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Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

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Laid the foundation stone of the Kashmir Chapter of the Centre for Regional Studies, Culture, Dialects and Emotional Intelligence of the University of Jammu.

Srinagar • Thursday 29, October 2026 • Vol: 17 • Issue No: 255 • Pages: 08 • Price: ₹ 2/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

LG Sinha Allocates Portfolios To Eight J&K Ministers

Dy CM Surinder Choudhary Gets Five Departments



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday allocated portfolios to eight ministers in the Omar Abdullah-led Jammu and Kashmir government, assigning key departments, including Revenue, Power Development, Finance, Education and Rural Development, following the recent cabinet reshuffle.

According to Government Order No. 1690-JK(GAD) of 2026, issued on October 28 by the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary has been assigned Public Works (Roads and Buildings), Industries and Commerce, Labour and Employment, and Skill Development departments.

Senior National Conference leader • P-06

Power Deficit Of Over 600 MW Looms For J&K, Ladakh

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: Ahead of chilling winters, more than 600 Megawatts (MW) power deficit is looming over Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in November 2026.

An official informed that during peak solar and non-solar hours, both the regions are likely to face a power deficiency of 623 MW in the month of November.

The official figures projecting the power • P-06

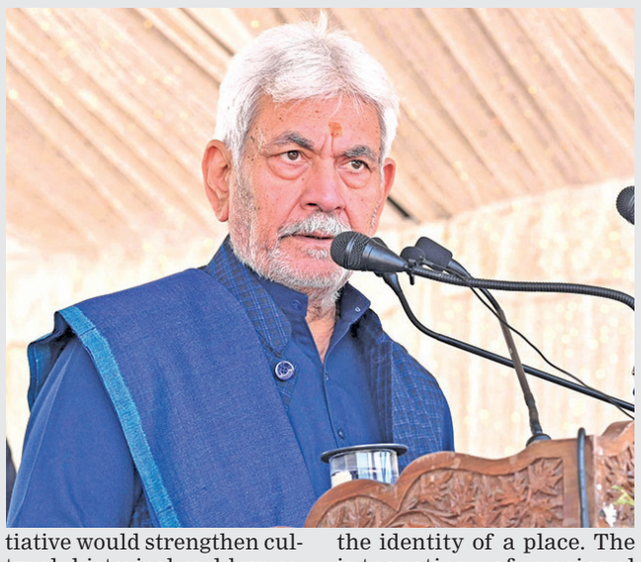
J&K Cannot Be Understood Through Geography Alone: LG

Says Future-Ready Institutions Must Encourage Continuous Learning

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, said on Wednesday that the Jammu and Kashmir region cannot be understood through geography alone.

"Languages, folklore, cultural practices, arts, faith, traditions and lived experiences together shape the identity of a place. The integration of regional knowledge with emotional intelligence would form the soul of the new Centre and help create a deeper understanding of society," said the L-G during the foundation stone ceremony of the Kashmir Chapter of the Centre for Regional Studies, Culture, Dialects and Emotional Intelligence of the University of Jammu



Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor said that the Centre represents a unique and forward-looking confluence of regional studies, culture, dialects and emotional intelligence. Highlighting the rich civilisational heritage of Jammu Kashmir, the Lieutenant Governor said that the initiative would strengthen cultural, historical and human connections while preserving the region's diverse intellectual and linguistic traditions.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that a region cannot be understood through geography alone.

"Languages, folklore, cultural practices, arts, faith, traditions and lived experiences together shape the identity of a place. The integration of regional knowledge with emotional intelligence would form the soul of the new Centre and help create a deeper understanding of society and the people," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that the Centre's wide-ranging objectives, including preservation of manuscripts, creation of digital archives, • P-06

Drug-Free J&K Campaign

LG Felicitates SSF Personnel For Exemplary Security Management

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, Wednesday felicitated senior officers and personnel of the Special Security Force (SSF) for their outstanding professionalism and dedication in ensuring the successful conduct of the 100-day "Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir Campaign."

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor commended the SSF for adding a remarkable chapter to the administrative and security history of the Union Territory through their courage, vigilance and exceptional competence. He said the SSF has emerged as a symbol of discipline, excellence, and commitment.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the significance of the Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir Campaign, launched on April 11, 2026, as a transformative • P-06

J&K To Witness 'Largely Dry' Weather Till Nov 6



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness generally dry weather conditions over the next several days, with no significant weather activity expected till November 6, the Meteorological Centre Srinagar said on Wednesday.

According to the forecast, scattered places may receive brief spells of light rain or light snowfall over higher reaches on October 29, while the weather is expected to remain generally dry on October 30 and 31.

The MeT Centre said the weather would remain partly cloudy from November 1 to 3. From November 4 to 6, generally dry conditions are expected, with the possibility of brief spells of light rain or snowfall over higher reaches at isolated places.

The department has advised farmers to continue harvesting and other agricultural operations.

Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 22.7 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, 1.9 degrees above the seasonal normal, while • P-06

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DC Srinagar presides over PM Surya Ghar Awareness camp at Ghanta Ghar



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo Wednesday presided over an Awareness-cum-Registration Camp under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana at Ghanta Ghar, Lal Chowk to promote rooftop solar energy adoption and sensitise the citizens about the benefits and provisions of the flagship scheme.

The camp was organised by the Executive Engineer, KPDCL-Ist Srinagar, with the objective of educating residents about rooftop solar installations and facilitating on-the-spot registration of eligible households under the scheme.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner encouraged citizens to adopt rooftop solar energy solutions to reduce household electricity expenditure and contribute towards a cleaner, greener and more sustainable energy future. He stressed the importance of creating greater public awareness about renewable energy initiatives and ensuring that eligible households are informed about the benefits and procedures associated with the scheme.

The DC highlighted that the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana has reached 7,910 households in Srinagar, reflecting the scheme's expanding reach across the district and growing efforts to promote decentralised renewable energy generation at the household level.

Underscoring the significance of the awareness initiative, the DC said that the programme was aimed at informing residents about the benefits of rooftop solar installations while providing them with an appropriate opportunity to register for the scheme on the spot.

He noted that the scheme is demand-driven and voluntary in nature and urged eligible residents to explore its benefits and enrol themselves. He emphasised that wider adoption of rooftop solar energy can help households manage electricity expenses while contributing to environmental conservation and reducing dependence on conventional sources of power.

During the programme, the DC inspected the awareness and registration stalls established by KPDCL officials and scheme vendors. He interacted with the representatives, reviewed the information and registration facilities being provided to the public and encouraged them to sustain outreach efforts to ensure that more eligible households are made aware of the scheme.

As a part of the awareness campaign, a nukkad natak (street play) was also staged to sensitise the public about the advantages of rooftop solar installations, the importance of renewable energy and the benefits available under the PM Surya Ghar scheme.

The campaign forms part of the broader efforts of the Government supported initiative to promote renewable energy, improve awareness about solar initiatives and encourage households to participate in the transition towards sustainable energy solutions.

Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, IAS Probationer, Aakash Garg, Executive Engineer KPDCL-Ist, Syed Abrar Ahmad, other officials of KPDCL and scheme vendors were present on the occasion.

DC Kupwara presides over Mega Block Diwas at Nutnussa

GMK NEWS NETWORK



KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Abhishek Sharma, Wednesday presided over a Mega Block Diwas at Nutnussa, reaffirming the district administration's commitment to addressing public grievances and ensuring effective delivery of government services at the grassroots level.

The programme witnessed active participation from public delegations and local residents of Nutnussa and adjoining areas, including Jagarpora, Chak Nutnussa, Keegam and Chak Keegam, who projected various issues and developmental demands concerning their respective areas.

The major issues raised included reliable drinking water and power supply, improvement of road connectivity, strengthening of healthcare infrastructure, promotion of agriculture and horticulture, effective implementation of Rural Development Department (RDD) schemes, and issues related to the functioning of local food stores.

The Mega Block Diwas was attended by ADC Handwara, Chief Planning Officer, Superintending Engineers of PWD and I&FC, Chief Medical Officer Kupwara, ACD Kupwara, Chief Education Officer Kupwara, Tehsildar Handwara and other district and sectoral officers.

The Deputy Commissioner gave a patient hearing to the grievances and directed the concerned departments to ensure their prompt and time-bound resolution. Several issues were resolved on the spot through the intervention of the concerned officers.

Taking note of drinking water concerns in vulnerable pockets, the DC directed the concerned authorities to maintain a dedicated fleet of water tankers on standby to ensure timely water supply in areas facing acute or persistent shortages.

The Superintending Engineer, I&FC, was directed to expedite ongoing developmental works, remove bottlenecks affecting their execution and submit comprehensive monthly progress reports to the district administration.

Emphasising accessible healthcare, the DC instructed the Chief Medical Officer to ensure proper functioning of NTPHC Nutnussa for uninterrupted healthcare services to the local population.

The ADC Handwara was also directed to organise coordinated outreach camps involving all line departments to enhance public awareness and ensure wider coverage of government welfare schemes and services.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed that public grievances must be addressed with urgency and accountability, directing the concerned officers to closely monitor follow-up action and ensure resolution of the issues raised during the programme within stipulated timelines.

Towards the conclusion of the programme, the DC inspected stalls set up by various departments to showcase their achievements, ongoing initiatives and public welfare activities. He also distributed sanction letters among beneficiaries under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) through the Animal Husbandry Department.

DC Kupwara Flags off student Rally under Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Abhishek Sharma, Wednesday flagged off a student rally under the Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign (TFYC 4.0)–2026 from the DC Office Complex, Kupwara.

The rally aimed to sensitize students and the general public about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption, discourage tobacco use among youth and promote a healthy, tobacco-free lifestyle. It also sought to encourage collective community participation in building a healthier society.

The rally passed through the General Bus Stand and various markets of Kupwara town before culminating at ANMT School, Kupwara, with students spreading awareness about tobacco prevention and healthier lifestyle choices.

The 60-day campaign will feature a series of awareness activities to discourage tobacco use among youth, promote tobacco-free habits and strengthen public participation in curbing tobacco consumption.

Through sustained awareness and community engagement, the campaign seeks to encourage informed choices among young people and contribute towards building a healthier, tobacco-free Kupwara.

ACB organises Youth Parliament in B'la to promote Corruption-Free Governance

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) organised a Youth Parliament at the Auditorium of Government Boys Degree College, Baramulla, under Vigilance Awareness Week 2026, on the theme "Probity for Prosperity."

Tariq Ahmad Zarger, former Secretary of the Rural Development Department (RDD), attended the programme as the Chief Guest. Javed Hassan Bhat, SSP, AIG Headquarters, ACB Srinagar, and Tasleema Bano, Principal of Government Boys Degree College, Baramulla, were the Guests of Honour. A large number of youth and officials were also present.

During the Youth Parliament proceedings, participants deliberated on issues concerning the Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution (CA&PD) Department and the Rural Development Department (RDD), raising concerns regarding alleged irregularities and public service delivery. The proceedings also highlighted action taken by the ACB against corruption.

The discussions further focused on transparency and accountability in public administration, the timely disposal of pending cases, digital initiatives and capacity-building.

Speaking on the occasion, Tariq Ahmad Zarger stressed the importance of fighting corruption and urged the youth to uphold honesty, integrity and accountability in every sphere of life. He said that corruption damages society by weakening public institutions, undermining trust, obstructing development and depriving deserving citizens of their rights and opportunities. He called upon young people to actively contribute to building a transparent, ethical and corruption-free society.

SSP Javed Hassan Bhat, while addressing the gathering, said that it is the duty of every citizen to stand united against the menace of corruption and work collectively to eradicate it from society. He emphasised that public awareness, integrity and the active participation of young people are essential to preventing corruption and strengthening transparent and accountable governance. He urged the youth to reject corrupt practices and contribute to building an honest, ethical and corruption-free society.

Peerzada Aijaz Ahmad, Superintendent of Police, ACB Baramulla/Kupwara/Bandipora Wing, highlighted the aim and significance of the programme. He stressed the role of youth in promoting integrity, transparency and accountability in public governance.

CEO SSCL reviews E-Bus Operations at Pantha Chowk

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, on Wednesday reviewed the functioning of Srinagar's electric bus services and inspected the E-Bus depot at Pantha Chowk, directing officials and service providers to improve fleet utilisation, maintenance, operational monitoring and passenger convenience.

The CEO was accompanied by the Additional CEO SSCL, General Manager, Public Transport Operations; Manager, Operations and Enforcement (E-Bus); Statistical Officer; and representatives of Tata and Chalo Mobility.

During the review, Dr. Basharat took stock of the deployment and operational performance of the electric bus fleet. He stressed the need for effective monitoring of bus schedules, route-wise deployment and service frequency to ensure punctuality and minimise inconvenience to commuters.

The CEO directed the concerned SSCL officials to closely monitor daily operations, review the performance of individual routes and ensure prompt resolution of operational issues in coordination with the service providers.

Emphasising the responsibility of the operating agency, the CEO stressed the need for regular preventive maintenance, timely repairs, effective charging management and maximum availability of roadworthy buses. Tata's representatives were asked to ensure close coordination between depot and field teams and to address technical and maintenance-related issues promptly, in accordance with the applicable contractual obligations.

The role of Chalo Mobility in passenger-facing digital services was also highlighted, with emphasis on the reliability of real-time bus tracking, digital ticketing and passenger information. Accurate service updates and timely communication of route changes or disruptions are important to help commuters plan their journeys and access public transport conveniently.

Dr. Basharat further emphasised better coordination among SSCL officials, Tata and Chalo Mobility, along with regular review of operational performance, passenger complaints and service-related gaps. He stressed that issues affecting commuters must be identified and addressed in a time-bound manner.

DC Shopian leads Mega Block Diwas at Keller

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SHOPIAN: In a continuous effort to strengthen grassroots governance and ensure doorstep delivery of public services, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, presided over a Mega Block Diwas programme at Keller, Shopian Wednesday.

The primary objective of the block diwas was to directly engage with the community, assess local developmental needs, ensure administrative accountability and review seasonal preparations particularly harvest and post-harvest agricultural activities.

During the interaction, dynamic demands were passionately voiced by local representatives and citizens which include, Playground at Gatipora, dearth of Specialist doctors for night shift at Sub- District hospital, Keller, construction of crucial local routes, uninterrupted electricity, installation of electric poles, availability of Snow- cutters, establishment of a Chest Diseases Hospital at Keller, construction of the Daramdora footbridge, creation of parking facilities at the Sub-District Hospital Keller, checking of Pesticides, toilets for Keller market, shifting of HT line from apple orchards via main roadside, repairing of unsafe school buildings, establishing of general public library in Keller, etc.

Reaffirming the administration's commitment to transparent, accountable and citizen-centric governance, the Deputy Commissioner assured attendees that every genuine demand raised during the programme would be systematically tracked and addressed in a time-bound manner. He said that any official laxity or negligence in resolving public matters would invite strict accountability.

Information Department Kulgam organizes Media Interaction

GMK NEWS NETWORK



KULGAM: District Information Office, Kulgam, Department of Information and Public Relations, Wednesday organized a Media Interaction programme at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat Kulgam.

The programme was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam.

Media representatives, representing print, electronic and digital media platforms in the district participated in the interaction and highlighted various media and public welfare concerns and issues.

At the outset, District Information Officer Kulgam, Showkat Hussain Ganie presented opening remarks on responsible journalism, professional ethics and importance of effective coordination between media and district administration. He also highlighted the need to curb misinformation and strengthen effective media activities in the district and enhancing the publicity activities in the district.

During the interaction, media representatives raised various issues and concerns being faced by them while performing professional duties. They demanded the establishment of a dedicated Press Club at Kulgam to provide a platform for media persons, promote professional interaction and strengthen unity within the media fraternity. The need for a unified media body was also stressed.

ADC Kulgam, Vikar Ahmad Giri also shared his views and underlined the importance of constructive engagement, mutual cooperation and highlighting developmental and public welfare issues for larger public benefit.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam emphasized the importance of media in highlighting public issues and working for the development of the Kulgam. He urged media persons to maintain professional conduct, better content creation and strengthen close coordination with the district administration.

Deputy Commissioner stressed the need to further strengthen the media-administration communication and assured full cooperation from the district administration in redressal of genuine issues concerning the media fraternity and other highlighted public welfare issues.

DC Anantnag reviews arrangements for 'Run for Unity' on Oct 31

GMK NEWS NETWORK



ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Wednesday chaired a review meeting of district officers at the Conference Hall of Dak Bungalow, Khanabal, to review arrangements for the smooth and successful conduct of the 'Run for Unity', scheduled to be held on October 31.

The meeting was convened to ensure effective coordination among various departments and put in place all necessary arrangements well in advance for the event, which is organised to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and promote the ideals of national unity, integrity and patriotism.

Addressing the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised that, being an event of national importance, the 'Run for Unity' must be accorded the highest priority. He directed all concerned officers to work in close coordination and ensure that all requisite arrangements are completed within the stipulated timeframe for the smooth conduct of the programme.

The DC stressed the importance of inter-departmental coordination and directed each department to discharge its assigned responsibilities efficiently. He called for a coordinated approach among all stakeholders to ensure the seamless execution of the event and urged people from all sections of society to participate enthusiastically.

Dr. Bilal observed that events such as the 'Run for Unity' play a significant role in fostering patriotism, strengthening national integration and promoting the values of unity and brotherhood among participants and the general public. He added that such initiatives provide an important platform to reaffirm the collective commitment to the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the nation.

During the meeting, responsibilities for various activities and arrangements related to the programme were assigned to the concerned departments. The officers were directed to maintain close liaison with one another and ensure the timely completion of all preparatory measures.

Dir Agri reviews implementation of Saffron Expansion under JKCIP in Pampore

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, Wednesday visited Pampore to review saffron expansion activities being carried out under the Jammu and Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIP).

During the visit, the Director inspected saffron expansion fields in Munpora, Meej, Konibal and Dusoo areas of Pampore. The inspection focused on assessing field development, reviewing the implementation of project interventions and evaluating the condition of newly established saffron plantations.

The visit enabled the Agriculture Department to assess the progress and effectiveness of ongoing initiatives, identify challenges faced by farmers and field-level implementing agencies, and review measures to ensure the timely and efficient achievement of project objectives.

He also reviewed the adoption of recommended cultivation practices; the availability of essential inputs and the support being provided to saffron growers under JKCIP. The assessment is expected to help identify further measures to strengthen saffron production, enhance productivity and promote the sustainable development of Kashmir's traditional saffron sector.

While interacting with the saffron growers Director Agriculture stressed on the joint efforts needed for the revival and preservation of internationally recognised this heritage crop.

Later, the Director visited India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre (IIKSTC) at Dusoo, Pampore and reviewed the activities being undertaken at the centre. He interacted with the concerned officers and took stock of the facilities being made available to the saffron growers at the centre, including saffron processing, grading, packaging and e- auctioning, with a focus on strengthening marketing channels and ensuring better returns for saffron growers.

Govt accords 17.24 crore Administrative Approval for Industrial Estate at Barsoo

Industrial Estate to boost infrastructure, create jobs in J&K: CM



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has accorded Administrative Approval for the development of a new Industrial Estate at Barsoo in Ganderbal district at an estimated cost of ₹17.24 crore.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said the project marks a significant step towards strengthening industrial infrastructure and creating new employment opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The proposed Industrial Estate, equipped with modern infrastructure and essential facilities, is expected to provide fresh opportunities for entrepreneurs, attract industrial investment, generate employment for local youth and contribute to sustainable industrial growth and economic development across Jammu and Kashmir.

Javid Dar calls for technology-driven transformation of J&K's apple industry

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Wednesday called for a comprehensive transformation of Jammu and Kashmir's apple industry through technological innovations, precision horticulture, smart farming and improved market connectivity to enhance growers' income and strengthen the region's position in domestic and international markets.

The Minister was speaking at the 6th Edition of the CII J&K Apple Conclave 2026, organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), J&K, at Radisson Collection, Srinagar. The conclave, themed "From Orchard to Global Market," witnessed detailed deliberations on strategies for modernising the apple sector and unlocking its potential in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

Emphasising the need to move towards technology-driven horticulture, Javid Dar highlighted the importance of adopting modern orchard management practices, precision farming techniques and scientific interventions to improve the productivity, ensure consistent quality and make apple cultivation more sustainable and economically rewarding.

He stressed that strengthening Jammu and Kashmir's apple economy requires a coordinated approach encompassing orchard modernisation, scientific cultivation, efficient post-harvest management, value addition and robust marketing infrastructure. He called for greater collaboration among the government departments, industry



representatives, agricultural scientists and growers to translate emerging opportunities into tangible benefits for the farming community.

The Minister said that the transition from traditional cultivation practices to modern, market-oriented horticulture is essential to meet the evolving consumer expectations and international quality standards. He emphasised that improved grading, packaging, storage and supply-chain management can play a crucial role in reducing post-harvest losses, preserving produce quality and enabling growers to secure better market returns.

Javid Dar underscored the need to promote innovation, sustainability and technology adoption across the apple value chain. He said that close coordination among the government, industry and research institutions would be instrumental in addressing existing challenges, improving competitiveness and opening new avenues for market expansion.

The Minister appreciated CII J&K for providing a constructive platform for dialogue and partnership among stakeholders. He said that such initiatives can facilitate knowledge exchange, encourage investment and help identify practical solutions for the sustainable growth of Jammu and Kashmir's apple industry.

Vice Chancellor, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), Professor Nazir Ahmad Ganai, attended the conclave as the Guest of Honour.

Senior officers from Agriculture Horticulture department and representatives from CII were also present on the occasion.

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates newly constructed Administrative Block at Women's College

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo Wednesday inaugurated the newly constructed Administrative Block at Government Women's College, M.A. Road here, marking a significant step towards strengthening the institutional infrastructure of the prestigious women's educational institution.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister underscored the importance of strengthening educational infrastructure alongside academic excellence, stating that a well-equipped institutional environment is essential for the effective delivery of education and the overall development of students.

"Government's endeavour is to ensure that educational institutions across Jammu and Kashmir have the necessary infrastructure and facilities to provide quality education in a conducive and student-friendly environment. Strengthening the infrastructure of colleges is not merely about creating physical assets; it is about improving the overall academic ecosystem and enabling our institutions to function more effectively", the Minister said.

The Minister observed that women's education holds a pivotal place in the government's vision of an inclusive and progressive society, emphasising that educational institutions must provide young women with opportunities to excel academically, develop their potential and prepare themselves for greater responsibilities in society.

"Empowering women through quality education remains one of our foremost priorities. Our colleges must serve as centres of learning, confidence-building and excellence, where young women are equipped with the knowledge, skills and opportunities required to shape their future and contribute meaningfully to society", she remarked.

The Minister further stressed the need for educational institutions to focus on continuous improvement in infrastructure, administrative efficiency and the quality of academic services. She called for sustained efforts to ensure that the facilities created in educational institutions are utilised effectively and contribute to a better experience for students as well as staff.

Reiterating the government's commitment to strengthening the higher education sector, the Minister highlighted that concerted efforts are being made to improve institutional facilities and create an enabling environment that supports academic growth, innovation and the holistic development of students.

PG residents at GMC Handwara protest, demand stipend hike

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Postgraduate (PG) and Diplomate of National Board (DNB) residents at Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara on Wednesday held a peaceful protest demanding an increase in their stipends, prompting the All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA) to extend support to the protesting doctors.

The protesting residents, expressed concern over what they described as a disparity in stipends paid to postgraduate medical trainees in Jammu and Kashmir compared to their counterparts in other states.

They urged the government to review the existing stipend structure and ensure fair compensation for doctors undergoing rigorous postgraduate training.

The residents questioned why their stipends remained significantly lower than those offered in several other states, where postgraduate doctors receive more than Rs 1 lakh per month.

They said postgraduate residents shoulder substantial clinical responsibilities while undergoing specialised training and serving patients, making a revision of their stipends necessary.

Meanwhile, AIMSA strongly supported the protesting residents and called upon the government to address their demands without further delay.

Dr Mohammad Momin Khan, President of AIMSA, expressed solidarity with the doctors and urged the authorities to take immediate steps to resolve the issue.

He said the demand for a stipend hike was genuine and deserved serious consideration, adding that postgraduate residents across government medical colleges in Jammu and Kashmir could also join the agitation if the concerns of the Handwara residents remained unaddressed.

AIMSA also raised concerns over the issuance of show-cause notices to three PG residents—Dr Rounak, Dr Abhijeet and Dr Sanjeev—in connection with the protest. The association strongly condemned the action and demanded the immediate withdrawal of the notices, maintaining that the concerns raised by the residents should be addressed through dialogue. —(KNO)

Secy RDD inaugurates 10-day SARAS Mela in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Ramesh Kumar, on Wednesday inaugurated the 10-day SARAS Aajeevika Mela at Polo View Park, Srinagar.

The event brings together rural entrepreneurs, artisans and women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) from across the country.

Organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), the mela provides a platform for participants from different states to showcase their products, promote traditional crafts and explore new market opportunities. Several districts of Jammu and Kashmir are also participating, displaying their unique local products.

Participants from various states have brought a wide range of products, including handicrafts, handloom items and food-processing products. Many of these products are made by women associated with SHGs, highlighting their entrepreneurial skills and contribution to the rural economy.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary said the mela provides an excellent opportunity for rural artisans and entrepreneurs to interact, exchange ideas and learn from one another. He highlighted that the event also offers direct market access, enabling local residents and tourists visiting Kashmir to purchase their products.

Ramesh Kumar further observed that such platforms help artisans and entrepreneurs promote their products, explore new marketing avenues, improve their skills and enhance their livelihoods. The mela also enables them to expand their businesses by connecting with potential customers and exploring opportunities beyond their local markets.

The Secretary inspected stalls representing different states, along with those showcasing the unique crafts of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Union Territories. He interacted with exhibitors and applauded their entrepreneurial spirit and innovation in rural enterprises.

Ramesh Kumar said several SHGs from Jammu and Kashmir are participating in the mela, including Lakhpati Didis—women who have achieved an annual household income of Rs 1 lakh or more through sustainable livelihood activities.

Emphasising the importance of women's empowerment, the Secretary said such initiatives play a significant role in promoting financial independence and self-reliance among rural women. He noted that the mela provides them with a valuable platform to showcase their products, connect with potential customers and explore new business opportunities.

The event has received an encouraging response, with participants showcasing their products and engaging with visitors, buyers and fellow entrepreneurs.

Participants from states including Telangana, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Tripura, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, among others, will showcase products reflecting their regions' traditional skills and local resources. The exhibits include Pochampally Ikat sarees, Banarasi textiles, Chikankari embroidery, traditional jewellery, handicrafts, home décor, jute products and other eco-friendly goods.

Dy CM inspects ongoing road, bridge projects in Udhampur

GMK NEWS NETWORK



UDHAMPUR: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Wednesday conducted an extensive tour of Udhampur district and inspected the ongoing developmental works on the PWD road from Jakhani Naka Point to via Lower Balli being executed under NABARD. He also inspected the construction site of a 165-metre-span steel girder double-lane motorable bridge over River Tawi.

The Deputy Chief Minister was accompanied by Chief Engineer PWD R&B, Chenab Zone, Batote, Ashok Kumar Khokhar, Superintending Engineer, PWD R&B Circle Udhampur-Ramban, Shivangi Gupta, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr Umesh Shan and other concerned officers.

During inspection of the road project, the Deputy Chief Minister expressed concern over the slow pace of work. He directed the executing agencies to expedite the progress and ensure completion by December 20, 2026. He instructed the Superintending Engineer to closely monitor the execution of the project and ensure strict adherence to the prescribed quality standards.

Surinder Choudhary directed the executing agencies to mobilise adequate manpower and machinery and complete the work within the stipulated timeline. He asked the Executive Engineer PWD to issue a show-cause notice to the contractor for slow progress of work.

The Deputy Chief Minister also visited Government Girls Middle School, Sharda, where he inspected the attendance register of the teaching staff. He enquired about the sanctioned strength of teachers and the available infrastructure. He interacted with the students and teachers and encouraged the students to remain focused on their studies, work hard and strive to achieve their goals.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister visited Sharda Mata Temple and paid obeisance, praying for peace, prosperity and the well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the tour, Surinder Choudhary also visited the construction site of the 165-metre-span steel girder double-lane motorable Salmay bridge over River Tawi, on the Udhampur-Ghordi road being constructed under NABARD.

'Unnecessary' referrals from B'pora burden Srinagar's tertiary care facilities

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Alleged unnecessary referrals from District Hospital Bandipora to tertiary care hospitals in Srinagar continue to put pressure on healthcare facilities in the summer capital, with doctors at tertiary care hospitals alleging that several patients could be treated at their local hospitals.

Doctors working at tertiary care hospitals in Srinagar said patients were frequently referred from Bandipora despite not requiring specialised treatment, adding to the workload of medical staff and affecting the management of patients requiring advanced care.

"We receive dozens of patients every day who could be managed at peripheral health facilities or the district hospital itself. Referring such cases to a tertiary care hospital adds to the burden on an already stretched system," a doctor at SMHS Hospital said on condition of anonymity.

The doctor estimated that around 30 per cent of patients referred from Bandipora could be treated at facilities closer to their homes, although the proportion would vary depending on the cases and services available.

Sources at District Hospital Bandipora said several pregnant women referred to Srinagar hospitals did not have complications requiring tertiary-level intervention and subsequently underwent normal deliveries or caesarean sections.

They said repeated government directions to curb avoidable referrals had not adequately addressed the problem, calling for better implementation of existing guidelines and improvements in facilities at peripheral hospitals.

A senior doctor at SKIMS said questioning the necessity of a referral could sometimes lead to confrontations with patients' attendants.

"Some patients can be treated at district hospitals and other peripheral facilities, but they are still referred to tertiary care centres. When we question the need for a referral, attendants can sometimes become aggressive," the doctor said.

The doctors said strengthening diagnostic services, specialist availability and emergency care at district hospitals could help reduce unnecessary patient movement and ensure that tertiary care facilities remained accessible to those who genuinely needed advanced treatment.

An official, however, rejected the allegations, maintaining that patients were referred to Srinagar only when their medical condition warranted treatment at higher-level facilities.

Earlier, the government had ordered an audit of referrals from district-level hospitals to tertiary care centres to optimise the deployment of medical personnel in peripheral institutions and improve patient services across the healthcare system. —(KNO)

Div Com reviews preparations for UT Diwas, Rashtriya Ekta Diwas at SKICC

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Wednesday reviewed the preparations for the celebrations of Union Territory Foundation Day (UT Diwas) and Rashtriya Ekta Diwas during a meeting held at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC); Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; Director Information; SSP Traffic; Vice-Chairman, Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA); heads of various departments and police officers.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner took a detailed review of the arrangements being put in place by various departments for the two important events.

He emphasised the need for close inter-departmental coordination, timely execution of assigned responsibilities and ensuring that all arrangements are completed well in advance.

Reviewing the preparations for Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, he stressed the importance of ensuring enthusiastic participation of departments, students and citizens in the Run for Unity, underscoring the spirit of national unity, integrity and collective responsibility that the occasion represents.

The Divisional Commissioner also reviewed the arrangements for UT Diwas and called for organising both occasions in a befitting manner.

He took stock of participant mobilisation, transport facilities, traffic management, public address systems, installation of hoardings and standees, beautification of stages, display screens, distribution of T-shirts and caps, refreshments and the appointment of nodal officers.

Directing the concerned officers to ensure meticulous planning and effective implementation, the Div Com stressed that all necessary arrangements must be put in place at the earliest to facilitate the smooth and successful conduct of the programmes.

Later, the Divisional Commissioner inspected the arrangements at the back lawns of SKICC for the flag-off ceremony of the Run for Unity. He also reviewed the stage development and installation of hoardings, directing the concerned agencies to ensure proper coordination and readiness at the venue.

He emphasised that all departments must work in close coordination to ensure that the celebrations are conducted smoothly, with befitting arrangements and overwhelming public participation.

J&K Orders Regulated Movement on NH-44 During Secretariat Office Move

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In view of the Move of Offices and to facilitate the smooth and hassle-free movement of the convoy of Secretariat employees from Srinagar to Jammu, restrictions have been imposed on the movement of goods carriers on the Jammu–Srinagar National Highway (NH-44).

No movement of up HMVs/MMVs (goods carriers) from Jakheni, Udhampur towards Srinagar shall be allowed on October 31, 2026 (Saturday) and November 1, 2026 (Sunday).

Furthermore, no goods carriers (HMVs/MMVs) shall be allowed to proceed from Jakheni (Udhampur) towards Ramban, Banihal, Srinagar, etc., or from Qazigund towards Banihal, Ramban, Udhampur, etc., after 0200 hours on October 31, 2026 (intervening night of October 30/31) and November 1, 2026 (intervening night of October 31/November 1).

However, down HMVs from Qazigund towards Jammu shall be allowed in a regulated manner.

Goods carrier (HMV/LMV) operators carrying fresh, perishable goods and livestock have been advised to load their vehicles accordingly, keeping the traffic restrictions in view.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Wular Lake Cannot Be Left To Die

Wular Lake is more than a vast stretch of water in north Kashmir. It is part of the Valley's natural heritage, a source of livelihood for thousands of people and one of nature's strongest defences against floods. Yet, this precious ecosystem is slowly losing its strength under the pressure of encroachments, pollution, siltation and years of neglect.

The question is no longer whether Wular needs protection. The real question is whether we are prepared to act before the damage becomes irreversible. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), in its audit of lake conservation and management in Jammu and Kashmir, has flagged the shrinking water spread of Wular, pointing to encroachments along its periphery and the accumulation of silt. These observations should serve as a serious warning to the authorities. When a lake of such ecological importance begins to lose its capacity to hold water, the consequences extend far beyond its immediate surroundings.

Unfortunately, the deterioration of Wular cannot be blamed on a single factor. Untreated sewage entering the Jhelum, agricultural runoff carrying fertilisers and pesticides, the dumping of solid waste and the spread of excessive aquatic vegetation are all adding to the lake's burden. At the same time, soil erosion and degradation in the catchment areas continue to send silt into its waters, making the lake shallower and reducing its capacity to store water.

What makes this situation particularly painful is that the damage is not confined to the environment. It is being felt in the homes of fishermen and families who have depended on Wular for generations.

For these communities, the lake is not a tourist attraction or a subject for official reports. It is their workplace, their source of food and the means through which they educate their children and run their households. Declining fish catches, reduced earnings and weed-choked waterways are making life increasingly difficult. Those who once depended on fishing and the collection of water chestnuts now face growing uncertainty about their future.

The reported decline in fish catches and concerns over indigenous species should be taken seriously. Traditional fishing communities understand the lake in ways that cannot be learned from official files alone. Their experiences must be heard, documented and included in conservation planning.

At the same time, alleged illegal encroachments, unregulated sand extraction and destructive fishing practices, including the reported use of electric shocks to catch fish, demand firm and impartial enforcement. Such activities, if allowed to continue, can damage the ecosystem further and deprive future generations of its natural wealth. The law must apply equally to everyone, regardless of influence or position.

Wular's importance, however, goes well beyond the livelihoods of its fishing communities. The lake plays a vital role in receiving excess water from the Jhelum and helping regulate flood flows in the Valley. Its ability to absorb and hold water is a natural protective mechanism. As its depth and water-holding capacity decline, Kashmir risks weakening one of its most valuable natural safeguards.

Flood protection cannot depend entirely on embankments, drainage projects and emergency response after disaster strikes. Nature itself provides protection, but only when its systems are allowed to function. Destroying or neglecting these systems and then spending public money to manage the resulting damage is neither sensible governance nor sound planning.

The Wular Conservation and Management Authority has undertaken restoration measures, including desilting and the removal of willow plantations and invasive vegetation. These efforts deserve attention, but isolated interventions cannot restore a lake if fresh silt continues to enter, sewage keeps flowing into its waters and encroachments remain a persistent concern.

Restoration must therefore become a sustained programme rather than an occasional exercise. The authorities need to identify and remove illegal encroachments through transparent legal procedures, strengthen pollution control, prevent untreated sewage from entering the lake and improve soil conservation in the catchment areas. Desilting and vegetation management must be based on scientific assessment, with regular monitoring to measure whether the lake is actually recovering.

Equally important is accountability. Public funds spent on conservation must produce visible and measurable results. People have a right to know what has been achieved, what remains incomplete and why problems continue despite repeated interventions. Independent monitoring and periodic public reporting can help ensure that restoration does not remain confined to announcements and official claims.

The communities living around Wular must also become partners in its protection. Fishermen, farmers, local representatives and environmental experts should have a meaningful role in shaping conservation measures. Awareness alone will not solve the problem unless people are provided with practical alternatives and the administration demonstrates that rules will be enforced fairly.

Kashmir has already witnessed the consequences of weakening its natural environment. The loss of wetlands, the degradation of water bodies and the increasing pressure on fragile ecosystems should have taught us that environmental damage eventually becomes a human problem. Wular is no exception.

A lake does not disappear overnight. It loses a little of its depth, a little of its water spread and a little of its ability to sustain life. By the time the damage becomes impossible to ignore, the cost of recovery may be far greater than the cost of timely protection. The time to save Wular is now. The lake has served Kashmir for centuries. It is our turn to serve it.

Good Morning Kashmir

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B-11, Budshah Flats, Jehangir Chowk, Srinagar-190001
Printed at:
Khidmat Offset Printing Press, The Bund, Srinagar
Published From:
Main Bus Stand, Near Masjid Rehmat, Lal Bazar, Srinagar - 190023
Layout Designer
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From Paddy Fields To Apple Orchards

Is Kashmir Trading Food Security For Higher Income?

As Farmers Turn Towards More Profitable Horticulture, Shrinking Paddy Cultivation Raises Concerns About Kashmir's Dependence On Rice Supplies From Outside The Region.

SHOIAB MOHMMAD BHAT



Our elders often tell us that these orchards were once paddy fields where we grew rice for our families. This is something many Kashmiris have heard from their elders. Land that once produced the staple food of local households has gradually changed its appearance. In many areas, green paddy fields have given way to apple orchards, with farmers hoping for better earnings and a more secure livelihood.

The shift is quite logical. Agriculture is the major source of income for a number of families, and hence the farmers always search for the varieties that give them more profits. Apple production has gained significance within the Kashmiri economy and provided jobs as well as supported various businesses. However, this shift also raises a question that deserves serious attention: as Kashmir earns more from its orchards, is it becoming increasingly dependent on other states for its staple food?

The Numbers Behind the Changing Landscape

Studies of land-use transitions in Kashmir have also shown that the shift is not limited to changes in the landscape but also involves changes in agricultural land use in the Kashmir Valley. A study published in 2020 in the journal GeoJournal reported these transitions using satellite data from 1992, 2001, and 2015.

Another study conducted in 2022 on agriculture transitions in Anantnag district shows that there is a considerable decrease in the area under paddy cultivation. Show the possibility of increased gains through horticulture and agricultural challenges as reasons for decision-making by farmers. Recent studies conducted on Anantnag district in 2025 found out that the area under cultivation of rice was decreased from 38,893 hectares in 2001 to 21,730 hectares in 2020.

These findings point towards a significant change in the region's agricultural priorities. However, the decline in paddy cultivation cannot be attributed entirely to apple orchards. Urban expansion, infrastructure development, irrigation problems, and other changes in land use have also played a role.

Why Farmers Are Choosing Apples Over Rice?

Money does count for a farmer working on a small patch of land. Rice cultivation supplies food, but economic benefit comes out of rice cultivation is comparatively less than the income earned from an effective apple plantation. An apple plantation increases the money from selling fruits and helps employ labourers, transporters, and packers. The growth in high-density orchards has helped farmers opt for the latest techniques.

In such circumstances, where expenses were increasing and money flows were uncertain, the selection of a lucrative crop becomes necessary for a farmer. It is not fair to expect farmers to overlook their requirements for the sake of following traditional farming practices. Yet the long-term consequences of these individual decisions deserve attention. When many farmers make the same choice, the cumulative effect can reshape the region's food production system.

The issue, therefore, is not about blaming farmers for growing apples. It is about understanding how agricultural policies and market incentives can support both household prosperity and local food security.

More Apples, More Dependence on Outside Rice

Rice is very essential for the families in Kashmir. It is consumed in everyday meals and family gatherings and plays an integral part in the food culture. Hence, ensuring a constant flow of this crop is a necessity. Based on the report published by Mongabay on 13 October 2026, in 2024-25, Jammu and Kashmir received 4.86 lakh tonnes of rice from the surplus states as compared to 3.74 lakh tonnes in 2022-23. According to an agronomist quoted in the report, Jammu and Kashmir grows 50–55 percent of their rice requirement while the rest comes from outside the region.

This clearly depicts the reliance on rice imported from other regions. But the increasing amount of rice being imported is not due to the conversion of paddy field area alone; it depends on various other factors such as population growth, consumption patterns, and yield. However, the pattern does pose a legitimate worry. The region, which used to produce a bigger percentage of its staple food item (rice), would now be more vulnerable to disruption in terms of supply, transportation issues, and price fluctuations.

The Risks We Should Not Ignore

Apple cultivation brings income, yet it also carries risks. Farmers face uncertain market prices, weather-related damage, diseases, and rising production costs. A poor harvest or a fall in market prices can affect an entire season's earnings. Rice production has its own challenges, including water availability, labour costs and changing weather conditions. Neither crop offers complete security on its own.

The answer is because of their uses. Apples are a valuable commercial commodity, whereas rice is a vital foodstuff used by people in the area on a daily basis.

Failure to take into consideration future demand may lead to problems when local rice production is reduced. However, at the same time, it would not be practical to ask farmers to switch back to rice farming without addressing income issues. Kashmir needs an approach that recognises both economic opportunity and the importance of producing essential food locally.

Finding a Balance Between Income and Food Security

The government, agricultural universities and farming communities can work together to protect productive paddy land while improving the profitability of rice cultivation. Better irrigation facilities, improved seeds, new technologies, low cost of production, and improved procurement would certainly increase the appeal of paddy cultivation. Agro-based planning ensures that there should be identification of those areas where paddy cultivation is productive and significant. Planning should keep in mind the local context.

Research is also needed to map how much paddy land has been converted into orchards and how these changes affect local rice production. Reliable district-level data would help policymakers understand the scale of the problem and plan accordingly.

Development Must Also Protect Our Food Future

Kashmir's apple economy is the main source of livelihood and agricultural identity. Its growth deserves support. At the same time, the value of a harvest cannot be measured through market earnings alone. Our elders remember when many families depended on their own fields for rice. Their memories remind us of a time when local food production played a greater role in household security.

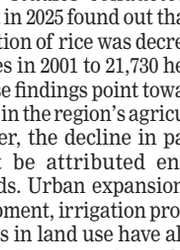
The answer does not lie in rejecting modern horticulture or returning entirely to traditional farming. It lies in making thoughtful choices about land, income, and the needs of future generations.

Kashmir should continue to grow its apples, strengthen its farmers' incomes and protect the land needed to feed its people. Economic progress will be more sustainable when prosperity and food security advance together.

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Halisheri

Reviving Kashmir's Forgotten Spirit Of Togetherness



HAROON RASHID BHAT

"The best of people are those who are most beneficial to others." — A saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)



Sometimes, an ordinary journey can awaken memories of a society's forgotten values. Recently, while going to the market, I came across a group of people, young and old, working together to fill potholes along a pathway. There was no formal announcement, no organised campaign, and no waiting for the concerned department to intervene. They had noticed a public problem and decided to address it through collective effort. As I watched them, I was reminded of Halisheri, a beautiful Kashmiri tradition rooted in voluntary service, mutual cooperation, and community responsibility. Their initiative was more than a simple act of repair; it was a reminder that meaningful change often begins when ordinary people choose to act for the common good.

In traditional Kashmiri society, Halisheri represented the spirit of people voluntarily joining hands to accomplish tasks for the benefit of the community. People would come together to clean irrigation canals, clear roads blocked by snow during harsh winters, assist neighbours in times of difficulty, and support families facing hardship. Their contributions were not measured in money or personal recognition but in the willingness to share their labour and ease the burdens of others. Such collective efforts strengthened social bonds, nurtured mutual trust, and fostered a sense of belonging. Halisheri was not merely a practical arrangement; it reflected a way of life in which community welfare was considered a shared responsibility.

Unfortunately, these practices have become less visible in contemporary life. Changing lifestyles, growing individualism, and increasing dependence on institutions have weakened some of the bonds that once brought communities together. We frequently complain about damaged roads, unclean surroundings, and administrative delays, but sometimes overlook the contribution we can make within our own capacity. The incident I witnessed, however, reassured me that the spirit of Halisheri has not disappeared. It survives wherever people are willing to step forward without waiting for appreciation or reward.

For me, this was Halisheri in action and Ebadah in practice. In Islam, faith is expressed not only through prescribed religious observances but also through compassion, honesty, kindness, and service to humanity. Helping someone in difficulty, removing an obstacle from a public pathway, assisting an elderly neighbour, or contributing to the welfare of the community can become meaningful expressions of faith when performed with sincere intentions. The people filling those potholes may have considered their work a simple social responsibility, yet their actions reflected values that religion consistently encourages: concern for others, generosity, and a willingness to make life easier for fellow human beings.

The significance of their effort becomes clearer when we consider those who use the pathway. A pothole that appears insignificant to one person may create difficulties for an elderly resident, a child going to school, or someone carrying essential supplies. By addressing such a problem, the volunteers were contributing to the safety and convenience of others. Their work demonstrated that even modest actions can produce meaningful benefits when guided by a spirit of service.

Reviving Halisheri does not mean transferring the responsibilities of government departments to ordinary citizens. Maintaining roads, drainage systems, irrigation channels, and public infrastructure remains the responsibility of the concerned authorities. Citizens must continue to seek accountability and timely action. However, community participation can complement official efforts through cleanliness drives, plantation campaigns, assistance to vulnerable families, and the responsible reporting of public hazards. Technical or dangerous repairs must be undertaken by qualified personnel with appropriate safety measures.

What we need is a healthier balance between our rights and responsibilities. We should neither remain silent when public services fail nor become indifferent to the difficulties around us. Constructive participation can strengthen communities, encourage accountability, and inspire others to contribute. When people work together for a common cause, they develop not only a cleaner and safer environment but also stronger relationships built on trust and cooperation.

Our younger generation, in particular, needs to witness and experience this spirit. Civic responsibility cannot be taught through textbooks alone. Children learn its real meaning when they see adults cleaning their surroundings, helping neighbours, respecting public property, and working together without personal gain. Such examples cultivate empathy, discipline, and a sense of belonging that can benefit society for generations.

Kashmir is blessed with extraordinary natural beauty, but the true beauty of our Valley also lies in the character of its people. Our mountains, rivers, and gardens may attract admiration, but compassion, hospitality, and mutual assistance are what make a society truly beautiful. If we revive the spirit of Halisheri, we can strengthen our communities and preserve a valuable part of our cultural heritage.

The people I witnessed filling those potholes may never realise how deeply their simple act inspired an observer. Yet, their initiative reminded me that meaningful change does not always begin with grand announcements or elaborate plans. Sometimes, it begins when a few ordinary people decide not to remain indifferent.

Let us revive Halisheri not merely as a memory of our past, but as a living principle for our future. Let us recognise that serving humanity is both a social responsibility and, when performed with sincere intentions, a practical expression of faith.

May Almighty Allah bless all those who came forward for this noble cause, reward their sincere efforts, and ease their paths just as they sought to ease the paths of others. Ameen.

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Harud: When Autumn Turns Kashmir's Fields To Gold



MAUZAM BAKSHI

Some seasons change the appearance of a landscape; others awaken its soul. In Kashmir, autumn belongs to the latter. When the chinars burn crimson and copper, when paddy fields turn gold beneath a softening sun and when fallen leaves gather along the banks of the Jhelum, the Valley seems to enter a world where beauty becomes prayer and time acquires a sacred meaning. Kashmiris call this season "Harud". The word carries more than the arrival of autumn.

It evokes the fragrance of harvested paddy, the whisper of chinar leaves beneath familiar footsteps, the bustle of apple orchards and the delicate purple blossoms of saffron emerging from the soil. It recalls preparations for winter and the wisdom of generations who learned to live according to the rhythms of the earth. Yet Harud is more than a season of colours. Beneath the crimson foliage and golden fields lies a deeper truth, everything that blooms must change, everything that rises must descend and everything we cherish is entrusted to us for a time, never promised forever. Perhaps this is why autumn touches the Kashmiri heart with such tenderness. It is beautiful, but its beauty carries the shadow of departure. After the freshness of spring and the abundance of summer, nature begins to speak in a softer voice. The days shorten, mornings acquire a sharper chill and the distant mountains seem to draw closer beneath a fading blue sky. To stand beneath an ancient chinar during Harud is to witness a mystery that language cannot fully explain.

The tree appears most magnificent at the very moment it prepares to surrender its foliage. Its leaves, having spent the summer drinking sunlight, turn copper and gold before descending to the soil from which their life emerged. What appears to be an ending is also an act of return. The leaf does not resist the wind or mourn the branch it must leave. It falls quietly, fulfilling its place in the larger movement of existence. Human beings, by contrast, spend much of their lives resisting change. We cling to youth, possessions, relationships and memories, as though the world were meant to remain exactly as we wish it to be. Impermanence is not a punishment imposed upon life, it is woven into the very fabric of life.

The beauty of a flower, the warmth of sunlight and the presence of those we love become precious partly because none can be held unchanged forever. The chinar teaches this lesson without words. It simply stands, changes colour and lets go. In Kashmir, the chinar is more than a tree. It is a living witness to generations, a silent guardian of memory and an enduring symbol of the Valley's identity. In Srinagar's gardens, beside Dal Lake, along village pathways and in the courtyards of old homes, its branches have sheltered conversations, friendships, childhood games and moments of solitude long since lost to the past. Kashmir's spiritual traditions have long invited human beings to look beyond outward appearances. Lal Ded, the fourteenth-century mystic, turned inward in her search for truth. Her vision directs the seeker towards self-knowledge and inner awakening. Harud, in its silent language, echoes this movement from the outer world towards the inner self.

It recalls preparations for winter and the wisdom of generations who learned to live according to the rhythms of the earth. Yet Harud is more than a season of colours. Beneath the crimson foliage and golden fields lies a deeper truth, everything that blooms must change, everything that rises must descend and everything we cherish is entrusted to us for a time, never promised forever.



The changing landscape becomes a mirror in which we encounter our restlessness, our fear of loss and our longing for permanence. The falling leaf asks a question the human heart often avoids, if everything around us must change, where shall we seek the peace that does not depend upon things remaining unchanged ? It requires a journey into the self, into the stillness where the noise of possession and desire begins to subside. The Rishi tradition associated with Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali, revered as Nund Rishi, offers another enduring expression of Kashmir's spiritual inheritance. Its emphasis on simplicity, humility, compassion and reverence for creation reminds us that spiritual life cannot be separated from the manner in which we inhabit the earth. The mountains, rivers, trees and fields are not merely resources at humanity's disposal. They are part of the larger order within which human existence becomes possible. The Valley's golden fields offer another form of contemplation.

As ripened paddy bends beneath the weight of its grain, farmers gather the fruit of months of labour. Every harvest is an encounter with the limits of human control. A farmer may prepare the soil, sow the seed and labour through the seasons, but the final abundance remains dependent upon forces beyond individual command. The harvest therefore calls for gratitude as much as celebration. For generations, Kashmiris understood this relationship through experience. Autumn meant gathering food, drying vegetables, storing provisions and preparing households for the difficult winter ahead. Their lives were not free from hardship, yet dependence upon the land fostered an awareness that modern convenience can obscure, abundance is never something to be taken for granted. Gratitude is not merely a feeling expressed when life is generous, it is humility before the conditions that make life possible. Kashmir's literary inheritance gives the season another dimension. In the poetry of Habba Khatoon, love and longing become expressions of the heart's vulnerability before separation and change. Autumn speaks this language instinctively.

A fallen leaf may awaken the memory of a beloved face. An empty branch may recall a voice that once filled a courtyard. The fading light over the Jhelum may bring back a childhood evening, a departed friend or a home that now exists only in recollection. Yet longing need not be sorrow alone. It can also be gratitude. We mourn what has departed because its presence enriched our lives. Harud does not offer a ready-made answer. It offers an image, a silence and an invitation. As the season advances, the chinars surrender their remaining leaves, the orchards grow quieter and the mountains prepare to receive the cold. But beneath the apparent ending, life continues. The roots remain alive. The soil holds its hidden possibilities. The earth rests, gathering within its darkness the conditions of renewal. Perhaps the deepest lesson of Harud is that surrender and renewal are not opposites.

There are things we must release because life cannot move forward while we insist upon holding everything in place. There are silences that prepare the heart to listen, losses that deepen understanding and endings that teach us to recognise the value of what remains. This does not mean grief should be denied. Spiritual wisdom lies not in refusing sorrow, but in carrying it without allowing it to extinguish gratitude, compassion or hope. When the last leaves fall, Kashmir does not become less beautiful. Its beauty changes its language.

The colours recede, the branches stand bare against the winter sky, and the Valley enters a quieter chapter of its existence. What remains is not emptiness, but the possibility of renewal hidden beneath the surface. It lives in the humility of the harvest, in the longing of the poet, in the inward search of the mystic and in the quiet recognition that nothing in this world belongs to us forever. When the evening light fades over the Jhelum and the last chinar leaves settle upon the earth, Kashmir offers its most enduring lesson, to love without possessing, to remember without being imprisoned by the past, and to accept change without surrendering hope. That is the sacred beauty of Harud. Kashmir does not simply turn to gold, for a brief and luminous moment, the Valley reveals the soul beneath its beauty.

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Social Entrepreneurship, Creating Impact Beyond Profit



DR. ANJUM NAZIR QURESHI



The real opportunity lies in nurturing young entrepreneurs who do not just create jobs but also address social inequalities. This is the essence of social entrepreneurship, where innovation meets empathy and economic growth becomes a means of creating a better society.

What if the success of an entrepreneur were measured not merely by the wealth they create, but by the lives they transform? In a world where young people are encouraged to become global citizens, secure rewarding careers, and explore entrepreneurship, it is time to look beyond conventional business models. The real opportunity lies in nurturing young entrepreneurs who do not just create jobs but also address social inequalities. This is the essence of social entrepreneurship, where innovation meets empathy and economic growth becomes a means of creating a better society.

Social entrepreneurship addresses community challenges through innovative solutions while maintaining financial sustainability. Unlike conventional entrepreneurship, which primarily emphasizes profit, it equally emphasizes social well-being, inclusion, and long-term development. Youth-led social enterprises can play a significant role in reducing educational inequalities. Affordable e-learning tools, digital literacy programs, and community-based learning initiatives can make quality education accessible to rural communities and underserved populations.

Social entrepreneurship can also transform our understanding of education. Instead of glorifying marks and rote memorization, it encourages creativity, empathy, critical thinking, and practical problem-solving. It shifts the focus from merely obtaining qualifications to developing competencies that help individuals address real-world challenges.

This transformation requires us to reconsider employability. While formal degrees remain important, practical experience and demonstrated skills also deserve recognition. An individual who has acquired expertise through experience may possess valuable knowledge despite being unable to pursue higher education because of financial constraints. Educational and employment policies must therefore recognize experiential learning while ensuring that quality education remains affordable and accessible to all.

A successful social enterprise balances its social mission with financial sustainability. It generates sufficient revenue to continue its operations while remaining committed to community development. Rather than offering temporary assistance, it builds an ecosystem where people can acquire skills, earn a livelihood, and live with dignity and self-respect. Such enterprises can empower women, local artisans, farmers, persons with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged communities by providing skill development, market access, and sustainable livelihood opportunities. The objective is not merely to help people survive but to enable them to become independent contributors to economic and social progress.

Educational institutions have a crucial role in preparing young people for this responsibility. Experiential learning, innovation challenges, internships, and community-based projects can help students understand societal problems and develop practical solutions. Mentors can guide them in refining their ideas and creating sustainable business models. Incubation centers, startup funding, government initiatives, corporate social responsibility programs, and partnerships with non-governmental organizations can further support young entrepreneurs in transforming their ideas into viable enterprises. However, social entrepreneurship demands more than business knowledge. It requires empathy, ethical leadership, critical thinking, resilience, and collaboration. Effective solutions begin with listening to communities, understanding their needs, and addressing the root causes of their challenges rather than merely treating the visible symptoms.

The success of a social entrepreneur cannot be measured through financial returns alone. It must also be evaluated through the lives transformed, employment opportunities created, women empowered, resources conserved, and communities strengthened. A solution to a local problem can eventually create a wider social impact. Collaboration with industries, educational institutions, government agencies, and community organizations can help expand this impact. Young entrepreneurs must also understand that setbacks are part of the journey. Failure is not the opposite of success; it is an opportunity to learn, adapt, and develop better solutions.

The future does not belong merely to those who build successful businesses; it belongs to those who use their success to build a better world. When young people combine innovation with empathy, ambition with responsibility, and entrepreneurship with inclusion, they become powerful agents of social transformation. Social entrepreneurship offers youth an opportunity to redefine success—not by asking how much they can earn, but by asking how much they can contribute. After all, the greatest achievement of an entrepreneur is not simply creating wealth, but creating opportunities, restoring dignity, and ensuring that progress reaches those who need it most. That is how young entrepreneurs can transform not only their own futures but also the future of society.

Educator, International Trainer, Author, and TEDx Speaker, Chandrapur.

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4000 cyclists register for 'Pedal Through Paradise': DIG Maqsood-ul-Zaman

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Armed Police Maqsood-ul-Zaman on Wednesday said that around 4,000 cyclists have registered for the J&K Police Cycle Race-2026, 'Pedal Through Paradise', slated to be held in Srinagar on Thursday.

In a video message, the DIG invited more cycling enthusiasts to participate in the race, saying the event aims to encourage young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle. "Organisers are also offering on-the-spot registration," he added.

"We want our youth to be healthy and health-conscious. This is part of the Fit India initiative," the DIG said.

He said the race would feature two routes—from Lalit Ghat towards Harwan Garden via Shalimar and from Lalit Ghat towards Nagbal Chowk via Foreshore Road.

"We have kept around Rs 6 lakh as prize money, finisher medals and refreshments. On-the-spot registration has also been arranged," he said.

Meanwhile, Traffic Police Srinagar have also announced restrictions and diversions on Boulevard Road and adjoining routes for the race. Commuters can contact the Traffic Police Control Room at 103 for assistance—(KNO)

Another cabinet reshuffle possible after 18 months: Minister Javed Dar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Cabinet Minister Javed Ahmad Dar on Wednesday said another cabinet reshuffle could take place after 18 months, offering fresh opportunities to National Conference legislators who were not accommodated in Tuesday's expansion.

His remarks come amid reports of disappointment among some senior party legislators following the induction of four new ministers into Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's Council of Ministers.

Dar said discussions had taken place about giving other legislators an opportunity to serve in the cabinet after one-and-a-half years.

"It has also been decided that after one-and-a-half years, some more colleagues will be given an opportunity. There may be another change after 18 months," Dar said

He said legislators who had missed out on ministerial positions should remain patient, as the present arrangement was not necessarily permanent.

"I believe those colleagues who could not become ministers this time will, God willing, get an opportunity in the future," he said.

Dar pointed to the limited size of the Council of Ministers under Jammu and Kashmir's present Union Territory arrangement, saying the restriction made it impossible to accommodate every deserving legislator.

"We are presently a Union Territory, where only nine people can become ministers. Earlier there were five, and now four more have been inducted," he said.

He expressed hope that Jammu and Kashmir's statehood would eventually be restored, creating greater scope for political representation.

"I hope the day will come when statehood is restored. It may take a few months. Those colleagues who are disappointed today may then get an opportunity to work in the cabinet," he said.

The minister acknowledged that legislators had legitimate aspirations for ministerial positions but maintained that the leadership had to make decisions within the existing limitations.

"Everyone has the right to aspire to become a minister. But the circumstances are such that only a limited number can be accommodated," he said.

Dar defended the decisions taken by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and National Conference president Farooq Abdullah, saying the selection of ministers had been carefully considered.

"I believe the decisions taken by the Chief Minister and Dr Farooq Abdullah were made after considerable thought. Other colleagues should also understand this," he said.

He appealed to party legislators to remain united and continue supporting the leadership despite disappointment over the allocation of ministerial berths.

"We should all stand with our party leadership. We have placed our trust in them, and we will continue to do so," he said.

Dar also congratulated the four newly inducted ministers and expressed confidence that other legislators would receive opportunities to contribute to governance in the future.(KNS)

NIT organises e-waste, cleanliness, plantation drives under SCDPM 6.0

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Wednesday organised e-waste collection, cleanliness and plantation drives under the Ministry of Education's Special Campaign for Disposal of Pending Matters (SCDPM 6.0) and the Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect Programme.

The initiatives were undertaken under the guidance of NIT Srinagar Director Prof. Anurag Mishra to promote responsible e-waste management, environmental conservation and systematic disposal of obsolete materials.

The e-waste collection drive was held from 10 am at the designated collection point near the campus fountain. Carrying the message "Recycle Responsibly for a Clean and Green Campus", the drive encouraged students, faculty members and staff to segregate electronic waste from general waste and ensure its responsible disposal.

A plantation drive was also organised to promote environmental sustainability and develop a greener campus.

Participants included Registrar NIT Srinagar Prof. Atikur Rehman, Dean Alumni and International Affairs Prof. M. A. Shah, Deputy Registrar (Administration) Faisal Ganai, Dr. Shahid Saleem, Dr. Jitendra Gurjar, Nodal Officer, Viksit Bharat; Dr. H. S. Pali; Dr. Pramod Yadav; Dr. Manoj Kumar; student coordinators Sukhdev and Jasmeet Kour, besides faculty members and students.

The Institute administered a Swachhata pledge on the same day, followed by a cleanliness and sanitation drive involving students, faculty, staff, mess and canteen operators, shopkeepers, and other service providers. The operators were directed to clean their premises and surrounding areas and ensure proper waste disposal. Before-and-after documentation of five locations was also undertaken.

The Institute also initiated the identification of obsolete physical files, electronic files and other unwanted materials for possible disposal in accordance with prescribed record-retention requirements.

Dr. Jitendra Gurjar, Nodal Officer, SCDPM, NIT Srinagar, said the campaign aimed to strengthen institutional cleanliness, promote responsible e-waste management and expedite the disposal of pending and obsolete materials.

He emphasised the importance of collective participation in maintaining a clean, green and well-organised campus.

Earlier, a stakeholder meeting was held on October 27 to review previously identified e-waste and plan the identification and segregation of additional obsolete electronic and electrical items.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE .....

LG Sinha Allocates

Ali Mohammad Sagar has been entrusted with Revenue, Power Development, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRRR), and Election departments.

Sakeena Masood Itoo has been assigned Health and Medical Education and Social Welfare departments, while Javed Ahmad Rana will handle Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Tribal Affairs and Transport.

Javid Ahmed Dar has been allocated Agriculture Production, Finance, Mining and Cooperatives, placing the government's financial administration alongside key sectors of the rural economy under his charge.

Among the ministers assigned portfolios following the reshuffle, Mir Saifullah has been given Planning, Development and Monitoring, Culture, Youth Services and Sports, and Administrative Reforms, Inspections and Trainings (ARI & Trainings).

Shamim Firdous has been entrusted with School Education, Higher Education and Jal Shakti departments, giving her responsibility for both the education sector and water supply administration.

Altaf Ahmad Wani has been assigned Forest, Ecology and Environment, along with Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.

The allocation places several major departments under ministers inducted into the government during the recent reshuffle, while redistributing responsibilities across the Council of Ministers.

Significantly, the order specifies that all departments and subjects not allocated to any minister shall remain with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

The Lieutenant Governor issued the order under Rule 4(2) of the Transaction of Business of the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Rules, 2019.

The order, signed by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, was published for general information by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo.(KNS)

Power Deficit Of

supply position for November-2026 reveal that J&K and Ladakh may likely require 3813 MW against the total availability of 3190 MW during solar and non-solar hours.

In the meantime, a top official informed that the Ministry of Power has allocated over 330 MW for J&K with effect from December-2026 to February-2027.

The official said, "We may face power deficiency challenges for the November month and we are sure as to whether we can manage the gaps through power exchange markets."

As already reported by this news agency Kashmir is reeling under power deficiency of nearly 300 MW.

An official had informed that "In Kashmir, the power demand nowadays remains around 1350 Megawatts (MW)."

He said, "During the peak hours, we generally nowadays have a power demand of 1300-1350 MWs in Kashmir division. However, the power availability is fluctuating between 1000-1150 MWs."

The official further said that the power supply keeps on fluctuating. "Thus, the power demand and availability also varies from time to time. During that period we enforce grid curtailment."

Pertinently, Jammu and Kashmir imports nearly 84 percent of power from other states even as the Union Territory generates nearly 370 Megawatts (MWs) from its local stations.

The official figures in this regard reveal that the Union Territory was importing nearly 2000 MWs of power from other states and UTs.

The officials have informed that out of the total power production capacity of 1197 MWs from the Jammu and Kashmir owned plants, the power generation fluctuated between 360-400 MWs—(KNO)

J&K Cannot Be

linguistic mapping, ethnographic studies, research on pilgrimage and tourism, mountain ecology, local entrepreneurship and fellowships for young scholars, are unique endeavours by the University. He said such initiatives would contribute to building a shared repository of knowledge for future generations.

The Lieutenant Governor also underlined 4 key factors that make such a Centre relevant in contemporary times. First, the need to balance global connectivity with local identity, the urgency of preserving endangered languages and knowledge systems, the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to complex challenges, and the growing recognition of emotional well-being in education. He said that while technology is transforming societies, the preservation of cultural roots and human values remains equally important.

Speaking on the role of universities in the age of rapid technological change and artificial intelligence, the Lieutenant Governor said that emotional intelligence and technological capability complement each other. He stressed that future-ready institutions must encourage continuous learning, adaptability, ethical awareness and multidisciplinary collaboration.

The Lieutenant Governor also noted that the main Centre at Jammu University's campus in Jammu and its Kashmir Chapter have the potential to emerge as a model institution for research, contributing to knowledge creation, cultural preservation and human-centred development while enhancing the global standing of the universities of Jammu Kashmir.

Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice-Chancellor, University of Jammu; Shri Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Dr Neelu Rohmetra, Dean Research Studies; Dr. Guneet Singh Sudan, Director Sub Office Kashmir, Prof. Sangita Gupta, Dean, Planning & Development, and faculty members of University of Jammu attended the foundation day ceremony.

Dr. GV Sundeep Chakravarthy, SSP Srinagar; Shri Jatin Kishore, Deputy Commissioner Budgam; Ms. Shruti Awasthi, Regional Director, IGNCA, senior officials of civil and Police Administration were also present.

LG Felicitates SSF

initiative aimed at mobilizing society against drug abuse.

It is pertinent to mention that the campaign was marked by an extensive Padyatra led by the Lieutenant Governor across all 20 districts of the Union Territory, fostering direct engagement between the administration and citizens.

Praising the SSF's role in the initiative, the Lieutenant Governor noted that the Force ensured meticulous security planning, seamless coordination, and effective crowd management across diverse terrains and challenging conditions.

"From urban centres to remote rural areas and mountainous regions, the SSF maintained the highest standards of security while facilitating meaningful public interaction," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor conveyed his best wishes to all SSF personnel and their families, expressing confidence that they would continue to serve the nation with courage, honour, and commitment. On the occasion, Shri Govind Jaiswal, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Shri Swarn Singh Kotwal, DIG Udhampur- Reasi Range and Former Director SSF; Shri Hareesh H.P, Director SSF and senior officials were present.

J&K To Witness

the minimum temperature settled at 3.7 degrees Celsius, 0.7 degrees above normal.

Pahalgam recorded a maximum temperature of 19 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 0.5 degrees Celsius, while Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 15 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Jammu recorded a maximum temperature of 31.5 degrees Celsius, 2.2 degrees above normal, while the minimum settled at 14.5 degrees Celsius, 1.3 degrees below normal.

No rainfall was recorded at the reporting stations during the observation period—(KNO)





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DDC Pulwama holds Grievance Redressal Camp at Sangarwani

GMK NEWS NETWORK



PULWAMA: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Wednesday chaired a mega Public Outreach-cum-Grievance Redressal Camp at Sangarwani (Inderwali), providing a platform to local residents to put forth their grievances, developmental requirements and issues concerning delivery of public services.

SSP Pulwama, Sahil Sarangal; ADDC Pulwama, Joint Director Planning, Pulwama; GM DIC Pulwama, DPO ICDS Pulwama, Superintending Engineers, ACR, ACD, ACP, DMO, CEO, CMO, CHO, CAO,CAHO, DIO, Executive Engineers and other district and sectoral officers from various departments were present during the camp.

Before commencement of the public interaction, the DDC inspected departmental stalls established at the venue by Agriculture, Horticulture, Education, Health, Sheep Husbandry, Social Welfare and other departments. He took stock of the services and schemes being showcased and was briefed by the concerned officials regarding the benefits available to the public under various government programmes.

Addressing the gathering, the DDC expressed gratitude to the people of Sangarwani and adjoining areas for their participation and for bringing their concerns directly before the district administration. He said that such outreach camps are aimed at taking governance closer to the people, listening to issues at their doorstep and ensuring effective and responsive delivery of public services.

During the interaction, residents and public representatives highlighted several issues pertaining to Forest Rights Act (FRA) claims, road connectivity, internet services, drinking water, education, health infrastructure, power supply and other developmental concerns.

It was highligted by the tribal social activists that the area has a predominantly Scheduled Tribe population and concerns regarding pending claims under the Forest Rights Act were raised. They stated that several genuine FRA claims are still pending, affecting the execution of developmental works in the area, particularly where requisite clearances/NOCs are involved. The DDC directed the ACR and Forest officials to remain available at the location and ensure that all genuine FRA cases are examined and processed on priority.

The issue of poor internet connectivity in the area was also raised, with residents pointing out that inadequate network services are affecting education, online services and other digital facilities. The DDC sought a status update from the concerned BSNL/telecom authorities and directed that the pending approval/permission-related issue be taken up on priority. He assured that necessary intervention from the district administration would be provided immediately so that the matter is resolved at the earliest.

Residents also raised the issue of the Sangarwani road, which has remained affected due to pending issues related to funds and other clearances. The DDC directed the concerned departments to identify and resolve the bottlenecks and expedite the work.

Regarding the non-functional filtration plant, the DDC sought the reasons for the delay from the concerned officials and directed immediate corrective action to ensure that the facility becomes functional and safe drinking water is made available to the people.

The demand for establishment of a Higher Secondary School at Sangarwani was also raised, taking note of the issue, the DDC directed the Chief Education Officer to undertake the necessary assessment and prepare the requisite proposal for establishment/upgradation of the institution.

Several road-related issues were also brought to the notice of the DDC, including the Abhama-Sangarwani road, Pakharpora-Sangarwani road and other link roads. The DDC directed the concerned engineering agencies to expedite pending works and address the bottlenecks causing delays. He also took note of concerns regarding the condition of roads and the resulting safety risks.

The issue of inadequate availability of Patwari services in the area was highlighted.The DDC directed the Tehsildar concerned to ensure adequate availability and regular presence of the Patwari so that people do not face unnecessary difficulties in accessing revenue services.

Residents also highlighted the need for improved drinking water facilities at Namlan/Behak, particularly in view of the growing tourist footfall in the area. The DDC directed the concerned officers to visit the location and take necessary measures for resolving the water supply issue. He also reviewed the progress of the hospital building under construction and directed the concerned agency to expedite the work while ensuring quality standards.

The issue of a footbridge connecting Namblan to Behak was also raised. It was informed that two phases of the work have been completed while one phase remains pending. The DDC directed the concerned agency to complete the remaining work on priority.

Residents further requested that similar public outreach camps be held in Khaigam and adjoining areas so that people living in remote villages can directly bring their grievances before the administration. The DDC assured that the administration would continue taking governance and grievance redressal initiatives closer to the people.

J&K Startup Policy 2024–27

JKEDI holds Startup Screening Committee Meeting for Seed Funding

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) Wednesday convened the Startup Screening Committee meeting to evaluate startup proposals from Kashmir Division seeking seed funding under the J&K Startup Policy 2024–27.

The meeting was chaired by Mohammad Younis Malik, Director, JKEDI, and attended by a distinguished panel of experts representing government departments, financial institutions, academia, and industry.

The panel comprised Rishpal Singh, Special Secretary, Industries and Commerce Department; Sudershan Kumar, Managing Director, JKTPO; Mohammad Nazir Sheikh, Director, Handloom and Handicrafts, Jammu, who participated virtually; Prof. Parvaiz Mir, Director, CIED, IUST, Awantipora; Saad Parvaiz, Associate Professor, NIT Srinagar; Javaid Ahmad Tenga, President, Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), Srinagar; Dr. Irfana Rashid, Coordinator, New Generation Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (New Gen IEDC), University of Kashmir; Ishfaq Ahmad Hakak, AGM, Jammu and Kashmir Bank; Abdul Rouf Khan, Incubation Manager, SKIIE, SKUAST-Kashmir; and Md. Adnan Rehman, Assistant Incubation Manager, IIT Jammu.

On the first day of the two-day exercise, 35 aspiring startups from Kashmir Division pitched their startup business ideas before the committee for consideration under the seed funding component of the policy. 28 startups are scheduled to present their proposals tomorrow, taking the total number of participating startups to 63.

The committee assessed the proposals in terms of their innovation, business viability, scalability, problem solving and potential to address market needs. It observed that the ideas presented on the first day demonstrated considerable promise and could contribute meaningfully to the entrepreneurial growth of Jammu and Kashmir.

The committee members emphasised the importance of fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among the youth of Jammu and Kashmir. They highlighted the potential of startups in generating employment, addressing emerging market needs, and creating dynamic enterprises. The members also underscored the need to encourage innovative, market-oriented, and scalable business ideas that can be developed into viable enterprises and contribute to the economic growth of the Union Territory.

Mega AYUSH Medical Camp organized in Srinagar



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: As per the directions of the Director AYUSH, Dr. Ajay Kumar Tickoo, and under the supervision of the District AYUSH Officer, Srinagar, Dr. Mohd Sultan Parray, a Mega AYUSH Medical Camp was successfully organized in Srinagar, witnessing a huge public gathering and enthusiastic participation.

The camp aimed to provide accessible healthcare services to the general public through free medical consultations, health check-ups, and medicines. Special emphasis was laid on generating awareness about the AYUSH system of medicine, the importance of preventive healthcare, and the numerous benefits of yoga in promoting physical, mental, and overall well-being.

The camp was attended by dedicated AYUSH medical officers, yoga instructors, pharmacists, and supporting staff, who rendered their valuable services for the welfare of the public.

The camp witnessed a significant turnout of people who benefited from free medical consultations, complimentary medicines, and awareness sessions highlighting the importance of yoga, preventive wellness, and the advantages of the AYUSH system of medicine.

The successful organization of the camp reflects the continued commitment of the AYUSH Department, towards promoting holistic healthcare, preventive wellness, and accessible medical services for all sections of society.

DC Anantnag Administers Integrity Pledge to Employees at Dak Bungalow

GMK NEWS NETWORK



ANANTNAG: As part of the observance of Vigilance Awareness Week 2026, officers and officials across Anantnag Wednesday participated in Integrity Pledge-taking ceremonies, reaffirming their commitment to upholding honesty, transparency, accountability and ethical values in public service.

The pledge was administered under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat.

During the ceremonies, employees vowed to combat corruption, maintain integrity in the discharge of their official duties and work towards ensuring transparent and accountable governance.

The initiative aimed to reinforce the importance of ethical conduct, dedication and responsibility among government employees while promoting a corruption-free administrative system.

The participants reiterated their resolve to discharge their duties with honesty, impartiality and a commitment to public welfare, thereby strengthening public trust in government institutions.

ULLAS-FLNAT October 2026 successfully concludes across B'pora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: The Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT) under ULLAS-Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (NBSK) was successfully conducted Wednesday across all five educational zones of District Bandipora.

The assessment was conducted in offline mode at designated examination centres and witnessed enthusiastic participation from adult learners, reflecting growing public awareness and commitment towards achieving universal literacy.

Out of 11,036 learners targeted for the October 2026 assessment round, approximately 8,500 learners appeared for the test across the district. The assessment was conducted with the support of 350 examination centres and 1,100 invigilators, ensuring its smooth and transparent execution.

As per the district's literacy survey, 45,014 non-/neo-literate learners were identified across the five educational zones.

In previous rounds of FLNAT conducted under the programme, 20,243 learners had appeared and been certified, representing significant progress towards the district's literacy objectives. The successful conduct of the assessment was preceded by extensive preparations and mobilisation activities across the district. Awareness campaigns were organised to sensitise the general public and motivate eligible learners to participate. Meetings and orientation programmes were also conducted at district and zonal levels for Principals, Zonal Education

Officers (ZEOs), Headmasters, Heads of Institutions (HOls), School Nodal Officers, teachers and other literacy functionaries.

The coordinated efforts of the Zonal Education Officers, Zonal Nodal Officers (ZNOs), Principals, Headmasters, HOls, teachers, volunteers, invigilators and other field functionaries contributed significantly to the successful conduct of the assessment.

The District Nodal Officer Mir Irfan Magbool, ULLAS, coordinated the overall exercise in close consultation with the concerned zonal functionaries to ensure adherence to the prescribed guidelines and timelines.

Chief Education Officer, Bandipora, Mohammad Rafiq Mir appreciated the dedication and collective efforts of all stakeholders and emphasised the need to sustain the momentum towards achieving the goal of 100% literacy by 2027. The successful completion of this assessment marks another important milestone in the district's ongoing ettorts to promote foundational literacy, numeracy and lifelong learning among adult learners.

DC Kupwara inspects Transit Accommodation in Nutnussa

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Abhishek Sharma, Wednesday inspected the Transit Accommodation at Nutnussa to take first-hand stock of the progress of ongoing development works.

He was accompanied by ADC Handwara, Superintending Engineers of PWD, I&FC and Hydraulics, Tehsildar and other concerned officers.

The project comprises 12 blocks with 192 flats and, upon completion, will significantly strengthen transit accommodation facilities in the district.

During the inspection, the DC reviewed the pace of execution and directed the SE PWD to ensure completion of the project within the next fortnight. He further instructed the concerned officers to identify and resolve any bottlenecks on priority to avoid delays.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL & HOSPITALS DIVISION SRINAGAR

--------Telefax:- 0194-2496089, Email ID:- :exen-mechospsgr@jk.gov.in --------

GIST OF E-TENDER

e-NIT No: M&HDS/TS /2026-27/77/e-tendering, Dated: 27.10.2026

(SHORT TERM)

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited on percentage basis from registered/reputed/experienced firms with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the below mentioned work: -

Name of Work	Est. Cost (in lacs)	Cost of T/Doc.	Time of completion (in days)	TS No	Earnest Money
1	2	3	4	5	6
Servicing ,Repairs/Replacements of various items of Central Heating System at State Taxes Department, Srinagar for winter season 2026-27	9.70	500	15	MHED/K/TS/118 Dated:-24.10.2026	2% of the estimated cost

AA Accorded Vide No: Estates/ACSTK/237-42, Dated: -14.10.2026

Position of Funds:- Available with intending Department.

1. Downloading of Bids:- The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from 27.10.2026 (18.00 hrs) and can be downloaded from 27.10.2026 (18.00 hrs)
2. Uploading: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site 27.10.2026 (18.00 hrs) to 04.11.2026 (13:00hrs) in two (02) covers.
3. Opening of Bids :- The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on 04.11.2026 at 15.00(hrs

No: M&HDS/TS/4994-98
Dated: 27.10.2026

DIPK-7138-26
DT: 28/10/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
M&HD, Srinagar

OFFICE OF THE ZONAI EDUCATION OFFICER SHOPIAN

Subject:- Tentative selection list of Samagra approved Behak Centres of Zone Shopian.

NOTICE

Whereas, the Director, Samagra Shiksha, vide letter No. Edu/PD/SmS/Quality/5939-53/2023-24 dated 30-08-2023 and the Chief Education Officer, Shopian, vide letter No. CEO/SPN/SmS/Seasonal/7458-63 dated 07-06-2024, have accorded approval for the establishment of new Behak/Seasonal Centres under Zone Shopian; and

Whereas, the Zonal Education Office, Shopian, issued Advertisement Notices No. 01 of 2024 dated 28-06-2024 (vide Endstt. No. ZEO/SPN/2981/24 dated 28-06-2024) and No. 02 of 2024 dated 29-06-2024 (vide Endstt. No ZEO/SPN/24/8982-B), along with Corrigendum No. ZEO/SPN/2024/2987 dated 02-07-2024, published in leading newspapers, inviting applications from desirous candidates; and

Whereas, a committee was constituted vide Zonal Education Office, Shopian's Order No. ZEO/SPN/3040-43 dated 11-07-2024 to scrutinize the application forms and prepare the merit list in accordance with the guidelines in vogue; and

Whereas, the said committee previously recommended Ten (10) Behak/Seasonal Centers out of the Twenty-Five (25) newly approved Seasonal Centers in two instances whose tentative selection lists were issued/published vide No.: ZEO/SPN/2025/4515 dated: 16.07.2026 and No.: ZEO/SPN/2025/4649-53 dated: 27.08.2025

Whereas, the committee after re-ascertaining feasibility report of the left Seasonal Centers vide No. B-01 dated: 04.05.2026 & Receipt No.: 5112 Dated: 05.05.2026 of this office, recommended Six (06) Behak/Seasonal Centers out of left 15 Behak/Seasonal Centers of the newly approved 25 behak centers in the third instance, in line with the guidelines issued by the Director, Samagra Shiksha, vide letter No. Edu/PD/SmS/Quality/5939-53/2023-24 dated 30-08-2023; And

Whereas, the mere inclusion of a candidate in the tentative selection list does not confer any right to selection, unless the documents submitted by the candidate are duly verified and authenticated by the issuing authority.; and

Whereas, in the meeting recently held vide Notice No.: ZEO/SPN/2026/6825-28 dated: 26-09-2026, tentative selection list in respect of the below mentioned Seasonal Education Centers was approved vide Minutes of Meeting issued vide No.: ZEO/SPN/2026/6869 dated: 06/10/2026:

Whereas, the mere possession of Dhok documents does not confer any right to selection, unless it is physically verified by the competent committee that the candidate actually resides in the same behak where he/she has been selected, and the documents are duly verified by the concerned authority; and

Whereas, The following criteria were followed by the constituted committee while devising the merit list:

1. Candidates belonging to local community and resides in the same behak (first Preference)
2. 10+2 (50 points on Prorata Basis) Graduation (05 points on Prorata basis) & Post Graduation (05 Points on prorata basis) & B.Ed (10 Points on Prorata basis)
3. Past Experience of running Behaks Centres(@25=05 Points per year for maximum 05 years) & Student availability= 05 Points(@01 point for 04 students having relation/link with the family of concerned candidate) total=100 points

Now therefor in order to invite objections from the stakeholders, the Tentative selection list of the Two (02) Newly proposed Behak/Seasonal Centres, as mentioned below, is hereby published.

S.NO	Name of Behak	Name & Parentage	Residence	DOB	CAT	Qualification			B.Ed	Points						
						10+2	Grad	PG		10+2	Grad	PG	Experience	B,Ed	Total	Remarks
1	Kalsar	Mohd Arshid S/o Abdul	Chajla Poonch	02-04-1992	ST	44.4	46.48	63.8	63.8	0	22.2	3.19	0	0	47.6105	Considered on Dhok Documents
2	Teeli B	Shakeela Kossar D/O Bagga	Malhout Rajouri	12-01-2003	ST	54	0	0	0	0	27	0	0	0	27	Considered on Dhok Documents

Objections, if any, must reach this office within seven (07) days from the date of issuance of this notice. The tentative selection list is subject to the outcome of any writ petition(s) pending before any court of law, if any

No. ZEO/SPN/2026/ 6986-88
Dated: 22-10-2026

DIPK-7114-26
DT: 28/10/2026

Zonal Education Officer,
Shopian

CM Omar congratulates J&K Wushu, Taekwondo teams on winning NSG trophies





GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday congratulated the Jammu and Kashmir Wushu and Taekwondo teams for winning the Overall Team Trophy in both disciplines at the 70th National School Games hosted at the Government College of Physical Education, Ganderbal.

Jammu and Kashmir delivered an impressive performance, winning 22 medals across the two disciplines. In Taekwondo, held from October 22 to 26, the team secured 14 medals, including four gold, three silver and seven bronze. In Wushu, held from October 15 to 19, the team bagged eight medals, comprising one gold, two silver and five bronze.

The Chief Minister had inaugurated the 70th National School Games on October 15. The event brought together over 1,300 young athletes from 23 States and Union Territories, providing a platform for emerging sporting talent from across the country.

Congratulating the young champions, Omar Abdullah said their achievements reflected Jammu and Kashmir's growing sporting potential and the dedication and hard work of its young athletes. He reaffirmed the Government's commitment to strengthening sports infrastructure and promoting sporting excellence across Jammu and Kashmir.

The 70th National School Games were organised by the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, J&K, under the aegis of the School Games Federation of India (SGFI).

Labroo attends Final of 5th Edition of Inter-College Men's Volleyball Tourney

GMK SPORTS DESK



SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC), Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, Wednesday attended the final of the 5th Edition of the Inter-College Men's Volleyball Tournament 2026, held at the Multipurpose Hall of Government College of Education (GCoE), M.A. Road, Srinagar.

The tournament was organised by the Department of Physical Education, Government College of Education (IASE) Srinagar, under Cluster University Srinagar, providing a vibrant platform for young athletes from various City Colleges to showcase their sporting talent, volleyball skills, teamwork, discipline and sportsmanship.

Among others present on the occasion were Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Nodal Principal, Kashmir Division Colleges, Prof. (Dr.) Seema Naz, IAS Probationer, Aaksh Garg, College faculty members, students, participant athletes, sports coaches and other concerned.

The Deputy Commissioner who attended the final match as the Chief Guest and presented trophies to the winner, runner-up and second runner-up teams during felicitation ceremony in recognition of their performance in the tournament.

The final match was played between Islamia College of Science and Commerce and Sri Pratap College, with Islamia College of Science and Commerce emerging victorious after an engaging contest. Sri Pratap College secured the runner-up position, while Government College of Education finished third in the tournament.

While interacting with the participating athletes, the DC highlighted the importance of promoting sports and extracurricular activities in educational institutions, emphasising their role in nurturing discipline, leadership, teamwork and a healthy competitive spirit among students. He underscored the importance of encouraging participation in sports alongside academic pursuits to ensure the holistic development of young people.

During his visit to the College, the Deputy Commissioner also inaugurated upgraded College Auditorium undertaken by the District Administration Srinagar using convergence of funds to improve the facility's infrastructure, functionality and overall utility.

He took stock of the improvements being carried out to strengthen the auditorium's capacity to host a wide range of academic, cultural and institutional activities. The upgradation is aimed at providing students and faculty members with an improved space for organising seminars, conferences, workshops, cultural programmes, academic presentations and other important college events.

Addressing the gathering, the DC said that strengthening educational infrastructure and integrating modern technology into academic spaces were important for enhancing the overall teaching-learning environment. He noted that the upgraded auditorium, equipped with contemporary audio-visual facilities, would enable the College to organise academic programmes, seminars, conferences, presentations, cultural activities and other institutional events more effectively.

He added that the newly installed video wall would facilitate digital presentations, interactive teaching-learning activities and the dissemination of educational content, while providing students and faculty members with improved access to modern visual communication tools.

The DC reiterated that the District Administration Srinagar remains committed to supporting educational institutions through infrastructure improvements and the provision of necessary facilities. He assured the College of continued support for further strengthening its infrastructure and promoting sports, cultural activities and other extracurricular initiatives.

Earlier, Principal, Kashmir Division Colleges, Prof. (Dr.) Seema Naz, in his welcome address expressed her gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, for the support extended by the District Administration to Government College of Education. She particularly acknowledged the provision of the State-of-the-Art Video Wall, Air Conditioners and other essential equipment, stating that these facilities would help improve the institution's infrastructure and enhance its capacity to organise academic and extracurricular programmes.

DC G'bal flags off Exposure-cum-Sports Tour for Children with Special Needs



GMK SPORTS DESK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shreya Singhal, Wednesday flagged off a one-day exposure-cum-sports tour for 40 Children with Special Needs (CWSN) under the Inclusive Education component of Samagra Shiksha from the lawns of the Mini Secretariat Complex, Ganderbal.

The tour, accompanied by escort teachers and the dedicated Inclusive Education Team of District Ganderbal, would take the students to the archaeological site of Burzahama and Bagh-e-Gul Dawood in Srinagar, providing them with opportunities for experiential learning, recreational activities and social interaction beyond the classroom.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC highlighted the importance of inclusive education and educational exposure in the holistic development of children with special needs. She expressed hope that the visit would help the students build confidence, strengthen peer relationships, develop social skills and create lasting memories through shared experiences.

3rd ODI: Smriti hails bowlers after India sweep Zimbabwe 3-0 in series

IANS



VADODARA: India captain Smriti Mandhana praised her bowlers for restricting Zimbabwe to under 140 in the third and final ODI, saying the team has made a good start to its ODI Championship campaign ahead of the next Women's ODI World Cup after completing a 3-0 series sweep.

"Yeah, 3 ODI wins, good way to start the ODI championship for the next World Cup. Really happy with the way the bowlers stood up, keeping them under 140, and Vaishnavi, I mean, got a fifer today. Really happy that she got a fifer on the last ball," Mandhana said after India won the third ODI by eight wickets.

India bowled Zimbabwe out for 131 in 39.5 overs, with Vaishnavi Sharma claiming five wickets for 39 runs. Sayali Satghare and Kranti Gaud picked up two wickets each before India chased down the target in just 17 overs to complete a clean sweep of the ODI series, having also swept the preceding T20I series.

Mandhana acknowledged Zimbabwe's efforts in the field but said India had sought to dominate the contest throughout the tour.

"Zimbabwe fielded really well and played some good cricket, but we just wanted to go out there and dominate. Apart from the first T20I, we did that. That is something which is a good thing," she said.

The India captain was also pleased with the pacers' execution of their plans, particularly their focus on bowling at the stumps. "Our pacers tried to hit the stumps; we wanted them to do that, and it was pleasing to see," Mandhana added.

India also used the final ODI to give more batting time to players who had not featured regularly in the format. Yastika Bhatia, who had not played an ODI for a long time, was promoted to open, while Harleen Deol also got an opportunity in the reshuffled order.

"Yastika has not played in the ODIs for a long time. We really wanted to have her bat; if we had batted first, we would have kept the same line-up. With 130, we thought she should be opening, and the same for Harleen. Really happy that they got some game time," Mandhana said.

Chasing 132, Shafali Verma smashed an unbeaten 51 off 27 balls, reaching her half-century in 26 deliveries, while Pratika Rawal remained not out on 59. Harleen scored 19 before India completed the chase at 135/2 in 17 overs.

All-round Musheer Khan powers Mumbai's charge against Haryana in Ranji Trophy tie

AGENCIES



MUMBAI: Musheer Khan recorded a rare feat of making a century and taking a five-for as his all-round show gave Mumbai a massive 160-run lead in the first innings of their Elite Group D Ranji Trophy clash against Haryana here on Tuesday.

The 21-year-old took 6/85 while claiming each of the first five wickets that fell in Haryana's innings, with No. 3 Nishant Sindhu waging a lone battle with a fine 105 not out for the visitors.

Musheer's exploits with the ball helped Mumbai enforce a follow-on in their bid for a third consecutive victory with a bonus point, as Haryana, who made 270 in reply to the host's 430, slipped to 73/2 at stumps on Day Three here at the BKC Ground.

Haryana trail by another 87 runs in the second innings with eight wickets intact heading into the final day, braced for a pitch that is breaking down but has slowed down immensely.

"The wicket has slowed down tremendously. Our spinners are trying to hit those spots where the ball is bouncing more, turn is available," Musheer told reporters after stumps on Wednesday.

Haryana's troubles compounded when opener Himanshu Rana copped a blow to his helmet off Sylvester D'Souza and retired hurt, some time after skipper Ankit Kumar was dismissed by Tanush Kotian.

Sindhu, who was batting on 22 not out, too had a nervous moment when an attempted pull off D'Souza lobbed up in the air and dropped short of the fielder on the leg side.

Yashvardhan Dalal was on 13 not out.

D'Souza later grabbed a spectacular catch at backward square leg to get rid of Dheeru Singh off Musheer.

The 22-year-old Sindhu faced 251 balls for his 105 not out, hitting eight fours and a six while spending 333 minutes at the crease. He already has clocked 87 minutes in the second innings.

Sindhu, who has been in the Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans camps in the IPL, said batting on turning wickets at home in Lahli helped them prepare for this game.

"For a long time it has been spinning more as compared to seam over there. So having played there, it felt easier to play here," Sindhu said after the close of play.

Cabinet approves Khelo India Sports Goods Manufacturing Scheme with outlay of over 1800 crore

AGENCIES



NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the Khelo India Sports Goods Manufacturing Scheme that aims to strengthen the country's position in the global sports goods sector with initiatives like the development of dedicated Sports Goods Manufacturing Zones.

The scheme has been approved with a total outlay of Rs 1,856.67 crore for the period 2026 to 2033-34.

Announced in the Union Budget 2026-27, the scheme seeks to strengthen India's sports goods manufacturing base through research and innovation, skill development, quality certification and market development.

"The scheme will support the development of a globally competitive sports goods industry and strengthen India's position in global supply chains," stated a PIB release.

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said the scheme will empower the youth of the country through new employment opportunities and drive investments.

"India Plays, India Manufactures! Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji, the Union Cabinet today approved the 'Khelo India Sports Goods Manufacturing Scheme' with an outlay of ₹1,856.67 crore. The resolution of Budget 2026-27 is now becoming a reality on the ground," Mandaviya said in a tweet.

"Now, not only Indian athletes, but sports equipment made in India will also elevate the pride of the tricolour across the world. This historic step will empower our Yuva Shakti through new employment opportunities, drive massive investments, and realize the ultimate vision of an Aatmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat."

The Scheme envisages the development of dedicated Sports Goods Manufacturing Zones (SGMZs) to promote cluster-based manufacturing and create integrated industrial ecosystems through the co-location of manufacturers, suppliers, testing facilities, design and prototyping centres, and ancillary enterprises.

"These Zones will be developed through convergence with existing industrial infrastructure under the BHAVYA Scheme and NICDC Industrial Parks, enabling efficient manufacturing, stronger industry linkages and enhanced competitiveness across the sports goods value chain," the PIB release stated.

A key focus of the scheme is to attract new investments and strengthen domestic manufacturing capacity in the sports goods sector.

Complementing this, the Turnover Linked Support component will incentivise higher production, capacity expansion and sustained manufacturing growth.

These interventions, backed by a combined outlay of Rs 1,130 crore, are expected to strengthen domestic manufacturing, reduce import dependence, enhance domestic value addition, catalyse significant private investment, generate employment opportunities across the value chain, and improve India's competitiveness in global markets.

Recognising the role of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the sports goods sector, the scheme envisages assistance for upgrading existing sports goods manufacturing clusters, including the development of common facilities and shared infrastructure.

