saying her party was ashamed of the Congress for what she described as its mentality and for dragging the Prime Minister's father into the political exchange.

The protesters accused the Congress leadership of crossing the bounds of political discourse and demanded accountability over the language used by Kharge. The demonstration added to the political backlash against the Congress president's remarks, which have drawn criticism from BJP leaders. [KNT]

From Driver to Aquaculture

Aashaq Mir's Leap from the Road to Aquaculture

SAMEER AHMAD

ANANTNAG: Proving that determination paired with the right opportunity can reshape one's destiny, Aashaq Hussain Mir, 36 a former commercial driver from Mir Pora, Sagam, has emerged as one of South Kashmir's most successful fish farming entrepreneurs.



Mir's journey began after attending an awareness workshop organized by the Department of Fisheries at Ashajipora, Anantnag. Inspired by the potential of modern aquaculture, he decided to leave behind his driving profession and ventured into trout farming in 2009 with just a single raceway.

Over the past decade and a half, his venture has expanded into a commercial operation. Today, Mir manages two major units comprising 19 raceways alongside two specialized hatcheries. His farms generate an annual yield exceeding 100 quintals of fish and produce between 5 to 6 lakh fish eggs every year.

Building on this success, Mir expanded his footprint in 2023 by establishing another fish farm in Verinag. To streamline distribution and bring fresh produce directly to consumers, he has set up three retail outlets across District Anantnag located in Sagam (Kokernag), Shangus Nowgam, and Verinag.

Beyond commercial success, Mir's enterprise provides steady employment to 10 local youths, turning his venture into a model of grassroots rural entrepreneurship in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mir, has credited the Department of Fisheries for playing a pivotal role in his entrepreneurial success.

Mir, who has known as one of the leading trout producers in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, noted that government assistance and technical backing proved vital in scaling his venture. Expressing gratitude to the department, he highlighted that the business has not only yielded substantial financial gains but has also underscored the growing viability of trout farming as a sustainable and lucrative enterprise in the region.

Farooq Abdullah's Pakistan Remark 'Unnecessary': Gh Hassan Mir

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Terming Farooq Abdullah's recent controversial statement as unnecessary, former Cabinet Minister and Apni Party Senior Vice President Ghulam Hassan Mir said Abdullah should not have made such a statement.

He made this remark while speaking to reporters today, when asked to comment on National Conference (NC) leader Farooq Abdullah's recent statement that Pakistan was helping protect Kashmiris.

Ghulam Hassan Mir said, "Farooq Sahib should not have made this statement. However, we also need to look at the sequence of his statements. On several occasions, he has described Pakistan as an enemy, but today he is calling it a friend. It is difficult to understand which of his statements he actually believes."

He further said, "This is the problem with politics in Kashmir. Our politicians are failing to provide clear direction to the people, leaving them confused by their contradictory statements and shifting positions."

Speaking about the apprehensions of the youth, Mir said, "A party colleague's 16-year-old son, who is in Class 10, told me yesterday that Farooq Sahib has the privilege of making such statements, whereas an ordinary Kashmiri making a similar statement could be booked under the PSA. This reflects how many of our young people perceive the situation. It is obligatory upon the Government of India to take meaningful initiatives to address the apprehensions and concerns of the youth in Jammu & Kashmir and rebuild their trust."

Reiterating Apni Party's demand for the talks between centre and people of Jammu and Kashmir, Ghulam Hassan Mir said, "Apni Party's stand is that the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the Centre must engage in dialogue to bridge the prevailing distance and trust deficit. It is the Government of India that must take the initiative to start these talks. Such a dialogue would help address genuine issues, bridge the trust deficit, and restore credibility in the relationship between Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the country."

"The trust deficit needs to be bridged. Apni Party will never make any statement that could further widen the trust deficit between the Centre and Jammu & Kashmir. Our aim is to rebuild trust, strengthen mutual understanding, and restore the credibility of the relationship between Jammu and Kashmir and the centre," Mir added.

South Kashmir

People demand widening of 22-km vital Shopian-Aglar Road

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SHOPIAN: Residents of several villages in South Kashmir have urged the government to widen the 22-km long Shopian-Aglar road to ensure smooth traffic movement and reduce the risk of accidents on this important thoroughfare.

Residents said, "Narrow stretches of this road frequently lead to traffic congestion and increase the risk of accidents."

They said the road serves as a vital link connecting dozens of villages across Shopian and adjoining areas of Pulwama and Anantnag districts.

Residents said the route witnesses' heavy traffic throughout the day. "Hundreds of employees, labourers and other people travel to the Industrial Estate SIDCO Lassipora through this road," they said.

Residents of Aglar, Nikloora, Shirmal, Heff, Chillipora, Sugan, Turkwangam, Molu, Dangerpora, Trenz, Pahnoo and several other villages said the road has become increasingly narrow to accommodate the heavy volume of vehicular traffic. They said that although the authorities have undertaken maintenance work on the road, its limited width at several places continues to cause inconvenience to commuters, with vehicles often getting stuck while attempting to pass each other.

Fayaz Ahmad of Heff, said the government has done commendable work in maintaining the vital road, but its existing width is insufficient to accommodate the heavy rush of vehicles.

"The Shopian-Aglar road is an important route for people travelling between Shopian, Kulgam and other adjoining areas. A large number of people use it daily to reach the Industrial Estate at Lassipora, but the narrow stretches frequently cause traffic jams," he said. "Since the road connects numerous villages and remains busy throughout the day, widening it has become a necessity. The present condition at several points causes inconvenience to commuters and increases the chances of accidents," he added.

Sameer Ahmad, of Turkwangam, said the road is particularly important for people travelling to SIDCO Lassipora and other workplaces in the area.

He said labourers, employees and other commuters often face delays due to traffic congestion on the narrow stretches, affecting their daily schedules.

"The road provides connectivity to several villages and is used by a large number of people travelling to the industrial estate and nearby offices. However, its narrow width makes the journey difficult, particularly during peak hours," he said.

Other residents said traffic congestion had become a recurring problem, with commuters frequently facing difficulties while crossing narrow portions of the road.

They said widening the road would not only ease traffic movement but also improve connectivity between villages and facilitate the movement of people travelling for work, education, healthcare and other essential purposes.

The residents said they had repeatedly brought the issue to the attention of the concerned authorities, but no concrete steps had been taken so far to widen the road.

They appealed to the government and the concerned department to take up the matter on priority and initiate measures to widen the entire stretch.

The residents said timely intervention would help prevent avoidable traffic congestion, minimise the risk of accidents and provide much-needed relief to thousands of people who depend on the road for their daily commute—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Declining Dignity Of The MLA's Office

The dignity and public image of the office of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) appear to have suffered over the years. Recent incidents involving public altercations between some elected representatives and ordinary citizens have raised concerns about the conduct expected from those entrusted with public service.

An MLA is not merely a holder of power but a representative of the people. Citizens expect their elected leaders to listen to their grievances, respond to criticism with patience and resolve disagreements through dialogue. When arguments turn into public confrontations, the dignity of the office risks being overshadowed by controversy.

Disagreements are a natural part of democracy, and elected representatives deserve respect too. However, leadership demands restraint and maturity, particularly in difficult situations. Public office comes with responsibility, and those who occupy it must remain mindful of the example they set.

At a time when people expect solutions to unemployment, development and public service issues, unnecessary controversies only distract from the real concerns of the public.

Ultimately, respect cannot be demanded on the strength of a position; it must be earned through conduct and service. An MLA's real strength lies not in authority or influence, but in the trust and respect earned from the people.

Good Morning Kashmir

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Ageing With HIV Must Not Mean Growing Invisible

SHOBHA SHUKLA



As long-term HIV survivors face stigma, fragmented healthcare and financial insecurity, community leaders call for a legally binding UN treaty that guarantees dignity, gender equality and government accountability for all older persons. As people living with HIV grow older, stigma, multiple age-related health conditions, financial insecurity and fragmented care threaten their rights and dignity. A legally binding UN treaty on human rights of older persons must ensure that longevity is matched by enforceable rights, adequate resources and community-led accountability.

Living longer is a victory. Ageing with dignity is the next challenge.

The demographic pyramid of the HIV epidemic is changing because - thanks to science and community-led rollout of lifesaving antiretroviral treatments - people are staying healthy and normal lifespans. When the viral load is undetectable there is zero risk of HIV transmission, so undetectable equals untransmittable or simply called U equals U. For millions of people living with HIV, growing older represents a remarkable triumph of science, activism, solidarity and community-led care. Yet this achievement has exposed a new and often overlooked challenge: the right to age with dignity, security and equal rights remains far from guaranteed.

"We are really addressing a very important moment in history, which is the time where people living with HIV have the opportunity to age," says Nicoletta Policek, who has lived with HIV for 42 years now. For Policek, who is the co-Founder and Director, PRISMA European Community Driven Observatory on Ageing and HIV, longevity is not merely a medical success story - it is the result of collective action, compassion and the determination of communities.

In 2025, an estimated 11.5 million people living with HIV worldwide were aged 50 and above (making up about 29% of all people living with HIV). This is projected to grow to 20.2 million (51%) by 2040. However, let us not forget that people with HIV experience accelerated biological ageing and a 50 years-old person with HIV often experiences age-related health conditions, and physical challenges typically seen in someone without HIV of around 70 years age in the general population.

Living longer with HIV brings in additional problems. Older people living with HIV may encounter barriers to healthcare, social protection, long-term care and meaningful participation in decisions affecting their lives. Their experiences also challenge a persistent assumption in public health: that controlling the virus alone is sufficient to secure wellbeing. As governments and international institutions consider a legally binding United Nations instrument on the human rights of older persons, the experiences of people ageing with HIV must help shape its provisions.

Nicoletta was speaking on SHE & Rights panel hosted by the Global Center for Health Diplomacy and Inclusion (CeHDI) and CNS with Global Alliance for the Rights of Older Persons (GAROP), Global Network of People living with HIV (GNP+), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) and APCAT Media.

A growing population, and an overlooked need

As people with HIV age, just like those without the virus, they too may require ongoing care for hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and/or other non-communicable conditions, alongside support for mental health, mobility and social connection. Tariro Kutadza, Advocacy Lead, Zimbabwe National Network of People living with HIV (ZNNP+) and founder leader of TB People (Zimbabwe), speaking from her lived experience, describes the reality of managing multiple health conditions while confronting stigma, isolation and limited treatment options. "Living longer is an achievement. Ageing well is the next goal," she says. That goal requires a shift from measuring success primarily through viral suppression to ensuring comprehensive, person-centred care throughout life.

Daxa Patel, co-founder and former President, National Coalition of People living with HIV in India (NCPI+) and leader of Gujarat State Network of People living with HIV (GSNP+), drawing from community experience in India, highlighted the additional burden of navigating a fragmented system. People living with HIV may need to negotiate different medical departments, documentation requirements and eligibility rules to access 'old age persons' benefits. She also points to the absence of dedicated health insurance and social protection arrangements specifically designed around their needs. When essential services are difficult to access, the formal existence of a benefit does not necessarily translate into a meaningful right.

Gender, stigma and the politics of invisibility

Ageing with HIV is not a uniform experience. Gender, disability, poverty, social exclusion and sexual identity can determine who receives care, who controls financial resources and whose needs are recognised. Older women who have spent their lives providing unpaid care may reach retirement without adequate savings or economic stability. Women living with HIV may also encounter stigma, economic dependence and limited influence over household or healthcare decisions. Transgender and gender-diverse older people can face additional discrimination in healthcare, housing and residential care settings. Low literacy, inaccessible information and complicated administrative processes compound these barriers.

Nicoletta Policek describes the personal cost of being rendered invisible by society. "I do not want to be invisible in social care. I do not want to be invisible when it comes to advocating for my own rights," said Nicoletta. Her words capture a fundamental human rights issue: older people living with HIV must be recognised as rights-holders, not simply as patients, dependants or recipients of charity.

Age is political

"Age is political," Policek argues. The distribution of resources, the design of public services and the power to define what dignified ageing means are all political choices. A society that celebrates longer life while overlooking the needs of long-term HIV survivors' risks turning a public health achievement into a new form of inequality.

Integration must put people, not budgets, at the centre

For Tariro Kutadza, the language of integration, sustainability and transition must be tested against the lived realities of older people. With international aid budgets under pressure and domestic financing priorities evolving, there is a danger that the needs of long-term HIV survivors will receive less attention as programmes focus increasingly on younger populations and prevention. As the Union World Conference on Lung Health opens next month in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Tariro underpinned that older persons are at 2-3 times more risk of TB. This TB risk goes up manifold for those with HIV.

Daxa Patel similarly calls for stronger peer-support networks led by people living with HIV, alongside community-led monitoring that documents denial of healthcare, stigma and difficulties accessing government benefits. Peer networks can help people navigate referrals, follow treatment, manage isolation and challenge discrimination. However, community participation cannot become an excuse for governments to withdraw from their responsibilities. As Policek warns, meaningful participation requires sustained funding, training, accessible processes, fair payment and protection of participants' identities.

Governments cannot claim to empower communities while expecting underfunded organisations and unpaid volunteers to compensate for weaknesses in public services. Currently the UN Human Rights Council's process of developing a legally binding international instrument on the protection of the human rights of older persons is underway. For people ageing with HIV, the treaty must move beyond general commitments to respect older persons. It should explicitly address the intersecting effects of ageism, HIV-related stigma, gender inequality and other forms of discrimination.

Ending ageism also means ending HIV stigma

It must guarantee that governments prohibit discrimination on the grounds of age and HIV status, including in healthcare, insurance, employment, housing, social protection and long-term care. Protection must extend to intersecting discrimination affecting older women, transgender people, people with disabilities and other marginalised groups. Older people living with HIV should have access to affordable, quality HIV treatment and medicines, routine screening for other chronic conditions, mental healthcare, rehabilitation and palliative care when needed.

The treaty must safeguard privacy and confidentiality. Unauthorised disclosure of HIV status can expose older people to discrimination, abuse and exclusion. Governments should ensure accessible pensions, income support, affordable housing and social protection for people with HIV. Administrative procedures must not create unreasonable barriers for people who lack documentation, literacy, digital access or the financial means to navigate multiple departments.

The treaty should require effective prevention and remedies for neglect, financial exploitation, coercion and gender-based violence. Older people living with HIV and their representative community-led networks must have a substantive role in designing policies, setting budgets, evaluating services, monitoring and implementation.

Nothing about us without us

The experiences of Policek, Kutadza and Patel converge on one principle: policies designed without the participation of older people living with HIV are unlikely to address the realities of their lives. Community-led evidence can reveal what conventional health indicators miss: a person denied admission to a care facility, a woman unable to claim a pension, or a patient forced to repeat sensitive information across disconnected services.

Community-led evidence must also translate into public accountability. As Nicoletta Policek emphasises, the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR) offers an important platform to scrutinise what governments are doing to protect older people living with HIV. Civil society organisations and community networks should bring documented experiences of discrimination, breaches of confidentiality, barriers to social protection and fragmented care into national consultations and relevant UPR submissions.

The right to grow older without losing rights and dignity

The HIV movement has demonstrated the power of collective advocacy, peer support and community leadership. Those lessons must now inform the next phase of the response: ensuring that people who have survived decades with HIV, can grow older without losing access to care, financial security, autonomy or a public voice. Human rights do not expire with age, and they must not stop at the door of a clinic or nursing home.

A legally binding treaty offers an opportunity to turn these demands into international standards against which governments can be held accountable. Its success will depend on whether it recognises the lived realities of people ageing with HIV and establishes clear obligations to protect their rights.

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Navi Pillay

From Humble Beginnings To The Pinnacle Of Human Rights



OMKAR DATTATRAY

The triumph of a bus driver's daughter in attaining the Nobel Peace Prize constitutes an extraordinary apotheosis of perseverance, intellectual tenacity and humanitarian commitment. It epitomises the transcendence of socioeconomic impediments and demonstrates how an individual emerging from an unpretentious familial milieu can ascend to the most exalted echelons of international recognition through erudition, indefatigability and an unwavering allegiance to justice. For the Indian diaspora, particularly those whose ancestral roots are embedded in the Indian subcontinent, such an accomplishment evokes immense pride and admiration. It also offers India an occasion to celebrate the remarkable contributions of people of Indian origin to the advancement of human civilisation.

Nilay Pillay, a distinguished South African jurist of Indian Tamil ancestry, has traversed an extraordinary trajectory from humble beginnings in Durban to the commanding heights of international jurisprudence. Her father worked as a bus driver, and her family did not possess the material privileges that frequently facilitate access to influential institutions. Nevertheless, the limitations imposed by economic circumstances did not extinguish her intellectual aspirations. Instead, her determination to acquire knowledge and establish an independent professional identity became the cornerstone of a career distinguished by courage, scholarship and an abiding commitment to human dignity.

Her accomplishments acquire even greater significance when viewed against the oppressive backdrop of apartheid-era South Africa. The institutionalised machinery of racial segregation systematically disenfranchised millions and perpetuated discrimination through an insidious hierarchy of racial classification. For individuals belonging to historically marginalised communities, professional advancement frequently entailed confronting formidable structural impediments. Pillay nevertheless persevered, pursuing legal education and embarking upon a career that would eventually establish her as an influential advocate of constitutionalism, equality and fundamental rights. Her professional journey exemplifies the emancipatory potential of education and the transformative efficacy of individual resolve. She established her own legal practice in South Africa in 1967 and represented people subjected to discrimination and political persecution. Her subsequent appointment as the first non-white woman to serve on the High Court of South Africa constituted a momentous milestone in the country's judicial history. It symbolised not merely personal distinction but also the gradual dismantling of exclusionary conventions that had historically circumscribed the participation of disadvantaged communities in positions of authority.

Pillay's influence subsequently transcended national boundaries. Her judicial responsibilities brought her into the domain of international criminal jurisprudence, where



questions of accountability, atrocities and the protection of vulnerable populations assume profound moral and legal significance. She served as a judge and president of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, which adjudicated crimes committed during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Her judicial work contributed to the development of international jurisprudence concerning sexual violence, including its recognition as a potentially constitutive element of genocide under the appropriate legal circumstances. Her subsequent association with the International Criminal Court and her tenure as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2008 to 2014 further consolidated her international stature. In these capacities, she confronted the complexities of discrimination, impunity, institutional accountability and the universal applicability of human rights. Her career underscores the indispensable proposition that peace cannot be sustained through diplomatic expediency alone; it requires credible institutions, impartial adjudication and an uncompromising repudiation of systematic oppression.

The Nobel Peace Prize, associated with her achievements in 2026, must therefore be understood within the broader philosophical framework of justice, reconciliation and human dignity. Its significance extends beyond the conferral of an illustrious distinction upon an individual. It draws attention to the indispensable relationship between peace and accountability, reminding the international community that durable stability cannot be constructed upon the foundations of injustice or the deliberate subjugation of vulnerable populations. Where violations remain unaddressed and perpetrators enjoy impunity, the prospect of genuine reconciliation remains precarious. For the Indian diaspora, Pillay's achievement represents an inspiring affirmation of the intellectual, professional and humanitarian contributions made by people of Indian ancestry across geographical frontiers. Generations of migrants have confronted displacement, economic uncertainty and social discrimination while endeavouring to establish dignified lives in their adopted homelands. Their descendants have subsequently distinguished themselves in diverse spheres, including science, medicine, education, jurisprudence, public administration and international diplomacy.

Pillay's accomplishment adds a particularly consequential dimension to this collective legacy by foregrounding the contribution of an individual whose professional endeavours have been closely associated with justice and human rights. India, too, can regard her achievement with legitimate admiration, recognising the enduring connections between the country and its far-flung diaspora. Nevertheless, intellectual honesty demands an appropriate distinction between ancestral affiliation and national identity. Pillay is a South African jurist, and her accomplishments belong fundamentally to her professional service and the society in which she has worked. Her Indian heritage enriches the significance of her story without diminishing her South African identity or transforming an individual international distinction into a national award for India.

Perhaps the most compelling dimension of her journey lies in its profound repudiation of inherited privilege as the exclusive determinant of success. The daughter of a bus driver has demonstrated that humble origins need not become an immutable impediment to extraordinary achievement. Her life offers an enduring admonition to young people that circumstances of birth are not necessarily the boundaries of intellectual ambition, professional excellence or social contribution. Education, perseverance, ethical conviction and an uncompromising commitment to one's principles can collectively overcome formidable disadvantages.

Ultimately, Navi Pillay's journey constitutes a stirring testament to the indomitable human spirit. Her recognition celebrates the proposition that greatness derives not from affluence, ancestry or social eminence, but from the consequential use of one's abilities in the service of humanity. For the Indian diaspora, it is an occasion for profound gratification; for India, a moment to acknowledge the achievements of its global kinship; and for the international community, a reminder that justice remains indispensable to peace. Her extraordinary trajectory conveys a timeless message: humble beginnings do not preordain modest destinies, and the highest form of distinction lies in transforming personal achievement into an enduring contribution to human dignity.

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

The True Test Of An Inclusive School

MOHAMMAD HANIEF

Education is often judged by examination results, grades and classroom performance. Yet, these measures do not always reflect a child's true abilities, creativity or potential. For children with learning disabilities, the pressure to meet conventional academic expectations can turn school into a place of anxiety rather than discovery.

Difficulties with reading, writing, spelling or mathematics may affect their confidence, particularly when their struggles are misunderstood as carelessness or a lack of effort. In this context, co-curricular activities can play a transformative role by helping children recognise their strengths, express their abilities and develop a stronger sense of belonging.

Learning disabilities, including dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia, affect particular areas of learning and vary from child to child. They do not automatically indicate low intelligence or a lack of ambition.

A student who struggles to write a paragraph may possess remarkable artistic talent, while another who finds calculations difficult may excel in music, sport, drama or practical work. When education focuses too narrowly on marks, such abilities can remain unnoticed. A more inclusive approach recognises that children learn differently and deserve opportunities to succeed in different ways.

Co-curricular activities are not merely recreational additions to the school timetable. Sports, drawing, painting, music, dance, drama, gardening, storytelling, handicrafts and cultural programmes can contribute significantly to a child's emotional, social and intellectual development. They encourage teamwork, communication, discipline, creativity and problem-solving while allowing children to learn through experience rather than relying exclusively on written assignments and examinations.

For a child who repeatedly faces academic difficulties, achieving something in another field can be deeply encouraging. Completing a painting, learning a dance sequence, participating in a school play or contributing to a sports team can provide a sense of accomplishment that conventional assessments may fail to capture. Appreciation from teachers and classmates can help children understand that their abilities matter and that they have a valuable place in the school community.

Such experiences are particularly important because repeated failure and negative comparisons can weaken a child's self-esteem. When students are given opportunities to demonstrate their strengths, they are more likely to participate, build friendships and approach challenges with greater confidence. Co-curricular activities therefore support not only talent development but also emotional well-being and social inclusion.

India's educational framework increasingly recognises the need to make education accessible and meaningful for children with disabilities. The National Education Policy 2020 emphasises equitable and inclusive education, while the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, provides a legal framework for inclusive education and appropriate support. These commitments must extend beyond classroom teaching to sports, assemblies, excursions, competitions and cultural events.

Enrolling a child in a mainstream school does not, by itself, guarantee inclusion. A student may still be left out because instructions are difficult to follow, activities are organised inflexibly, materials are unsuitable or adults underestimate the child's abilities. Genuine inclusion requires schools to identify and remove these barriers. Clear instructions, demonstrations, visual aids, flexible timing and adapted equipment can help more children participate meaningfully.

The objective should not be to separate children with learning disabilities from their peers unnecessarily, but to create an environment in which differences are understood and individual needs are respected. Every child should have a fair chance to participate without fear of ridicule, embarrassment or discrimination.

Teachers are central to creating such an environment. Understanding



a child's interests, learning needs and individual strengths is the first step towards meaningful participation. Some students may benefit from visual demonstrations, step-by-step guidance or activities involving movement and practical experience. Others may require additional time, peer support or alternative ways of showing what they can do.

The emphasis should be on effort, progress and enjoyment rather than perfection. Children should not be publicly compared with classmates or discouraged because they need more time to learn. General teachers, special educators, counsellors and parents can work together to identify appropriate opportunities and provide consistent support. Professional development can also help teachers recognise learning disabilities and respond with practical, evidence-informed strategies.

Co-curricular activities can complement academic learning as well. Storytelling and drama may encourage language development and communication, while practical projects can connect abstract ideas with everyday experience. A student who struggles with written expression might first explain an idea orally, arrange pictures or use a visual plan before attempting a written task. Accessible digital resources and assistive technology may also support some learners when selected according to their needs. However, technology cannot replace patient teaching, personal encouragement and supportive relationships.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the promise of inclusive education depends on how effectively policies are translated into everyday school practice. Awareness of learning disabilities is important, but misconceptions can still cause children to be labelled weak, careless or unwilling to work. Families may not always know where to seek assessment and guidance, while teachers can face large classes, limited specialist support and insufficient training. Access to services may be particularly difficult for families living in remote and rural areas.

Addressing these challenges requires sustained action rather than occasional awareness campaigns. Schools need better teacher preparation, supportive leadership, accessible facilities and stronger coordination with parents and specialists. Education authorities should look beyond enrolment figures and examination results to examine whether children with disabilities are participating fully in school life and receiving the support they require. Reliable local information and regular monitoring can help identify gaps and improve services.

Jammu and Kashmir's rich cultural traditions also offer valuable opportunities for inclusive participation. Poetry, storytelling, art, handicrafts, music and community celebrations can allow children to express themselves while connecting with their cultural heritage. Sports and recreational activities can promote physical well-being, teamwork and friendship when reasonable adjustments are made where necessary. Such opportunities should welcome different abilities rather than expect every child to perform in exactly the same way.

Parents, teachers, school leaders and education authorities all have a role in helping children flourish. Parents can encourage their children's interests, celebrate small achievements and avoid constant comparisons with siblings or classmates. Teachers can make participation an integral part of school life, while school leaders can ensure that bullying and ridicule are not tolerated. Community organisations can contribute by promoting awareness, supporting families and creating opportunities for children to display their talents.

Ultimately, the purpose of education extends far beyond passing examinations. It should help children develop independence, confidence, relationships and a sense of purpose. Co-curricular activities are therefore not optional extras for children with learning disabilities; they are an important part of equitable and meaningful education.

A child may need additional time to read a passage or solve a mathematical problem, yet shine on the playground, on stage, in a workshop or through a work of art. These achievements deserve recognition because they reveal dimensions of ability that marks alone cannot measure.

The true measure of an inclusive school is not whether every child learns in the same way, but whether every child receives the understanding, support and opportunity needed to develop their potential. When schools look beyond examination results and value the whole child, they create an environment where differences are respected, confidence grows and every learner has a genuine opportunity to succeed.

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Book Review

Beyond The Edge Of Awareness



WANI ARFAT



The Jammu and Kashmir has an interesting past full of literature, poetry, and knowledge. For decades, Jammu and Kashmir has produced famous literary figures who have contributed to the world with their ideas about life, society, humanity, and religion. From the contributions of Lal Ded, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani, and others to the work of Mahjoor, there have been many literary figures who have moved hearts with their words. From their writings, we learn that literature is not only about good wording but also about emotions, social issues, questions, and good messages. Rahil Rasheed Wani is among those new voices whose views on various aspects of life and society have been compiled in the book titled Beyond the Edge of Awareness: Selected Writings in English & Urdu, published by GNK Publications in 2026. The book presents Rahil Rasheed Wani's views in both English and Urdu.

Rahil Rasheed Wani was born on June 10, 2006, and he hails from the village of Gulgam that is located in the district of Kupwara, Jammu and Kashmir and is five kilometers away from Kupwara town. This village is known for the calm environment and for the courteous behavior of its people. The inhabitants of the village lay a lot of emphasis on respect and human relations. He was educated in Islamic Global School, Srinagar, and is presently pursuing his bachelors' degree from Poona College, Pune. Besides his studies, he is also preparing himself for the Civil Services examination conducted by the UPSC. He is very much interested in literature, writing, and social affairs. He has written a book titled "Beyond the Edge of Awareness". The themes of the book include humanity, education, character formation, and social responsibility.

This book discusses education, unemployment, youth, family, human values, corruption, war, and the purpose of life. The topics mentioned are closely related to the issues that we observe in our surroundings. The writer wants to motivate readers through his writings by encouraging them to think about and understand the reality of their lives. He says that education and success are important; however, they become truly meaningful only when we learn to understand people and become good human beings through education.

The interesting thing about this book is that it has been written in two languages—English and Urdu. There are seven chapters in each language, making a total of fourteen chapters in the book. Furthermore, this book is highly relevant to Jammu and Kashmir, as both these languages hold great importance in the fields of education and literature.

The foreword of the book has been written by Dr. Reyaz Tawheedi Kashmiri, a well-known Urdu fiction writer, literary critic, researcher, and scholar whose writings deal with various aspects of Urdu literature and Kashmiri society. He is also the teacher of Rahil Rasheed Wani. This is an important addition to the literary content of the book. His presence reminds us of the vital contribution that teachers can make in motivating young people to read, write, and think.

Education is another major topic dealt with in the book. In his chapter entitled "The Real Purpose of Education", the author says, "Education, in its truest sense, is a process that humanizes humanity." He believes that education should teach us to reason logically, respect other people, and take responsibility for our actions. The author also says, "We know how to make machines but we don't know how to make man." These statements make us think about the extent to which we pay heed to virtues like honesty, kindness, and courtesy. The chapter is especially significant for students of Jammu and Kashmir, who spend much time in acquiring education.

The author further discusses education in Kashmir and its relationship with culture and identity. Students need to acquire a modern education without neglecting their heritage. This is an important issue, as education needs to enable young people to learn about the wider world as well as their own community. Another chapter, entitled "Degrees Without Skills: Why India's Youth Remain Unemployed", discusses unemployment. The author writes that "A degree is worthless without skills." There are many educated young people who cannot find suitable jobs after completing their education. This is an issue in Jammu and Kashmir, as many students in the region believe that education ensures them a promising future.

Moreover, this book explores modern factors influencing human behaviour. With the advent of technologies such as social media, many people tend to post pictures or stories about their success. It must be said, however, that what we see may be a distorted image of reality, as someone who seems happy might have their fair share of troubles. The author tries to persuade readers to pay attention to true friendship, courtesy, and inner peace. Technology plays a significant role because of its ability to help people gain knowledge and communicate with others. However, it should be used properly, as real progress can be achieved only in that case.

Another theme discussed in the book is war and human agony. In "After the Devastation: The Test of Human Consciousness", the author poses the question, "Who is suffering in the war? Leaders or the common man?" The question serves to draw readers' attention to the fact that the common man is often the one who suffers the most during conflicts. Children miss their childhood, families are made homeless, and people live in fear and uncertainty. We have our own experience of conflicts and the suffering they cause to ordinary people.

Another significant chapter is "Apathy, Empathy, and Sympathy: Beneath the Same Firmament." According to the writer, "The sky above them is the same, but the ground beneath their feet is not." This quotation implies that although individuals live in the same society, they have to deal with different problems. Some students have access to all the resources, such as books, transportation, and other necessities, whereas others are unable to afford their fees or even travel to their educational institutions. Many students in Kashmir have to spend money to attend an institution or travel for their education.

The chapter "The Silent Forces Behind Every Great Life" emphasises the importance of families and teachers. According to the author, "A mother builds the heart. A teacher builds the mind. Together, they build the destiny of humankind." Parents teach children their first lessons, while teachers provide them with knowledge and confidence. Both are equally important in shaping young people. This chapter also highlights the significance of love, respect, and care for our parents because, apart from money, there are other things that contribute to success. Our success should not come at the cost of our responsibilities towards our families.

The Urdu section discusses topics such as youth, changing values, and corruption. The writer explains that young people need good advice and positive company to grow and develop. He also highlights the importance of honesty in life and explains that it should begin at home. This is a good point raised by the author, but the problem of corruption depends not only on individuals but also on the system.

"Life is a Response that Should be Made When Needed" discusses the purpose of life, one's responsibilities, and faith in Allah. Readers are reminded that they cannot choose the environment into which they are born. However, what they can certainly do is make responsible decisions as they grow in life. Life becomes more meaningful when one uses their abilities to help others. This point is likely to encourage young readers to think about their life objectives, behaviour, and personalities.

Muntazir Momin Wani, an author, researcher, and social commentator, shared his views on Rahil Rasheed Wani's book Beyond the Edge of Awareness through a video message. He discussed some of the major themes of the book, including self-awareness, human life, and social issues, praising the author for attempting to analyse philosophical and social concepts in both English and Urdu.

Among the strengths of Beyond the Edge of Awareness is the fact that the issues discussed relate to people's everyday experiences. The language in this book is clear and understandable, and the problems presented in this book are pertinent to the youth and society as a whole. Problems like education, family, culture, and human values have all been covered in one book. However, there are still some concepts that may need more explanation and examples. There are some arguments that need more development, especially those that are complicated. Some repetition could be avoided to bring out the major themes more clearly.

The official launch of Beyond the Edge of Awareness took place during the Gulistan Channel programme "Lafz Lafz Gulistan", which was attended by poets, writers, and intellectuals. On this occasion, the intellectual and literary aspects of the book were highlighted.

In my opinion, Beyond the Edge of Awareness is a constructive attempt to bridge education, human values, and social responsibility. I feel that this book deserves considerable attention because it discusses issues of concern to young people, especially in Jammu and Kashmir. The idea behind it is that education must make us better human beings, development must make our lives better, and knowledge must help us understand each other. I feel that the book could have done a better job of providing evidence and discussing some issues in certain chapters. However, its most important feature is that it makes us realise our responsibilities towards society.

In conclusion, Rahil Rasheed Wani is to be congratulated for compiling his thoughts in the form of a book published in English and Urdu. It is with immense pleasure that I, Wani Arfat, would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to him and wish him further success in his literary career. I hope that his book will inspire many young men and women in Jammu and Kashmir to read and write and thereby express their thoughts and ideas. Our region is known for its rich literary history, and fresh literary talent could play a part in preserving our literary heritage by expressing thoughts on contemporary issues.

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EAM Jaishankar meets Russian State Duma Chairman Volodin

IANS



NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar on Monday met Chairman of Russia's State Duma, Vyacheslav Volodin, in New Delhi and discussed bilateral cooperation as well as opportunities to deepen parliamentary linkages between the two countries.

"Pleased to meet the Chairman of the State Duma of Russia, Vyacheslav Volodin and his delegation in New Delhi. We discussed our bilateral cooperation as well as opportunities for deepening our parliamentary linkages," EAM Jaishankar posted on X.

Earlier in the day, Volodin noted that the BRICS countries are united in recognising the right of each state to a sovereign path of development.

"We represent countries with different political systems, economic models, and traditions. But we are united in building a multipolar world, respecting different approaches and national legislations, and recognising the right of each state to a sovereign path of development," said Volodin in his address at the plenary session of the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum, which began in New Delhi.

In his address, Volodin, currently on his first working visit abroad to attend the two-day forum in New Delhi, highlighted that, over the 20 years of its existence, BRICS has become one of the key pillars of the emerging multipolar world and a just world order.

"The relations between our countries within BRICS are an example of effective cooperation, where sovereign states work on mutually beneficial terms, developing their economies and improving the well-being of their citizens," said Volodin.

Volodin also met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the inauguration of the forum in New Delhi and conveyed warm greetings and best wishes from Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Volodin began his working visit to India on Sunday and met with his foreign counterparts for bilateral discussions on the sidelines of the BRICS forum in New Delhi.

According to the Russian Foreign Ministry, meetings and talks with "colleagues from the Parliament of India" are also planned, considering that Russia-India relations are a privileged strategic partnership, rooted in traditions of 'Druzhba Dosti' and mutually beneficial cooperation.

"Relations between Russia and India constitute a privileged strategic partnership, rooted in traditions of friendship, trust and mutually beneficial cooperation. It is important to contribute to developing and strengthening these relations through parliamentary cooperation," the ministry mentioned.

Concluded most discussions, now fine-tuning India-US trade pact: Goyal

IANS

NEW DELHI: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Monday that India and the US have sorted out most of the issues in their proposed bilateral trade pact and are now giving the finishing touches to the agreement that has to be signed.

"We have concluded most of the discussions on the India-US trade deal. Now we are fine-tuning the agreement," Goyal said while speaking at the India-Netherlands Business Forum in The Hague.

He also said India is holding trade negotiations with eight other countries.

The minister's remarks come close on the heels of President Donald Trump telling reporters in the White House that the US and India were "pretty close" to making a trade deal.

"We're going to make a deal...It's going to be a much different kind of deal than we've done," Trump said.

Similarly, the US Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor, sounded a positive note, saying major issues involved in the talks had been addressed and the two countries were close to finalising an agreement.

Goyal has stated earlier that India has stated in the trade talks with the US that the final agreement must give its exporters a competitive advantage over rivals in other countries.

Meanwhile, Goyal also met with Members of Parliament from the Netherlands to discuss new opportunities for advancing India-Netherlands relations.

"Discussed the potential of the India-EU FTA to boost market access, diversify supply chains, and unlock fresh investment opportunities," he said in a post on X.

The minister further stated that he also emphasised the importance of collaboration in advanced manufacturing, renewable energy and innovation to build a resilient, future-oriented economic partnership in his talks with the Dutch leaders.

Goyal is on an official visit to Germany and the Netherlands from October 22–27 to deepen India's strategic economic partnerships, expand bilateral trade and advance industrial and technological collaboration with the two countries.

During the Berlin leg of the visit from October 22–24, he participated in the Berlin Global Dialogue, engaging with international policymakers and global business leaders to highlight India's macroeconomic stability, manufacturing capabilities and pivotal role in building resilient global supply chains.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE .....

Rajnath Singh To

member states (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam) and its eight Dialogue Partners (India, US, China, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand) to strengthen security and defence cooperation," the ministry mentioned in a statement.

India became the dialogue partner of ASEAN in 1992, and the first ADMM-Plus was held in Vietnam's Hanoi in 2010. Since 2017, ADMM-Plus Ministers have been meeting each year to bolster defence cooperation amongst ASEAN and the Plus countries.

The Philippines is the chair of ADMM-Plus for 2026. Under the construct of ADMM-Plus, India is co-chairing the Experts Working Group on Counter-Terrorism with Malaysia for the cycle 2024-2027. India's active participation in the ADMM-Plus mechanisms demonstrates the deepening defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia under India's Act East policy, aimed at ensuring peace, stability and collective growth in the region.

Last month, Indian Naval Ships Sahyadri and Kulish reached Subic Bay port in the Philippines to participate in the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus Joint Cooperation Activity (JCA).

The visit was in line with the Indian government's Act East Policy and the vision of MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions), underscoring India's India's continued commitment to multilateral maritime cooperation and constructive engagement with regional partners, according to the statement from the Ministry of Defence.

The ADMM-Plus JCA brought together maritime forces from ASEAN Member States and eight Plus countries for professional and operational engagements aimed at enhancing interoperability, fostering mutual understanding and strengthening cooperation in the maritime domain.

LG To Administer

and central Kashmir, and one from the Jammu province.

They said Ali Muhammad Sagar and Altaf Kaloo are being inducted into the cabinet while Satish Sharma could be dropped from the council of ministers.

It has been learnt that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had approached the Congress high command in August to ask whether they would like to avail a berth in the ministry, but they have not responded to the offer.

Sources said that the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee was divided over whether to be part of the government.

Following the swearing-in ceremony tomorrow, there would be a massive rejig in the portfolios of ministers, they said

"The Chief Minister would relieve himself of few portfolios as well as effect massive changes in the portfolios of his council of ministers," they said—(KNO)

Dar, Rana, Satish

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will administer the oath of office and secrecy to the incoming ministers. The exercise will mark the first major reshuffle of the Omar Abdullah-led government since it assumed office in October 2024.

Sources said the proposed changes are expected to extend beyond filling vacant ministerial positions, with changes in the existing Cabinet's composition and a possible redistribution of key portfolios also under consideration. The final list of incoming and outgoing ministers has not been officially announced.

According to sources, Ali Mohammad Sagar, a senior National Conference leader with extensive experience in government, is among the likely choices for a Cabinet berth. Arjun Singh Raju, the National Conference MLA from Ramban, is also being considered, a move that could strengthen representation from the Jammu region in the Council of Ministers.

Sources further indicated that Javid Ahmad Dar, Javed Ahmed Rana and Satish Sharma may be dropped as part of the proposed reshuffle. No official confirmation has been issued regarding their exit, and the reasons for the possible changes remain unclear.

Well placed sources added that National Conference veteran Mubarak Gul is being considered for the post of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, while incumbent Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather may be inducted into the Cabinet and assigned the Finance portfolio.

Rather, a senior legislator with considerable legislative and administrative experience, currently occupies the Speaker's chair. His possible induction into the executive would necessitate a change in the Assembly's speakership, with Gul emerging as a likely successor, according to the sources.

The proposed changes are also expected to leave the positions of Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary and Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo unaffected. Sources indicated that both are likely to continue in their existing roles, although the allocation of portfolios across the Cabinet could be reviewed.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had earlier said that the list of ministers had been finalized in consultation with National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah. He had also urged party colleagues seeking ministerial positions to stop sending messages and making repeated approaches, saying the decision had already been taken.

The expansion comes amid pressure to accommodate senior legislators and maintain regional representation within the Council of Ministers. Under the applicable framework, Jammu and Kashmir's 90-member Legislative Assembly permits a Council of Ministers comprising up to nine members, including the Chief Minister.

The names of those likely to be inducted or dropped, as well as the proposed changes involving the Speaker and Finance portfolio, remain subject to official confirmation ahead of Tuesday's ceremony. [KNT]

Kashmir Shivers

Pahalgam recorded a minimum temperature of 0.2 degrees Celsius, while Sonamarg and Gulmarg registered 0.5 and 0.6 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Srinagar recorded a minimum temperature of 3.3 degrees Celsius, while the mercury settled at 1.8 degrees Celsius at Srinagar Airport. Pulwama recorded 0.6 degrees Celsius, Awantipora 1.0 degree, Budgam 2.0 degrees, Konibal in Pampore 2.1 degrees, Qazigund 2.6 degrees, Kupwara 2.8 degrees, Bandipora 3.3 degrees and Baramulla 4.2 degrees Celsius.

In Ladakh, Nyoma recorded a maximum temperature of 8.1 degrees Celsius and a minimum of minus 8.4 degrees Celsius. Leh recorded a maximum of 11.4 degrees Celsius and a minimum of minus 4.1 degrees Celsius, while Kargil registered a high of 16.4 degrees Celsius and a low of minus 1.4 degrees Celsius.

Among other stations, Tangste recorded a minimum temperature of minus 5.4 degrees Celsius, followed by Padum at minus 4.6 degrees, Stakna at minus 4.3 degrees, Drass at minus 4.0 degrees, Upshi at minus 3.7 degrees and Chuchot at minus 3.6 degrees Celsius. Diskit in Nubra Valley recorded a low of minus 1.3 degrees Celsius, while Khaltse and Garkon registered minimum temperatures of 0.2 and 5.1 degrees Celsius, respectively.

In the Jammu division, Jammu city recorded a minimum temperature of 14.4 degrees Celsius, while Jammu Airport and Kathua registered 16.3 and 15.2 degrees Celsius, respectively. Among the higher-altitude stations, Bhadarwah recorded 4.2 degrees Celsius, Banihal 6.0 degrees, Rajouri 7.6 degrees and Kishtwar 7.9 degrees Celsius.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Department has forecast mainly dry weather over the coming days, although brief spells of light rain may occur in a few districts. Residents, particularly in higher-altitude areas, are likely to continue experiencing cold nights as temperatures remain low—(KNO)

Bollywood's Singham

In a social media post, the resort said it was delighted to host the actor, adding that some moments make a stay truly unforgettable.

Earlier, Devgan was reportedly seen shooting in the Kaksar area of Kargil, Ladakh, 'wearing an Army uniform', for his upcoming film 'Chauhaan', the source said.

The action drama is directed by Neeraj Yadav and is scheduled for release on October 1, 2027—(KNO)

Jeddah Consulate

possible assistance to affected nationals.

He informed that 24×7 control rooms have been established in Jeddah and Makkah to address the concerns of pilgrims. The Consulate is also maintaining regular contact with affected pilgrims, tour operators and the concerned Saudi authorities.

According to the communication, teams from the Consulate, with the support of Indian community associations and volunteers, are facilitating essential medicines, food and other immediate requirements, particularly for vulnerable pilgrims.

The Consulate is also coordinating closely with the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah regarding pilgrims' welfare and with local authorities on visa-related matters.

Regarding the return of affected passengers, Suri said the issue of alternative flight arrangements and additional flight capacity had been taken up with the concerned authorities in India and the airlines.

He added that some affected pilgrims had already returned through available scheduled flights, while efforts were continuing to facilitate the early return of the remaining passengers.

Assuring continued support, the Consulate stated that it remained available to extend necessary assistance in specific cases brought to its attention.





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India and UAE explore opportunities to share best practices in digital governance

IANS



NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla held a meeting with UAE's Federal National Council Speaker Saqr Ghobash on the sidelines of the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum 2026 in New Delhi on Monday, with discussions centering on expanding cooperation in education, youth exchanges, trade, investment and people-to-people ties.

Both sides explored opportunities to share best practices in digital governance through Digital Sansad, Artificial Intelligence (AI), parliamentary committee functioning and the Online Assurance Monitoring System.

During the meeting, Birla and Ghobash reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen the historic bonds of friendship between India and the UAE through enhanced parliamentary cooperation, regular dialogue and exchanges of parliamentary delegations.

"Delighted to host H.E. Mr. Saqr Ghobash, Speaker of the Federal National Council of the UAE, on the sidelines of the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum 2026. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthening the historic bonds of friendship between India and the UAE through enhanced parliamentary cooperation, regular dialogue and exchanges of parliamentary delegations. We also explored opportunities to share best practices in digital governance through Digital Sansad, artificial intelligence, parliamentary committee functioning and the Online Assurance Monitoring System," Birla posted on X.

"Emphasising the shared aspirations of Viksit Bharat and the UAE's We the UAE 2031 vision, we discussed expanding cooperation in trade, investment, education, youth exchanges and people-to-people ties. We also recognised the India-UAE Parliamentary Friendship Group as an important bridge connecting parliamentarians of our two nations," he added.

During the meeting, Birla and Ghobash exchanged views on regional developments and underscored the importance of dialogue and diplomacy in promoting peace and stability. Birla expressed appreciation for UAE's support for India on global platforms and reaffirmed New Delhi's commitment to deepening the enduring strategic partnership for mutual prosperity.

Lok Sabha extended a warm welcome to Saqr Ghobash as he arrived in New Delhi on Sunday to attend the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum.

In a post on X, Lok Sabha stated, "Lok Sabha extends a warm welcome to H.E. Saqr Ghobash, Speaker of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates and Head of the UAE Delegation, on his arrival in New Delhi for the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum 2026. He was received by Shri Gulam Ali, MP."

The Forum, which commenced earlier in the day, has brought together parliamentary leaders from BRICS member and partner countries to discuss ways to strengthen parliamentary cooperation and advance people-centric development.

SKIE classes launches EduSKIE

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: In a major initiative to make quality education accessible to all, SKIE Classes has launched EduSkie, an integrated online learning platform aimed at students of Classes 8th, 9th and 10th, a statement issued by the institution said Monday.

What sets EduSkie apart is its focus on holistic education. The platform goes beyond academic coaching, offering career guidance through psychometric tests and health consultation support.

In a significant social initiative, the management has announced that the entire programme will be free for underprivileged students, including orphans, destitute children, students from economically weaker sections, and wards of police martyrs, it said.

The initiative is aimed at transforming the educational landscape and bringing quality learning opportunities to students across Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, and the rest of the country.

In its first phase, the platform will cater to students of Classes 8th, 9th and 10th, combining academic learning with career guidance and health support.

Along with live and recorded classes, comprehensive study material and regular assessments and tests the platform will offer psychometric tests to help students understand their aptitude and explore suitable career paths.

It will also provide around 15 free health consultations by doctors and councillors from across India for enrolled students, in association with its health partner.

The initiative has been launched in collaboration with organizations – KS Admission Pvt. Ltd., Uttarakhand (Director, Mr. Dipak Singh), Health Gennie, Jaipur (Director, Mr. Sudanshu Goyal), Soft Finn Solutions (Director, Mr. Mohammad Shahid Khan), who were present on the occasion.

The event brought together dignitaries from different religious backgrounds, along with intellectuals, educationists and educational thinkers.

A major highlight of the launch is the announcement of completely free access to the EduSkie programme for eligible students from underprivileged backgrounds, including orphans, destitute children and wards of police martyrs.

To ensure that the benefits reach the most deserving students, eligibility will be verified at the grassroots level by any one of the following designated authorities: Halqa President, Head of the local Masjid Committee, Headmaster or Principal of the concerned school, Numberdar, or the concerned Station House Officer (SHO).

The management stated that the initiative aims to ensure that financial hardship does not deprive any student of quality education, career guidance and essential health support, the statement added.

'Bigg Boss 20'

Qazi, Farrhana's conversation in Kashmiri goes viral on social media



REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Kashmiri language found a place on national television as 'Bigg Boss 20' contestant Qazi Touqeer and Farrhana Bhatt, an actress from the Valley, switched to their mother tongue during the show's 'Weekend Ka Vaar' episode on Sunday, sharing a light-hearted exchange that brought a taste of Kashmir's everyday conversations to the national audience.

According to the details available, Farrhana appeared on the show on October 25 to promote her song "Shahiba", but her interaction with Qazi also turned into a moment of cultural connection as the two exchanged greetings and spoke in Kashmiri.

"Every Kashmiri is so proud of you. I'm loving you and whatever you're doing. You're so entertaining!" Farrhana told Qazi, praising his personality and performance on the reality show. She also encouraged him to bring the season's trophy to Kashmir, saying, "Make sure trophy Kashmir aaye!"

During their Kashmiri exchange, Qazi asked Farrhana, "Wari chukh theek chukh?" (How are you? Are you well?). Farrhana replied, "Shukar, shukar, Hazrat, tuhi chiv theek," saying she was doing well by God's grace.

Qazi then asked, "Yeti chhu Tachar chalan, Kashmir manz chha jari?" referring to whether the "Tachar" trend was also going on in Kashmir. Farrhana replied, "Jari."

The exchange offered viewers a glimpse of colloquial Kashmiri and the familiarity of everyday expressions used in the Valley.

The conversation later turned to music, with Qazi joining Farrhana in singing "Shahiba". Farrhana also suggested that the two collaborate on an official song after Qazi leaves the Bigg Boss house.

Their interaction brought Kashmiri language and cultural familiarity to a national entertainment platform, giving viewers beyond Jammu and Kashmir a glimpse of the Valley's everyday conversation—(KNO)

7 drug peddlers arrested in Anantnag, contraband recovered: Police

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Continuing its sustained crackdown against drug trafficking and substance abuse, Jammu and Kashmir Police in Anantnag intensified its efforts to curb the drug menace across the district. During a series of operations, police teams apprehended seven peddlers and recovered large quantity of contraband substances from their possession.

In a statement issued, officials said that a police party from Police Station Anantnag apprehended Sareer Ahmad Bhat son of Khazir Mohammad Bhat resident of Chirhama Mirbazar, at Nawvathoo Danter and recovered approximately 230 grams of charas powder-like substance from his possession. In another operation, police intercepted a Hyundai i10 bearing registration number JK05B-3181, driven by Mohd Altaf Bhat son of Abdul Majeed Bhat, resident of Mirdanter. Approximately 153 grams of charas powder-like substance was recovered during the search from his possession. Besides, vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized.

In separate operations at Wazirbagh and behind Police Station Anantnag, police apprehended Bittu Dantani son of Raju Dantani resident of Chapur Mehdi Kuwa, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, presently residing at Achabal Adda, Anantnag, and Ajay Kumar son of Kishan Kumar, resident of Verrugam Kadi, Gujarat. Approximately 17 grams and 22 grams of charas, respectively, were recovered from their possession, officials said.

Meanwhile, acting on reliable information, Police Post Sangam conducted a raid at the residential house of Bilal Ahmad Bhat son of Abdul Wahab Bhat, resident of Baliyar Marhama, and recovered approximately 7.170 kilograms of ganja-like substance. Similarly, a naka party of Police Post Shairbagh apprehended Danish Manzoor Shaikh son of Manzoor Ahmad Shaikh, resident of Janglat Mandi, Anantnag, at High Ground and recovered approximately 205 grams of charas-like substance from his possession.

Moreover, a naka party of Police Station Mattan apprehended Javid Mukhtiyaar Pashoo son of Mukhtiyaar Ahmad Pashoo, resident of Gopalpora, Mattan, and recovered approximately 52.6 grams of charas-like substance from his possession.

In a separate action, a police party of Police Post DK Pora apprehended Bashir Ahmad Bhat son of Mohd Abdullah Bhat, resident of Brinty, and recovered approximately 15 grams of charas from his possession.

Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and further investigations have been initiated, officials added.

Police reiterated its firm commitment to eradicating the drug menace and appealed to the general public to cooperate with police by sharing credible information regarding drug trafficking and peddling—(KNO)

Govt orders probe into alleged tender irregularities in R&B Division Anantnag

JAHANGEER GANAIE

ANANTNAG: The Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered an in-depth fact-finding inquiry into alleged irregularities in the allotment of works by the Public Works (Roads and Buildings) Division, Anantnag, directing a four-member committee to examine the tendering process and identify officials responsible for any violations.

As per Government Order No. 358-PWD(R&B) of 2026, the R&B Department has constituted a preliminary enquiry committee to scrutinise the procedure adopted in the allotment of works under NIT No. 168/Anantnag/2026-27/E-Tendering/1717, issued on August 24, 2026, by the Executive Engineer, R&B Division Anantnag.

According to the terms of reference, the committee will examine the award of a contract to the L2 bidder, allegedly in violation of the guidelines issued by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and the provisions of the General Financial Rules (GFR).

The panel has also been tasked with reviewing other tenders issued by the division during the financial year 2026-27 in which contracts were awarded to bidders other than the L1 bidder.

The inquiry will assess whether such allotments resulted in any financial loss or potential loss to the public exchequer and determine the circumstances under which the contracts were awarded to bidders other than the lowest bidder.

It will also identify the officers and officials involved in the allotment of contracts in cases where violations of the prescribed rules and procedures are established.

The fact-finding exercise is aimed at examining compliance with established tendering procedures and financial regulations in the allotment of public works.

The findings of the committee are expected to bring clarity to the circumstances surrounding the alleged irregularities and fix responsibility, wherever warranted—(KNO)

K'taka govt holds talks with sugarcane factory owners & growers; CM appeals to farmers to allow cane crushing

IANS



BELAGAVI: Karnataka Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar held day-long meetings at the Suvarna Soudha in Belagavi on Monday to resolve the issues of sugarcane growers.

He first held separate meetings with sugar factory owners and sugarcane growers, and then held a joint meeting of both factory owners and farmers. He later spoke to the media.

"We have discussed with sugar factory owners and sugarcane growers. We cannot decide without taking the Centre into confidence. Factory owners will not agree unless sugar MSP is increased. Farmers should allow cane crushing to happen. Otherwise, farmers themselves will face problems," he said.

"The committee constituted by the Central Government is coming to the state on October 29th; I will not take a hasty decision in a single day. We will take a decision after discussing once again with sugar factory owners, officials, the Central Government and the committee. I have appealed to farmers to cooperate for this," he said.

When asked if he is appealing not to protest, he said, "Why protest when we are on their side?"

When asked if he will write a letter to the Prime Minister, he said, "I have written a letter to the Prime Minister; I will also discuss with the Union Minister. I will meet the Maharashtra CM. All of us in our state have to take a decision together."

When asked whether he will give instructions to start sugar factories, he said, "I am appealing in this regard. Let cane crushing begin. Cane crushing has already started in Maharashtra. We should not allow our cane crop to go to Maharashtra. This will cause problems for farmers and the government."

Earlier, speaking in the meeting with sugarcane growers, the CM assured, "To provide a permanent solution to the problems of sugarcane growers, we have to put pressure on the Central Government along with the Maharashtra CM. This is being discussed.

When the Central Government committee comes to the state, I will come before it; I will speak on behalf of sugarcane growers."

"You have to understand the government's situation. We cannot give any relief until sugar MSP increases. This is not a matter to be decided in haste and emotion. Your voice will be my voice. I am on your side. You must understand my and the government's situation. We are ready to argue on your behalf," he reassured.

"We are discussing all the issues of farmers including sugarcane weighment, sugarcane transportation in today's meeting. Farmers should understand our financial situation. We are trying to convince the factory and the Central Government to give relief," he explained.

"I respected your struggle and met you myself in Kittur. At that time I had said that I would discuss with everyone and then discuss with you. Accordingly, I have called a meeting today. A severe drought has occurred. Due to rains in Maharashtra, the Krishna dam is full. Apart from that, no other dam is full," he said.

"There is a problem even for drinking water. Power generation has fallen, and power shortage is looming. It costs Rs 22,000 crore annually to provide free electricity to farmers' pump sets, Rs 7,000 crore for Gruha Jyothi, and due to increased power consumption this year in the backdrop of drought, an additional Rs 9,000 crore has to be paid.

Due to power shortage this year, people from Kerala have purchased electricity at Rs 23 and Rs 33 per unit," he explained the situation.

ZSWO Reasi organises outreach programme in Sujandhar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

REASI: The Zila Sainik Welfare Office (ZSWO) Reasi organised an outreach programme at Sujandhar village in the Bhomag area, bringing welfare, employment and healthcare services closer to residents of this far-flung area of the district.

The ZSWO conducted the programme in coordination with the Medical, AYUSH and Employment departments of Reasi. ZSWO representatives briefed ex-servicemen on various welfare and rehabilitation schemes, while Employment Department officials apprised participants of employment and self-employment opportunities under Mission YUVA. The participants showed keen interest in the schemes and initiatives.

A medical camp organised as part of the programme provided medical consultations and medicines to villagers. A portable X-ray machine and an ECG machine were used under the supervision of a physician. The Eye Department provided eye consultations, prescription glasses and medicines for various eye ailments, while the AYUSH Department offered traditional remedies and treatment for common health conditions.

The programme benefited both ex-servicemen and local residents of Sujandhar by providing access to essential welfare services, employment information and healthcare facilities at their doorstep. The camp received an encouraging response from the local population, underlining the importance of such initiatives in extending public services to remote areas of the district.

Akhilesh Yadav pitches for linking Aadhaar with voters' list, alleging irregularities in electoral rolls

IANS

LUCKNOW: Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday pitched for linking the voters' list with Aadhaar and other biometric verification tools, arguing that this was the need of the hour given the scale of electoral irregularities and manipulation of electoral rolls by those in power.

The SP supremo made the demand during a press conference on Monday, where he pointed fingers at the Centre and the Election Commission, accusing them of facilitating tampering of the voter list and rigging in elections.

He accused the Centre of weakening democracy and eroding the trust of people in constitutional institutions through match-fixing of votes.

"The government that shuns questions weakens democracy," he said and called for safeguarding the integrity of elections by deploying the latest technology.

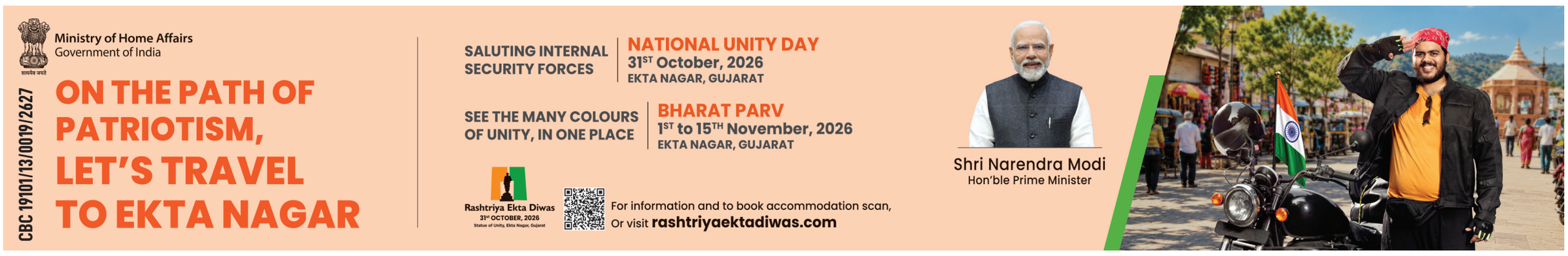
"Voter lists should be linked with Aadhaar, and a biometric system should be introduced at the polling booths. It should not be optional, and everyone should be added. These devices are not very expensive, and technology can help rectify irregularities," he said.

The SP supremo, raising concerns over duplicate voter entries and their impact on electoral outcomes, said that on multiple occasions, the same names appear in the electoral rolls again and accused the BJP of orchestrating these discrepancies for electoral gains.

Akhilesh Yadav alleged that over 2,000 entries under the name "Sunita, wife of Rajesh" have been found across the state.

He emphasised that it is the Election Commission's responsibility to ensure that no eligible voter is left out and that no ineligible names are included, and argued that creating duplicate voter IDs would not be easy, but could be controlled to a large extent if the Commission harnesses technology to investigate the alleged irregularities.

Akhilesh Yadav's fresh attack on the poll panel and Centre came while inducting party leaders from other parties who jumped ship to join SP. The leaders who joined the SP in the presence of the party chief included former BJP MLAs Sinod Shakya and Kushagra Sagar, former IAS officer Ram Bahadur Pasi, BJP leader Chandra Kumar Mishra, and Dara Singh Prajapati (previously associated with the BSP).



Ranji Trophy: Badoni slams second successive ton, Saransh's seven-for puts MP on top

IANS



NEW DELHI: Batting all-rounder Ayush Badoni continued his rich vein of form by hitting a second consecutive hundred, while India off-spinner Saransh Jain's seven-wicket haul gave Madhya Pradesh firm control on day one of the third-round Ranji Trophy matches on Monday.

Fresh from a career-best 217 against Gujarat, Badoni struck an unbeaten 106 off 122 balls, laced with 11 fours and two sixes, to take Delhi to 309/5 against Jharkhand at the JSCA International Stadium in Ranchi. Badoni, 26, previously hit 205 against the same opponents in the 2024/25 season.

A chanceless knock, Badoni's sixth first-class hundred, anchored Delhi's recovery. He found a reliable ally in all-rounder Sumit Mathur, who was unbeaten on 50, as the pair put together an unbroken 128-run stand for the sixth wicket. Mathur had a lucky escape on 36 when he was caught at long-on, only to be recalled because Anukul Roy had overstepped.

At Holkar Stadium in Indore, Saransh's 7-40 helped Madhya Pradesh bowl Bihar out for just 99. The hosts, still looking for their first win of the season after two draws, then reached 261/3 with a lead of 162, after bowling out Bihar for 99. Wicketkeeper-batter Saksham Purohit was unbeaten on 113, and his opening partner Yash Dubey made 84.

At the BKC Ground, Mumbai also made a strong start against Haryana at home after being put in to bat first. Angkrish Raghuvanshi made 114 off 180 balls with 13 fours and a six, while Musheer Khan scored 109 off 185 balls with 12 fours and a six. The pair added 208 runs for the second wicket to steer Mumbai to 290/3 at stumps.

Defending champions Jammu and Kashmir, also in search of their first win, were frustrated by Priyanshu Moliya at the Reliance Ground in Vadodara. Moliya's patient unbeaten 113 lifted Baroda to 259/6 after they had slipped to 197/6 at one stage.

Vidarbha, who have two wins so far, had Goa in trouble at 84/6 after Nachiket Bhute ripped through the top order with four wickets. But Darshan Misal and Yash Kasvankar then struck half-centuries and shared a stand of 104 runs for the seventh wicket to help the visitors reach 204/8. On a rain-hit day, Pondicherry reduced Uttar Pradesh to 67/4.

In Mysuru, Karnataka recovered from a sluggish start to bowl Tripura out for 194 at the SDNR Wadiyar Stadium. The hosts, who sprang a surprise by leaving out pacers Vidwath Kaverappa and Abhilash Shetty to accommodate spinners Shikhar Shetty and Ritesh Bhatkal, failed to make use of the new ball as Tripura moved comfortably to 88/2 in the first session.

Left-arm spinner Shikhar then claimed his third first-class five-wicket haul, while pacer Manvanth Kumar took three. Karnataka lost Mayank Agarwal early and were 10 for one at stumps. At the DVR Ground in Mulapadu, Chhattisgarh's spinners made full use of a helpful pitch to bowl Andhra out for 231.

Veteran off-spinner Jayant Yadav led the way with 4-75, while Ajay Mandal and Dharmendrasinh Jadeja took three and two wickets respectively. In reply, Chhattisgarh lost Ayush Pandey early when he was run out going for an unnecessary quick single. Captain Anuj Tiwary and Mayank Verma then negotiated the final half-hour to take the visitors to 35/1.

Wicketkeeper-batter Prabhsimran Singh laid the foundation with 81 off 126 balls, hitting nine fours and a six, while fifties from Salil Arora and Ramandeep Singh then guided Punjab to 289/6 against Hyderabad in Secunderabad.

Denish Das made 90 off 165 balls, with 14 fours, to take Assam to 235/6 against Saurashtra in Rajkot. For the hosts, veteran pacer Jaydev Unadkat picked up three wickets, while Ravindra Jadeja and Arth Yadav took one wicket each.

In Thiruvananthapuram, where only 50 overs were possible due to rain, Kerala reduced Bengal to 172/6, with Aditya Sarwate taking three wickets and Nedumankuzhy Basil two scalps.

Maharashtra bowled out Gujarat for 233 in Pune, with Siddhesh Veer taking four wickets, while Rajvardhan Hangargekar and Vicky Ostwal claimed three apiece. Maharashtra were 24/1 when stumps were called. Services off-spinner Pulkit Narang returned 6-47, his second five-wicket haul of the season, to bowl Odisha out for 194 in Bhubaneswar. The visitors were 13/0 at stumps.

Tamil Nadu bowled out Railways for 184 in Chennai, with R Sai Kishore and Sonu Yadav taking three wickets each, but slipped to 71/3 till stumps arrived. Devendra Singh Bora's six-wicket haul helped Uttarakhand dismiss Rajasthan for 272 in Dehradun despite skipper Kartik Sharma's 73. Uttarakhand were 18/0 at stumps.

Better performances will lead to better pay, says Sammy ahead of WI's Tests against Banglades

IANS



DHAKA: West Indies head coach Daren Sammy has urged his Test players to let their on-field displays do the talking in the fight for better pay, adding that a top-five finish in the World Test Championship (WTC) would bring additional financial rewards.

Last month, Cricket West Indies (CWI) announced a 25 per cent cut in the players retainer fees as part of a broader set of measures it described as 'a comprehensive counter-attack against all the challenges we face financially, developmentally and competitively.'

Sammy, however, said the decision had not dented the morale of the players on the ongoing tour of the subcontinent, by pointing out the white-ball sides recent showing in India. West Indies will meet Bangladesh in the two-match series starting on Wednesday.

"If you look at the way we played in the India series when the news was put to the players, how they responded shows the drive, the passion, the willingness to help turn around West Indies cricket. I think there's reality and there's understanding where you are as a professional, as a board, and there's no secret where we are, obviously financially.

"My word to the guys, especially this World Test Championship, you finish in the top five there's extra incentives. ICC has invested a lot of money in the World Test Championship in terms of prize money, and it's an opportunity for our boys to come up from the number eight that we have finished last two cycles.

"I don't think it's a conversation that's in the dressing room now, but we are aware. I have challenged the guys to put ourselves in a better position to negotiate and attract sponsors by the performances we put on the field. I thought the white-ball teams did that extremely well in India and hopefully we could do that as a red-ball team here in Bangladesh," Sammy told reporters in a press conference on Monday.

The West Indies head into their final series of the 2025-27 WTC cycle unbeaten in Test series this year, having beaten Sri Lanka 1-0 and drawn 1-1 with Pakistan. Sammy saw that results as a sign the team is moving in the right direction.

"The expectations are always there. The way we have played Test cricket this year, we have not lost a series this year. It's a long time we have gone through a year without losing a series, and this is our last series in the World Test Championship.

"The message to the guys: give it all. Ten possible days of Test cricket left in this cycle for us and just go out there and give it your all. Whatever motivates you, use that to go out and get performances. We have prepared really well," he added.

Sammy also credited the Test squad's preparatory camp in Chennai for putting the side in good shape for the series. "It is something we as a board have really looked at, giving guys the best possible chance to prepare. We had the ODI team there and we thought Chennai has an amazing facility.

"We sent the batting coach across with the help of Sri (Sriram Krishnamurthy) from the Chennai Academy and kudos to the director, he approved that camp and that preparation. You prepare well, you give yourself the best chance of performing. So leading up to this series I could see the guys are well prepared and hopefully that preparation changes (translates) into performance," he said.

Pant on course to play third red-ball game against New Zealand A; Bumrah also likely to play

IANS

NEW DELHI: Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant is likely on track to recover from his side strain in time for India A's third red-ball game against New Zealand A in Lincoln from November 7 to 10, 2026.

Pant has been out of action since suffering a left-side strain while leading the Rest of India to victory over Jammu and Kashmir in Srinagar earlier this month. The injury kept him out of Delhi's Ranji Trophy commitments and the first two four-day games against New Zealand A.

It is understood that Pant has been at the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Bengaluru for rehab and starting light skill-based work.

"He is on the road to recovery and is likely to be available for the third India 'A' game, provided that he gets his fitness certificate. If everything goes as planned, then he may leave for New Zealand in the first few days of November," said a source to IANS on Monday.

In Pant's absence, the selectors had picked Jharkhand wicketkeeper-batter Kumar Kushagra as his replacement for the first two four-day games. Kushagra has been recently called up as a cover when his Jharkhand captain, Ishan Kishan, was selected for the T20I series in New Zealand, after the latter sustained a low-grade right adductor strain.

It is understood that ace fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah is also likely to feature in the India A's third red-ball game, to be played at the Bert Sutcliffe Oval in Lincoln. Bumrah last played at the Asian Games in Japan in early October, where India retained its gold medal.

He was then rested for the home white-ball series against the West Indies and the T20I and ODI legs of the ongoing New Zealand tour. It is also understood that fast bowler Prasidh Krishna is on track to play in New Zealand after being out of action since the ODI against the West Indies in Guwahati, where he sustained a hamstring injury.

Pant, Bumrah and Prasidh (who's also a part of the first three ODIs) are part of India's squad for the two-Test series against New Zealand, to be played at Basin Reserve, Wellington from November 19 to 23 and in Hagley Oval, Christchurch from November 27 to December 1.

It is time that South Africa delivered on the big ICC stage again: Klusener



IANS

NEW DELHI: Former South African all-rounder Lance Klusener believes the ability to score consistently throughout the tournament will be decisive in determining South Africa's prospects at the 2027 Men's ODI World Cup, with the co-hosts aiming to turn the advantage of playing at home into a sustained challenge for the title.

South Africa will jointly host the tournament with Zimbabwe and Namibia, presenting an opportunity for the region to stage one of cricket's biggest events while providing the Proteas with another chance to pursue a major global trophy.

Klusener, currently the head coach of the Arabian Aces in the Abu Dhabi T10 League, spoke to IANS on the sidelines of the tournament about the demands of competing at home and the potential long-term benefits for African cricket.

The former international said that while home support could provide an important boost, the fundamentals of winning a World Cup remained unchanged. Teams must be able to build competitive totals consistently and chase challenging scores across the tournament rather than depend on isolated performances.

The former international said that while home support could provide an important boost, the fundamentals of winning a World Cup remained unchanged. Teams must be able to build competitive totals consistently and chase challenging scores across the tournament rather than depe

"Obviously, scoring enough runs consistently throughout the tournament is something which is going to be a challenge, not just for South Africa, but for any other team as well that will be hoping to challenge. So the team that can consistently put runs on the board or chase sizeable totals is going to have an opportunity there. That would be something that as a group, as a South African group, they would need to look at.

"There are pressures. There's pressures anywhere in a big ICC tournament, whether you're playing it at home or whether you're playing it away. So that's just a given. It's just about making sure that we embrace stadiums that are full of our own supporters, which is something that a home World Cup brings," Klusener said.

Michael Carrick on brink of being sacked as Man United coach after latest humiliation: Report



IANS

NEW DELHI: Manchester United head coach Michael Carrick seems to be on the verge of being sacked as the club's performances this season have been poor.

United were recently humiliated by Bournemouth 0-3 at home, and the defeat has left them just two points above the relegation zone. The recent defeat has also left the Red Devils without a win for eight games now, and the pressure has been mounting on their manager.

As per multiple reports in the English media, Carrick is on the verge of getting sacked by the bosses, and United are weighing up options to replace him.

Just after the defeat to Bournemouth, Carrick had stated that he had a brief chat with the club's hierarchy and was not sure if they would sack him. "Just briefly, like always after a game, but nothing out of the ordinary," he said. "I will see what happens. I totally understand the situation.

"I'm not expecting anything in particular, to be honest. I am carrying on as normal. I love this place. I'll always do what I feel is going to be the best for the football club, whatever decision is made on anything, really. So that's kind of it. You know, I'm not expecting anything either way," the manager added.

Carrick dropped Bruno Fernandes for the Bournemouth game following the Portuguese international's criticism of the manager's tactics during the Champions League 1-4 defeat to Como. Lisandro Martinez also took an aim at the club's hierarchy recently after United's 0-2 defeat to Atletico Madrid in the Champions League and had to apologise for his criticism.

Carrick was initially named the interim manager after Ruben Amorim was dismissed at the start of the year. He helped United finish third in the Premier League behind winners Arsenal and Manchester City and was awarded the full-time role.

However, United have been in the bottom half of the Premier League table with one win in eight matches and three losses. They sit 20th in the Champions League with a win and two losses in three matches.

