

Good Morning

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Youth J&K's Strength, Must Shun Drugs: LG Manoj Sinha

Says Story Of Jammu Kashmir Is No Longer Confined To Challenges Of Past

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday called upon youth to stay away from drugs and actively participate in sports and nation-building, saying their energy, confidence and positive thinking were crucial to building a peaceful, progressive and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.

"I have always emphasised that the true upliftment of any region occurs when its youth have faith in their eyes, opportunities in their hands, and a feeling of unity in their hearts. I am confident that events such as "Pedal Through Paradise" will inspire the youth of Jammu Kashmir to contribute significantly to the development of the nation through their talent, hard work, and determination," LG Sinha said while felicitating the winners of the "Pedal Through Paradise" cycling event and lauded the enthusiasm, determi-



nation and aspirations displayed by the participants. Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor said that the event reflected the optimism, self-

confidence and vibrant spirit of a new Jammu Kashmir, driven by the energy and talent of its youth. The Lieutenant Governor commended the Jammu Kashmir Police for extending their role beyond security and law enforcement through meaningful community outreach initiatives. He said that the programmes such as "Pedal Through Paradise" demonstrate a commitment to strengthening bonds of trust with citizens by combining discipline with inspiration and duty with social responsibility.

"Initiatives such as 'Pedal Through Paradise' are testimony to the fact that the Jammu Kashmir Police have combined security with compassion, discipline with inspiration, and duty with social commitment, so that bonds of the heart may be forged with the people of the Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the achievement of winners symbolises the changing face of Jammu Kashmir and highlighted the potential of youth to contribute to inclusive growth and national development. He observed **•P-06**

LG Felicitates UPSC, JKAS 2024 Successful Candidates

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Lieutenant Governor, Thursday Manoj Sinha addressed a felicitation ceremony organised for the successful candidates of UPSC Civil Services Examination 2025

and Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) Examination 2024. Congratulating the candidates on their remarkable achievement, the Lieutenant Governor also extended his best wishes to their parents, whose selfless efforts

helped them realise their aspirations.

Addressing the young officers, the Lieutenant Governor said that while they had cleared one of the most competitive examinations in the country, they must always remember **•P-06**

Sacrifices Of Martyrs Continue To Inspire J&K Police: DGP

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Asserting that sacrifices continue to inspire efforts of Jammu and Kashmir Police to maintain peace and security, Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhath on Thursday said force is committed to mentor younger generation and help society in addressing social evils.

Addressing the closing ceremony of 'Pedal Through Paradise 2026', organised by J&K Police at Police Golf Course, Dal Lake, the DGP Prabhath, paid rich tributes to 1621 police martyrs and announced 'Martyrs Memorial' football and hockey tournaments in their honour.

He said, "Youth is an asset and the future of the nation. Their aspirations and participation in productive activities are important for the overall progress of society and the country's economic development."

DGP Prabhath said, "Sports



provide young people with an opportunity to develop discipline, fitness and a sense of responsibility."

The DGP said that more and more youth engagement, more and more sporting activity are a prerequisite for a very healthy, heartening and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.

DGP Prabhath said cycling is not merely a symbol of a healthy lifestyle but it also helps in instilling discipline among participants. **•P-06**

J&K's New Media Policy To Cover Facebook, Instagram: Director Information

Says Draft Under Examination, Policy Seeks To Address Social Media's Growing Role

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir's proposed new media policy will cover social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, with the draft currently under examination and nearing finalisation, Director Information Mamta Yadav said on Thursday.

"If any policy is made, there is a process for it. We have sent a draft and are continuously responding to the queries that are coming in," Yadav said, expressing hope that the policy would be finalised soon.

She said the proposed policy would address areas not covered under the existing framework, particularly the growing role of social media in communication and public outreach.

"Social media has grown significantly, with platforms like Instagram and Facebook. We have included these aspects in the new policy," Yadav said.

The proposed policy comes amid a debate over the growing number of unregulated social media news platforms, online trolling and the circulation of misleading content in Jammu and Kashmir.

On September 30, Education



and Health Minister Sakina Itoo informed the Legislative Assembly that the government was working on a new media policy and that the Information Department had been given four months to formulate the guidelines.

The issue was raised by National Conference MLA Bashir Ahmad Shah Veri, who sought measures to address the alleged misuse of **•P-06**

MeT Predicts Light Rain, Thunderstorms Today

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Meteorological Centre Srinagar on Thursday said that Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness brief spells of light rain, thunderstorms, hailstorms and gusty winds at scattered places on Friday, with light snowfall possible over higher reaches.

According to the weather forecast, weather is likely to remain generally dry on October 31, while partly cloudy conditions are expected from November 1 to 3, with a brief spell of precipitation possible at a few places late on November 1 or in the evening.

From November 4 to 7, the weather is expected to remain generally dry, although isolated places may receive light rain or light snowfall over higher reaches late on November 5 or in the evening.

The advisory said no significant weather activity was expected across Jammu and Kashmir until November 7.



Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 22.7 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 4.3 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, according to the Meteorological Centre's daily weather report.

Gulmarg recorded the lowest minimum temperature among the main Kashmir Valley stations at minus 0.1 degrees Celsius, while Pahalgam recorded a minimum of 2.2 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund recorded a maximum temperature of 22.5 degrees Celsius **•P-06**

"You Have Earned Badge Of Honesty, Integrity" NC MLA's Praise For Minister Dropped In Cabinet Reshuffle

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Outgoing minister Satish Sharma has got support from an unexpected quarter — the ruling National Conference.

In a statement issued, NC MLA from Budhal Javid Iqbal Choudhary on Wednesday said positions and titles are temporary, but respect earned through honesty, integrity and courage is lasting.

"Dear Satish Sharma Ji, others may get titles and berths, but you have earned the badge of honesty and integrity. Continue contributing to society with the same sincerity and courage. Respect earned through honesty is far more valuable than any position," he said.

Choudhary said public life should be measured not by the positions one holds, but by the principles one stands for.

"A position may be taken away, but dignity, integrity and the respect of the people cannot be dictated by a chair," **•P-06**

India Ready To Share Its Operational Experience With Regional Partners: Rajnath Singh

'Op Sindoor' Demonstrated India's Proactive, Battle-Tested Approach To Counter-Terrorism

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Reaffirming New Delhi's readiness to share its operational experience with regional partners to strengthen collective security, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said 'Operation Sindoor' demonstrated India's proactive, battle-tested approach to counter-terrorism.

Addressing the 13th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM-Plus) in Cebu, Philippines, Singh, said India's counter-terrorism expertise had been shaped by decades of confronting complex cross-border security challenges.

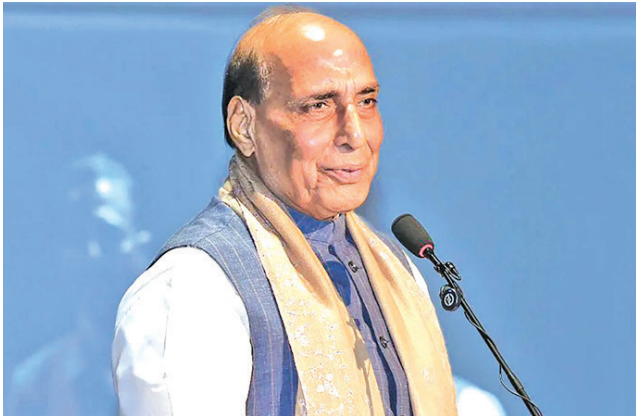
"Op Sindoor decisively demonstrated India's proactive, battle-tested doctrine," he said, adding that the operation dismantled terrorist infrastructure and established a firm red line against state-sponsored terrorism.

Singh said India is prepared to share its experience with ADMM-Plus partners through joint exercises, capacity-building programmes and intelligence sharing, stressing that terrorism knows no borders.

He said that India and Malaysia were co-chairing the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Counter-Terrorism for the 2024-2027 cycle.

Stressing India's commitment to ASEAN centrality and a secure, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific, Singh said regional peace and stability required mutual trust, cooperation and collective responsibility.

He also highlighted maritime security as a key pillar of India's engagement with ASEAN, noting that 2026 had been designated the ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation and that **•P-06**



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Ruhullah Firm On Nov 3 NC Exit, Accuses Leadership Of Betrayal

AGENCIES

BUDGAM: Striking a defiant note ahead of his scheduled resignation, estranged National Conference (NC) Lok Sabha MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi has launched a scathing attack on the party leadership, accusing it of a "collective betrayal" of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and abandoning the fight for the restoration of Article 370.

Confirming that he will resign both from the party and his Srinagar Lok Sabha seat on November 3, Mehdi said he remains firm in his decision and accused top party leaders, including NC president Farooq Abdullah, of prioritising "comfortable politics" over principles and electoral commitments.

Mehdi said nothing has changed since he announced his intention to quit the party and Parliament, emphasising that the chosen date holds deep personal and moral significance.

"November 3 is the death anniversary of my father, the late Aga Syed Mehdi, who was assassinated on this day. His legacy shapes my politics, efforts, and moral compass. Symbolically, that day is synonymous with directions in my life," Mehdi said, adding that the short delay also allowed him time to disburse his MPLADS funds for public developmental works.

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MP Khatana holds Public Darbar at Chaklipora Anantnag

Urges People to avail benefits of Government Schemes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Er. Gulam Ali Khatana, Thursday presided over a Public Darbar at Government Higher Secondary School, Chaklipora, Block Chittergul, Anantnag, to listen to public grievances and address issues concerning the people.

During the Darbar, local residents, public representatives and various delegations projected their demands and highlighted issues related to basic amenities, essential services and developmental requirements.

The issues raised included power supply, drinking water, healthcare facilities, tourism, education, road connectivity, agriculture and other public utility services.

Er. Khatana gave a patient hearing to the participants and took note of the grievances and demands put forth by them.

Addressing the gathering, the MP reiterated the



Government's commitment to the overall development of Jammu and Kashmir, with a special focus on the welfare of the poor, educated sections of society and tribal communities.

He urged officers to create awareness among people through Panchayats about various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, including those related to agricultural loans, Kisan Credit Card (KCC), employment generation, financial assistance and marriage assistance. He also encouraged eligible beneficiaries to avail benefits of these schemes.

He assured the people that their genuine grievances would be taken up with the concerned authorities for appropriate intervention.

He also directed officers of the concerned departments to take prompt cognisance of the issues raised during the Darbar and ensure their timely redressal through coordinated efforts.

Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Anantnag, Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, Chief Education Officer, Lead District Manager, officers from PDD, PHE, R&B, Horticulture, Agriculture, Tourism, Health, Rural Development, National Highways, Food, Forest and District Industries Centre, along with the Tehsildar and other concerned officers and representatives from various departments, were present during the Public Darbar.

Cultural Unit DIPR organises “Hansi Ke Rang, Sangeet Ke Sang” in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Cultural Unit Kashmir of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Jammu and Kashmir, organised a day-long cultural programme, “Hansi Ke Rang, Sangeet Ke Sang,” at Pt. Bhajan Sopori Auditorium, Srinagar, Thursday.

The programme, dedicated to humour, music and cultural expression, featured a humorous mushaira and live musical performances by Kohinoor Band.

The programme was presided over by Director Information and Public Relations, Mamta Yadav, Joint Director Headquarters Zahoor Ahmad Raina, Joint Director Information Kashmir Syed Shahnawaz Bukhari, Deputy Director Information PR Javid Ahmad Rather, Deputy Director Information (Central) Kashmir Zubair Ahmed, Deputy Director PR Kashmir Mohammad Rafiq Zullah, Cultural Officer Abdul Raqib Bhat, besides other officers, noted artists, writers, poets and scholars, attended the event.

The humorous mushaira witnessed enthusiastic participation from prominent poets, including Ayub Sabir, Nazir Josh, Yousuf Gulshan, Amin Ashraf, Taseer Afzal, Muzaffar



Hussain Dilbar, Jahangir Ahmad Shah, Dr. Shaida Hussain, Shabir Hakak and Ghulam Nabi Aajiz, who entertained the audience with their witty, satirical and humorous poetry. Their performances created an atmosphere of laughter and literary engagement.

Kohinoor Band added musical vibrancy to the event with an engaging live performance, blending entertainment with the spirit of Kashmir's rich artistic and cultural traditions.

Addressing the gathering, Director Information Mamta Yadav appreciated the initiative and highlighted the importance of creating vibrant platforms for artists, poets, musicians and performers to showcase their talent. She observed that cultural programmes play a sig-

nificant role in preserving the region's rich artistic and literary heritage while connecting people through shared traditions, creativity and artistic expression.

Emphasizing the importance of sustaining cultural activities throughout the year, Yadav assured that DIPR would endeavour to organise such programmes every month. She said regular cultural engagements would provide artists with greater opportunities to perform before wider audiences, encourage emerging talent and strengthen the cultural landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. She also appreciated the participating poets and musicians for bringing together humour, literature and music under one roof, making the programme an engaging experience for the audience.

Dir Horticulture chairs review meeting of Horticulture Developmental schemes



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director Horticulture Kashmir Vikas Anand, Thursday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of various horticulture developmental schemes being implemented by the department.

During the meeting, the Director reviewed the physical and financial progress of ongoing developmental schemes viz. CSS, CAPEX, HADP, HDP and other developmental activities aimed at strengthening the horticulture sector in Kashmir valley.

The Director emphasized the need for timely implementation of government

schemes, effective utilization of allocated funds, and ensuring that the benefits of various departmental initiatives reach the farming community. The officers were directed to maintain close coordination with field functionaries and regularly monitor the progress of works at the ground level.

Stress was also laid on providing technical guidance to farmers, promoting modern horticultural practices, and encouraging the adoption of scientific methods to improve productivity, quality, and farmers' income.

The Director called upon all officers to work with dedication and accountability

to achieve the prescribed targets within the stipulated timelines. The officers were further directed to address the concerns of farmers promptly and ensure effective delivery of departmental services.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the department's commitment to the sustainable development of the horticulture sector and the overall welfare of the farming community.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Director Horticulture (C), Chief Horticulture Officers, Assistant Director Horticulture, Technical Officer and other concerned officers/officials of the department.

MD NHM reviews Winter Preparedness across Health Institutions

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM) J&K, Athar Aamir Shafi-ul-Khan, Thursday chaired a review meeting at the State Health Society Office in the Old Secretariat, Srinagar, to assess and strengthen winter preparedness across healthcare institutions in the region.

The meeting was attended both in person and via virtual mode by the Director Health Services Jammu/Kashmir, Chief Medical Officers, NHM Programme Managers, and other senior health officials.

Conducting an exhaustive district-wise review,



the Mission Director placed core emphasis on maintaining uninterrupted medical services during the challenging winter months. He evaluated the availability of essential medicines, proper heating arrangements, and reliable power backup systems across all healthcare facilities to ensure patient comfort and operational continuity. Reviewing grass-

roots medical staffing, he stressed the adequate deployment of manpower and field-level workers, particularly ASHA workers and ANMs, while also directing enhanced preparations and resource allocation for the effective management of seasonal respiratory diseases.

A major focus of the deliberations was maternal and child healthcare safety

in remote and snow-bound terrain. The Mission Director directed officials to maintain a precise line listing of all pregnant women, proactively identify high-risk pregnancies or any patients requiring specialized medical intervention, and ensure their proper tracking and mobilization for respectful institutional delivery. Emphasizing a zero-tolerance approach

toward avoidable tragedies, he strongly reiterated that the administration must ensure zero maternal and infant deaths alongside absolute prevention of home deliveries.

To tackle logistical challenges during heavy snowfalls, the meeting finalized a robust deployment plan for 108 Ambulance services, with a specific priority on stationing 4x4 ambulances in difficult and snowbound areas.

Officials were instructed to maintain close liaison with the Mechanical Engineering Department, Police, and other stakeholder agencies for immediate snow clearance and unhindered emergency transit routes.

DC G'bal reviews Education Sector, stresses strengthening of Infrastructure



GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shreya Singhal, chaired a review meeting of the Education Sector at the VC Room, Mini Secretariat Complex, Ganderbal, to assess the status of educational infrastructure, functioning of Government schools and implementation of key educational schemes and initiatives across the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy CEO delivered a detailed presentation highlighting the status of educational infrastructure and the overall functioning of Government schools across the district. The review focused on the availability of essential facilities, including drinking water, toilet facilities and electric-

ity, with particular emphasis on the availability and functional status of girls' toilets. Student enrolment in Government schools was also reviewed.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the progress of digital, innovation-driven and skill-based educational initiatives, including the establishment of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs), AGHAZ and STEM Labs, aimed at promoting innovation, scientific temperament and experiential learning among students.

A comprehensive review was further undertaken of key educational schemes and programmes, including the PM POSHAN Scheme (Mid-Day Meal), ULLAS, Inclusive Education and PM SHRI Schools, to assess their implementation and progress across the district.

Pulwama strengthens access to Revenue services across Patwar Khanas



GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: In pursuance of the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Patwaris across the district continued to remain accessible to people in their respective Patwar Khanas as part of the routine functioning of the Revenue Administration.

The Patwaris interacted with residents, listened to their concerns and assisted them in matters relating to land records, revenue documentation, verification and other issues pertaining to the Revenue Department. The arrangement was aimed at ensuring that people could get their genuine issues

addressed at the local level and avoid unnecessary visits to government offices.

The routine process covered different areas and Patwar Khanas of the district, including Ghalandhar, Babhara, Mitrigam, Arihal, Gangoo and Rajpora among others, where Patwaris engaged with residents and dealt with matters brought to their notice.

The Deputy Commissioner had directed all Patwaris to maintain regular contact with the people of their respective jurisdictions, understand their issues and ensure that genuine grievances were addressed promptly in coordination with the concerned authorities.

Special Secy Agriculture Production reviews implementation of PDMC Scheme

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Special Secretary, Agriculture production department, Dr Ravi Shankar Sharma held a meeting at Directorate of Agriculture Lalmandi here for empanelment of companies under the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) component of centrally sponsored scheme Pradhan Mntri Rashtriya Krishi vikas yojna (PM-RKVIY).

The meeting was addressed by Director Agriculture Kashmir Sartaj Ahmad Shah, Director Horticulture Kashmir Vikas Anand, Director Planning , Agriculture Production department Majeed Ahmad

Karnai, Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta and the representatives of the empanelled companies.

The Special secretary underscored the importance of the PDMC scheme for precision water management to enhance crop productivity and increase farmers' incomes. The scheme also promotes fertigation to improve nutrient application efficiency and prioritizes water-scarce and groundwater-stressed regions. He also emphasised that the department is committed to mitigate the hardships faced by the farmers in rainfed areas and is taking every effort to promote climate resilient sustainable Agriculture.

DM Anantnag declares Bar Association Elections Null and Void Ab Initio

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: District Magistrate (DM) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, has declared the elections of the District Bar Association Anantnag, reportedly held on October 27, 2026, as null and void ab initio and non est in the eyes of law, citing a blatant violation of prohibitory orders issued by the District Magistrate.

As per the orders issued by the District Magistrate, the election process of the District Bar Association Anantnag had been prohibited vide Order No. 01-DCA of 2025, dated January 2, 2025, pending fulfilment of mandatory requirements and submission of requisite documents by the organisation.

The conditions stipulated in the order included submission of the registration certificate, constitution and memorandum, bye-laws governing the functioning of the organ-

isation, a list of current executive members and members enrolled during the preceding ten years along with their complete details, and a detailed statement of accounts. The order also required verification of the submitted documents and obtaining the necessary permission from the office of the District Magistrate before proceeding with the election process.

However, owing to the non-fulfilment of the prescribed requirements, the election process was again prohibited vide Order No. 62-DCA of 2026, dated September 28, 2026. The said order remains in force.

The District Magistrate observed that the elections of the District Bar Association Anantnag, reportedly held on October 27, 2026, as circulated on certain social media platforms, were conducted in violation of the subsisting prohibitory order, without fulfilment of the mandatory prereq-

uisites and without prior intimation to or permission from the office of the District Magistrate.

The conduct of the elections, in disregard of the subsisting order and without compliance with the prescribed requirements, has been viewed as a violation of the applicable legal and regulatory provisions, including those referred to under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, and the Indian Trusts Act, 1882.

Accordingly, the District Magistrate Anantnag has declared the elections of the District Bar Association Anantnag, reportedly held on October 27, 2026, as null and void ab initio and non est in the eyes of law.

The action underscores the importance of strict compliance with lawful administrative orders and the fulfilment of prescribed statutory and procedural requirements by organisations before undertaking such activities.

PCO Urban stresses accurate Population Enumeration across urban jurisdiction

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Principal Census Officer (Urban), Srinagar (Commissioner SMC), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Thursday inaugurated a two-day training programme for Phase II of Census 2027 at the Central Office, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Karan Nagar, emphasising the need for accurate, systematic and comprehensive Population Enumeration across Srinagar's urban jurisdiction.

During the inaugural session, Dr. Basharat stressed that all census functionaries must discharge their assigned responsibilities with utmost diligence, precision and accountability to ensure the collection of reliable and error-free population data. He underscored the importance of complete coverage of assigned enumeration areas, accurate recording of individual-level particulars and strict adherence to the prescribed census methodology and guidelines.

The Principal Census



Officer emphasised the need for effective coordination among Charge Officers, Census Resource Personnel, Census Clerks, Technical Assistants and other functionaries to ensure uniform implementation of prescribed procedures. He highlighted the importance of systematic supervision, regular monitoring of progress, timely reporting and prompt resolution of operational challenges during the enumeration process.

Dr. Basharat further stressed that particular attention must be given to preventing omissions, duplication and discrepancies in data collection. He underscored the importance of maintain-

ing data quality, following prescribed technical procedures and ensuring the confidentiality and secure handling of census information.

The training programme was attended by the City Census Officer (Urban), Charge Officers, Nodal Officers of SMC, Census Resource Personnel, Census Clerks and Technical Assistants.

Experts from the Census Department, including Deputy Director, Assistant Director and District Coordinator, imparted detailed training on census methodology, operational procedures, technical requirements and the responsibilities of various census functionaries.

DDC B'pora reviews progress under UT Capex, Tribal Sub Plan

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, Thursday chaired a review meeting at the Mini Secretariat to assess the physical and financial progress of various developmental schemes and sectoral plans across the district.

The meeting reviewed progress under the UT Capex Tribal Sub Plan, Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), District Mineral



Fund (DMF) and Revenue Capex. During the meeting, the DDC undertook a scheme-wise review of projects being implemented by various line departments and executing agencies. She was apprised of the status of completed and ongoing works, as well as projects yet to commence under the Tribal Sub Plan and DA-JGUA.

Emphasising the need to prioritise tribal welfare and development in marginalised areas, the DDC directed the concerned departments to expedite implementation of projects aimed at improving access to essential amenities and promoting inclusive socioeconomic development.

LG reviews preparations for observance of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to review preparations for the observance of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day) across the Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir.

The annual event commemorates the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, celebrating his monumental contribution to the unification of India.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary, Shri Atal Dulloo; DGP Shri Nalin Prabhat; Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department, Shri Chandraker Bharti; Special DG Coordination PHQ, Shri S.J.M.Gillani; ADG CID, Shri M. K. Sinha; ADGP Armed, Shri Nitish Kumar; Director, Fire & Emergency Services, Shri Alok Kumar; IGPs, Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commis-



sioners, SSPs and senior officials, in person and through virtual mode.

The Lieutenant Governor instructed senior officials to ensure seamless, peaceful, and streamlined arrangements for the 'Run for Unity' and the 'Rashtriya Ekta Diwas Pledge', embodying the core spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.

Highlighting the importance of inclusive participation, the Lieu-

tenant Governor urged school children, youth, security personnel, and citizens from every segment of society to actively engage in fostering national pride.

He further directed that unity runs and ceremonial parades should be organized across district headquarters and police stations, alongside national unity programmes in prisons across Jammu Kashmir.

CS DMRRR, Div Com assesses Readiness of Flats at Transit Camp Zewan

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Commissioner Secretary Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRRR), M. Raju, and Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Thursday visited Transit Camp Zewan to takr first hand appraisal of the readiness of accommodation flats for migrant employees ahead of their inauguration and allotment.

During the visit, the officers reviewed arrangements for the inauguration ceremony, including preparations for the stage and inauguration stone, the handover of keys to beneficiaries, and the installation of the Public Address System (PAS).

They also inspected essential civil amenities,



including electricity and water supply, functioning of lifts, sanitation, lighting, and security arrangements.

On the occasion, the officers directed all concerned departments to ensure comprehensive arrangements and complete all necessary preparations for the smooth conduct of the inauguration ceremony.

The officers were accompanied by IGP Kashmir Sujit Kumar, Deputy Com-

missioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo, SSP Srinagar Dr. G.V. Sundeeep Chakravarty, Director Information, Commissioner Relief and Rehabilitation (Migrants), and officers from the Roads and Buildings (R&B), Public Health Engineering (PHE), Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), Mechanical Engineering Department (MED), and Hospitality and Protocol departments.

‘Hunar Nama’ to Showcase Kashmir’s Rich Craft Heritage on DD Kashir

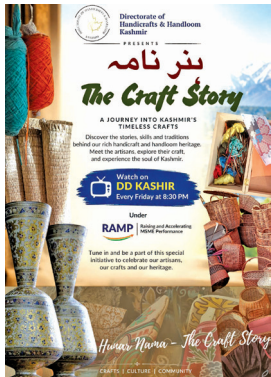
Craft-focused programme under RAMP to be telecast every Friday from 8:30 PM

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir has launched “Hunar Nama – The Craft Story”, a dedicated television programme aimed at showcasing Kashmir’s rich handicraft and handloom heritage and bringing the stories of its artisans, crafts and traditions to a wider audience.

Being undertaken under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Scheme, the programme will be telecast on DD Kashir every Friday from 8:30 PM to 9:00 PM, offering viewers an engaging insight into the craftsmanship, skills and traditions that have shaped Kashmir’s distinctive craft legacy.

The programme seeks to



highlight the exceptional craftsmanship of local artisans and the cultural, historical and economic significance of Kashmir’s traditional crafts. It will also provide a platform to showcase the dedication and creativity of artisans who have carried these unique traditions forward from one generation to another.

Through “Hunar Nama – The Craft Story”, the Directorate aims to strengthen public outreach, enhance the visibility of tradition-

al crafts and encourage greater appreciation of Kashmir’s handicraft and handloom products. The initiative will also contribute towards promoting traditional craft-based enterprises and improving their visibility within the broader MSME ecosystem.

The initiative is aligned with the objectives of the RAMP Scheme, which focuses on strengthening MSMEs, enhancing their competitiveness, improving market and institutional outreach, and supporting sustainable growth of enterprises across the country.

The Directorate has invited the general public, craft enthusiasts, tourists, researchers and all those interested in Kashmir’s rich cultural heritage to watch “Hunar Nama – The Craft Story” on DD Kashir every Friday at 8:30 PM and discover the artistry, heritage and human stories behind Kashmir’s world-renowned crafts.

KMC to Hold First-Ever Artist Convention ‘AAWAAZ 2026’ in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Music Club Srinagar has announced that it will organise AAWAAZ 2026: The Collective Voice of Artists, the first-ever Artist Convention, in Srinagar in the second week of November 2026.

According to the announcement, the con-



vention will bring together the artistic fraternity, civil society members and

people from all walks of life to collectively address artists’ rights, dignity and recognition, as well as the future of arts and culture in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Club said participation in the convention will be strictly by invitation only. Further details about the event will be announced shortly.

Sagar Assumes Office; Assures Time-Bound Redressal of Grievances

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Revenue, Power Development Department (PDD), Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Disaster Management, Monitoring, Relief and Rehabilitation (DMMR), and Elections, Thursday assumed office.

Soon after assuming charge, the Minister interacted with several deputations representing different sections of society, who called on him to highlight a range of public issues, developmental concerns and administrative grievances. The deputations apprised him of problems requiring the intervention of the concerned departments and sought appropriate measures for their early resolution.

The Minister gave a



patient hearing to the deputations and took note of the issues raised by them. He assured the representatives that the government is committed to addressing the genuine grievances of the people and ensuring that public concerns receive due attention from the concerned authorities.

Emphasising the importance of accessible and responsive governance, Ali Mohammad Sagar said that regular interaction with the public is essential

for understanding ground-level challenges and identifying practical solutions. He reiterated that the government remains focused on strengthening public service delivery, improving administrative efficiency and ensuring that people do not face unnecessary difficulties in accessing essential services.

The Minister stressed the need for close coordination among departments to facilitate the timely resolution of public issues. He

observed that effective governance requires a proactive approach, accountability at every level and sustained engagement with citizens to ensure that their concerns are addressed in a fair and transparent manner.

The Minister underscored the importance of ensuring that the concerned departments function efficiently and remain responsive to the needs and expectations of the public. He said that matters brought before him by the deputations would be taken up with the relevant authorities for examination and appropriate action, wherever required.

Ali Mohammad Sagar reiterated the government’s commitment to public welfare and assured the deputations that genuine

issues would receive due consideration. He emphasised that constructive engagement between the government and the people would remain an important mechanism for identifying challenges, resolving grievances and strengthening public confidence in the administration.

The Minister also reaffirmed his commitment to discharging his responsibilities with dedication and sincerity, with a focus on public welfare, effective governance and the timely redressal of people’s problems.

The interaction reflected the government’s continued emphasis on maintaining direct communication with citizens and ensuring that public grievances are addressed through appropriate administrative mechanisms.

MD NHM conducts on-site review at Children Hospital Bemina

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: In a continued effort to strengthen specialized pediatric and neonatal healthcare services across the Union Territory, Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM), J&K, Athar Aamir UI Shaifi, Thursday conducted on-site monitoring and review visit today at the 500-bedded Government Children Hospital, Bemina.

The visit covered key operational units within the premier facility, including the District Early Intervention Centre (DEIC), Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), High Dependency Unit (HDU), Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre (NRC), Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), laboratories, Paediatric Surgery Ward, Operation Theatre, and the Lactating Ward.

Accompanied by the Principal of Government

Medical College (GMC) Srinagar Dr. Iffat Hassan; Administrator Associated Hospitals GMC Srinagar, Medical Superintendent of Govt. Children Hospital Bemina, Head of Departments, Divisional Nodal Officer NHM Kashmir, and Programme Managers of NHM J&K, the Mission Director reviewed the execution and on-ground delivery of core National Health Mission programmes. These included Maternal and Child Health services, RBSK, RKSK, National Ambulance Services (102/108), blood services, NQAS, and free drug and diagnostic initiatives.

Discussions during the review further emphasized the ongoing commitment to upgrading level-III NICU capacity, streamlining high-end medication and consumable supplies, addressing critical staffing requirements, and enhancing patient care amenities such as the lactating ward.

Special traffic plan for Darbar Move on Oct 31, Nov 1: DIG Traffic

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Heavy traffic will not be allowed from Jammu towards Srinagar during the Darbar Move movement on October 31 and November 1, while fruit-laden trucks will be given priority, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Traffic Kashmir Haseeb Ur Rehman said on Thursday.

Speaking to reporters, Rehman said a special traffic plan had been put in place for the movement, with priority to be given to Darbar Move vehicles. “We have kept special provisions for fruit trucks. If the road is closed, we assemble them on the front line so that we can send them to Jammu on priority,” he said.

Rehman said traffic movement had so far remained smooth, with no major problems reported. He added that the department would try to give priority to fruit trucks if weather conditions deteriorated in the coming days.

He advised commuters to follow traffic advisories issued through print, electronic and social media and said road-status updates could also be obtained by calling the Traffic Control Unit at 103.

Regarding the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, he said traffic was moving smoothly under normal weather conditions, but rain or snowfall could affect movement.

People Calling Tehsildar, Head Clerk Absent; Baghat-e-Kanipora Residents Suffer

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The alleged absence of Tehsildar Umer and Head Clerk Muneer from the Baghat e Kanipora Tehsil office has left residents facing difficulties, with applicants complaining that their income certificates have remained pending for nearly 20 days.

The applicants said they had visited the office to

obtain the certificates but were unable to get their work done. The delay has caused serious concern among students who need the documents to submit their scholarship forms.

With October 30 being the last date for scholarship form submission, the applicants fear they may lose an important opportunity due to the delay in issuing the certificates.

The residents have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate notice of the reported absence of the officials, ensure their availability for public services and direct the issuance of pending income certificates before the deadline.

They said students should not be made to suffer because of delays in essential administrative work.

Dr. Bilal chairs comprehensive Meeting on Winter Preparedness

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Thursday chaired a comprehensive meeting of concerned officers at Dak Bungalow, Khanabal, Anantnag, to review winter preparedness and ensure timely arrangements across all departments.

Emphasizing the need for close interdepartmental coordination and a proactive approach, the DC stressed the timely implementation of mitigation measures to effectively address winter-related challenges and minimize inconvenience to the general public.

The meeting discussed the prioritization of roads for snow clearance, uninterrupted power supply, timely

replacement of damaged Distribution Transformers (DTs), and adequate decentralized buffer stocking of essential materials.

The Chair was informed that the total road length under P1 and PE categories is 1,005 km, while the total road length is 1,542 km.

The DC directed the concerned departments to ensure the pre-positioning of snow clearance machinery at strategic locations to facilitate timely snow clearance and maintain road connectivity during the winter season.

Comprehensive arrangements for uninterrupted water and power supply, healthcare facilities, relief and rescue operations, and snow clearance of roads were also reviewed.

The Chair was apprised

that adequate stocks of essential commodities and medical supplies had been arranged and that response teams were kept ready to address any eventuality arising from adverse weather conditions.

The DC directed the concerned departments to ensure the availability of safety gear for frontline staff, strict adherence to duty rosters, improved ambulance services, particularly for expectant mothers and terminally ill patients, and adequate heating arrangements in hospitals and health centres across the district.

He stressed the need to put in place robust mechanisms for interdepartmental coordination, prompt response to emergencies, and timely restoration of

essential services during the winter season.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) to remain fully prepared to respond to any emergency arising from heavy snowfall, severe weather conditions or other natural exigencies.

He stressed the importance of maintaining readiness for rescue and relief operations, particularly in vulnerable and far-flung areas.

Reviewing the preparedness of the Power Development Department, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned Superintending Engineer of KPDCI, to ensure regular and uninterrupted electricity supply during winter.

He emphasized the need

for advance maintenance of power infrastructure and prompt redressal of power-related complaints, particularly in areas vulnerable to weather-related disruptions.

The Superintending Engineer, Jal Shakti Department, was directed to ensure the availability of safe drinking water throughout the winter season and take advance measures to address any disruption in water supply caused by freezing temperatures or adverse weather conditions.

The Chief Medical Officer informed that there are more than 60 ambulances available and was directed by chair to ensure the adequate availability of essential and life-saving medicines in all health institutions across the district.

Connecting Kashmir: Building The Infrastructure For Growth

Besides the historical news of record-breaking bridges and gleaming terminals in Jammu and Kashmir there is one development that also needs appreciation. In August, foundation stones were laid for 110 village roads across the Udhampur, Kathua, Doda and Kishtwar region. This connectivity is going to improve the lives of 47,000 people. An interesting aspect of this road project is that recycled plastic waste is being used in this road construction.

This renewed emphasis on improving the connectivity

Third, strategy matters alongside development. Government statements openly link these projects to “border security, defence logistics and disaster response”. Better roads and tunnels in border regions serve both villagers and especially the armed forces. This is a reasonable aim, though it means some projects are driven by security needs as much as local ones.

showcases how the government approaches the problems pertaining to bringing connectivity to difficult terrains in the region. As they say, the railway line is only half a promise until the road to your house is paved.

For several generations, the Kashmir valley has remained cut-off to its mountains and largely with the mainland due to its harsh winters. Heavy snow often



closed down the highway for weeks if not months. Students waited, sick people waited, and truckloads of apples sat rotting by the roadside. Isolation was a common feature of their lives. However, this mindset has seen a remarkable change in the last few years.

All thanks to the Udhampur–Srinagar–Baramulla (roughly 272kms) rail link, which opened in June 2025. The link road is one of the hardest railway projects India has ever attempted. It runs through tunnels cut into unstable mountains and across deep gorges. Its remarkable centrepiece, the Chenab Bridge, is the highest railway arch bridge in the world (some 360 meters higher than the Eiffel tower).

But the real story is not the height of the bridge. It is that a person in Srinagar can now take a train and reach Jammu province in under five hours, and that trains are built to keep running through snow and earthquakes.

The roads are catching up too. Some years back, no one in Srinagar could imagine staying back in Sonmarg during the peak winters and think of reaching Zojila and Kargil via road. Since January 2025 travellers are now bypassing a stretch known for avalanches. It all happened because of the Sonamarg tunnel. It has already begun to turn Sonamarg from a summer stop into a year-round destination. The much bigger Zojila tunnel, which will connect Kashmir to Ladakh through the winter, reached its main breakthrough in June, this year.

It is not finished yet, but the hardest digging is behind it. In July, key sections of the new expressway from Delhi towards Katra opened, cutting a gruelling journey for pilgrims and traders to roughly half its old time.

In the air, a large expansion of Srinagar’s airport has been approved. It will add a new terminal designed with Kashmiri woodwork and local craftsmanship, and smaller airports at Udhampur and Kishtwar are planned so that people outside the big towns are not left behind. Behind all this concretization is assurance of timing and certainty or security.

A farmer who grows apples or saffron in south or north Kashmir no longer has to gamble on whether the road will be open on the day his crop is ready. A new cargo terminal in Samba, with more planned, helps goods travel by rail to bigger markets. A shawl weaver or a handicraft seller in Srinagar city can reach customers far beyond the valley. A tourism operator in Sonamarg can plan for winter instead of closing down. A student or a patient heading to Jammu no longer faces a day-long ordeal.

These are not small things especially for people who are living in the mountains. If we bring it down, it appears the government’s approach consists of four substantial ideas.

First, connectivity is the foundation of everything. The thinking appears to be that jobs, trade, tourism and investment will follow once the region is no longer cut off. Roads, rail and air are being treated as one network rather than separate projects.

Second, the goal is all-weather access. Almost every project, from the tunnels to the snow-clearing trains, is aimed at defeating the winter. Seasonal isolation is the enemy being fought.

Third, strategy matters alongside development.

Government statements openly link these projects to “border security, defence logistics and disaster response”. Better roads and tunnels in border regions serve both villagers and especially the armed forces. This is a reasonable aim, though it means some projects are driven by security needs as much as local ones.

Fourth, the benefits should reach beyond the big cities. The village road programme and the small regional airports suggest a recognition that a few showcase projects are not enough.

It would be too easy for some to end the celebration. A railway or tunnel is not the same as prosperity. Whether farmers actually earn more, whether young people find local jobs, and whether remote villages feel the change will depend on what happens after the ribbon-cutting. Roads need maintenance. Terminals need to be used. The Zojila tunnel still has to be finished. And infrastructure alone cannot answer every question people in the region have about their future.

Still, the direction is clear, and it deserves credit. A region once defined by what separated it from the rest of the country is being stitching back in, one tunnel, track and village road at a time.

The government’s posterity is that being connected is the starting point, and not the end goal. The real challenge comes what needs to be added afterwards; that a child growing up in a remotest area of Kishtwar village, or a fruit grower living in Shopian and a shopkeeper based in Srinagar no longer feel mountains acts as an impediment in their career or dreaming bigger in their lives. (PIB-Backgrounder)

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Karwa Chauth

The Festival Of Love, Devotion And Marital Harmony



OMKAR DATTATRAY

Karwa Chauth, also spelt Karva Chauth, is one of the most cherished Hindu festivals celebrated predominantly in northern and north-western India. The festival symbolises love, devotion, sacrifice, faith and the enduring bond between husband and wife. Observed mainly in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and neighbouring regions, it occupies a special place in the religious and cultural traditions of married Hindu women.

Traditionally, women observe a fast for the long life, good health, safety and prosperity of their husbands. Over time, the festival has evolved into a broader celebration of companionship, mutual affection and family togetherness. In 2026, Karwa Chauth falls on Thursday, October 29, according to the Hindu lunar calendar. The name Karwa Chauth is derived from two words: Karwa, meaning an earthen pot traditionally used for storing water and making ritual offerings, and Chauth, referring to the fourth day of the lunar fortnight. The festival falls on Kartik Krishna Chaturthi, the fourth day of the waning phase of the Moon in the Hindu month of Kartik, according to the North Indian calendar. The earthen pot is an important symbol of the occasion, representing auspiciousness, prosperity and the preservation of family wellbeing. The Moon, meanwhile, plays a central role in the concluding rituals of the fast.

The religious significance

of Karwa Chauth is closely associated with devotion, prayer and the welfare of one's spouse. Women worship Goddess Parvati, Lord Shiva, Lord Ganesha and other deities according to their family traditions. Goddess Parvati, also known as Gauri, is especially revered as a symbol of marital harmony, strength, devotion and auspiciousness. The fast is traditionally regarded as an expression of shraddha, or faith, sankalp, or determination, and tyag, or sacrifice. For many devotees, the observance is not merely a religious obligation but a deeply personal expression of affection and commitment. Its underlying message also encompasses patience, responsibility, trust and the importance of nurturing relationships.

Karwa Chauth begins early in the morning with Sargi, a traditional pre-dawn meal often prepared or given by the mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law. It generally consists of fruits, dry fruits, sweets, vermicelli and other nourishing foods. Sargi symbolises affection, blessings and family support before the day's fast begins. After this meal, women traditionally abstain from eating and drinking until the Moon is sighted in the evening. Many women prepare for the occasion by wearing traditional clothes, applying mehendi and adorning themselves with bangles, jewellery, sindoor and a bindi. Red, maroon, pink and other festive colours are popular because they are traditionally associated with auspiciousness and married life. The evening puja is among the most important parts of the festival.

Women arrange a decorated puja thali containing a diya, flowers, sweets, water and other customary offerings. They worship Goddess Gauri or Parvati and, in many households, Lord Shiva and Lord Ganesha. The Karwa Chauth Katha, a traditional religious narrative associated with the festival, is recited or heard during the



ceremony. In some communities, women gather in groups, exchange thalis and participate in customary prayers and songs. These collective observances strengthen social bonds and provide opportunities for older generations to pass traditional practices and stories to younger family members. Several legends are associated with Karwa Chauth. One of the best-known is the story of Queen Veervati, a devoted wife who observed the fast.

According to a popular version, her brothers, distressed by her hunger, created an illusion that the Moon had risen, persuading her to break the fast prematurely. She subsequently learnt that her husband had died and prayed with unwavering devotion until divine intervention restored his life. The story is traditionally understood as a lesson in faith, perseverance and devotion. Another celebrated Hindu narrative is the story of Savitri and Satyavan. According to the legend, Savitri followed Yama, the god of death, and through her wisdom, courage and determination secured the restoration of her husband's life. Although this story is not exclusive to Karwa Chauth, it reinforces the broader cultural ideals of love, loyalty and steadfast commitment.

The sighting of the Moon marks the culmination of the traditional fast. Women offer arghya, usually water, to the Moon and perform the customary worship according to their family traditions. In

many communities, a woman looks at the Moon through a sieve, or channi, and then looks at her husband through the same sieve. Her husband subsequently offers her water and something to eat, often a sweet, after which the fast is broken. This ritual is regarded as a symbolic expression of affection, gratitude, relief and togetherness. The Moon's appearance is therefore not simply the end of a period of fasting but an emotionally significant moment shared by couples and families.

Beyond its religious importance, Karwa Chauth has considerable social and cultural significance. The festival preserves traditional songs, stories, attire, rituals and culinary customs while bringing together mothers-in-law, daughters-in-law, sisters, friends and neighbours. It also creates an occasion for couples to express appreciation for one another. Although its traditional observance focuses on a wife's prayers for her husband's wellbeing, contemporary interpretations increasingly emphasise reciprocity and equality. Some husbands now observe the fast alongside their wives, while other couples celebrate the occasion through prayer, shared meals or expressions of affection without undertaking a strict fast. In modern India, Karwa Chauth reflects the interaction between cultural heritage and changing social values. For many women, fasting is a meaningful expression of faith and personal choice. Others

may prefer to participate in the prayers and celebrations without abstaining from food or water. Both approaches deserve respect.

Love and devotion should not be measured solely by physical hardship, nor should the festival become a source of pressure or guilt. A healthy marriage depends on mutual respect, honest communication, shared responsibilities and emotional support throughout the year. It is also important to consider health during the observance. A traditional nirjala fast involves abstaining from both food and water from sunrise until moonrise. Such prolonged fluid restriction may cause dehydration, headache, dizziness or weakness. Pregnant or breastfeeding women, people with diabetes, individuals taking medicines that require food or water, and those with certain medical conditions should seek professional medical advice before attempting a strict fast. Personal health and safety should always take precedence over social expectations.

In conclusion, Karwa Chauth is much more than a day of fasting. It represents a living tradition that connects religious faith with family relationships, cultural identity and the enduring values of love and companionship. Its rituals, legends, decorated earthen pots, evening prayers and moonrise ceremonies preserve a distinctive part of India's cultural heritage. However, the deepest significance of the festival lies in translating devotion into everyday conduct. A truly meaningful Karwa Chauth is one in which faith is voluntary, sacrifice is appreciated, women are respected and affection flows in both directions. While the traditional fast may last for a single day, the commitment to care for one another remains an essential responsibility throughout married life.

(The Author is a Columnist, Social and KP activist)

■ Middle-Class Life In Kashmir

Hovering Between Complacency And Challenges



DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

Kashmir's middle class lives a paradox: it can be happy with what it has and dissatisfied with what it hopes to become. A family may find joy in the warmth of shared meals, the beauty of the Chinar in autumn and the promise of a child's education, yet remain anxious about jobs, rising prices and an uncertain future. Beneath the Valley's postcard beauty lies a quieter struggle, not simply to make ends meet, but to reconcile dignity with desire, cultural rootedness with modern ambition, and everyday contentment with the persistent feeling that life should offer more. In Kashmir, happiness and dissatisfaction are not opposites; they are often two sides of the same middle-class existence.

Can a society be happy and dissatisfied at the same time? Can a family celebrate Eid, a wedding, a child's academic success or a snowfall in the valley while worrying about employment, rising prices, uncertain opportunities and the future of its children? In Kashmir, these contradictions are not merely philosophical puzzles; they are part of the everyday experience of many middle-class households. Behind the picturesque landscape of mountains, lakes and gardens lies a more complicated social reality, in which the desire for a peaceful, comfortable life coexists with the persistent feeling that life could—and should—offer something better.

The Kashmiri middle class occupies a distinctive position in the social structure of the Valley. It includes teachers, government employees, doctors, academics, small business owners, professionals, traders, journalists and a growing number of young people working in technology and other service sectors. Their aspirations are familiar across India: a secure income, a respectable home, good education for their children, reliable healthcare, social recognition and the freedom to plan the future without excessive anxiety. Yet the circumstances in which these aspirations develop give middle-class life in Kashmir its particular character.

Happiness here often comes from relationships, familiar surroundings, cultural continuity and the ability to preserve ordinary routines despite uncertainty. Dissatisfaction, on the other hand, arises from the distance between personal aspirations and the opportunities people believe are available to them. The two emotions can coexist because happiness is frequently rooted in what people already possess, while dissatisfaction grows out of what they hope to achieve.

One of the strongest sources of contentment in Kashmiri middle-class life is the importance attached to family and community. Family gatherings, hospitality, shared meals, religious observances and neighbourhood relationships provide emotional security. A cup of kahwa, the fragrance of a traditional meal, a conversation with neighbours or a gathering of relatives can offer a sense of belonging that no increase in income can easily replace. Kashmir's cultural traditions continue to shape everyday life. The warmth associated with hospitality, the aesthetic appeal of traditional crafts, the rhythms of seasonal change and the emotional significance of home create a social world in which material possessions are not the only measures of well-being. The beauty of a winter morning, the changing colours of the Chinar leaves and the first signs of spring can offer genuine pleasure even when economic circumstances remain difficult.

This does not mean that every Kashmiri household experiences the same degree of comfort or that cultural traditions automatically eliminate social tensions. Economic differences, generational conflicts and changing family structures are increasingly visible. Nevertheless, social relationships remain an important source of resilience for many families. The middle class also finds satisfaction in educational achievement. In a society where education is widely viewed as a means of advancement, a child entering a professional college, securing a competitive exam-



ination result or finding a promising job can become a source of collective pride. Such achievements represent more than individual success; they are often interpreted as evidence that a family's sacrifices have not been in vain. Yet this very commitment to education can produce disappointment when qualifications do not lead to employment commensurate with expectations.

Few issues expose the contradictions of middle-class life more clearly than the relationship between education and employment. Families invest heavily in schooling, coaching, university education and professional qualifications because they believe that education offers the surest route to a secure future. For many households, these investments involve years of saving, considerable financial sacrifice and the postponement of other needs. The difficulty begins when educated young people find that suitable employment is limited, recruitment processes are prolonged or available positions do not match their qualifications. Public-sector employment has traditionally represented security and social respect for many families, but government jobs cannot absorb every qualified applicant. Private-sector opportunities, entrepreneurship and newer professional careers can provide alternatives, although their availability and stability vary.

The resulting frustration is not simply a matter of unemployment. It is also a crisis of expectations. A young person who has spent years preparing for a professional career may feel that the social promise attached to education has not been fulfilled. Parents who have invested their savings in a child's future may experience anxiety when that child remains dependent on the family well into adulthood. For some, migration becomes an attractive option. Opportunities elsewhere in India or abroad may offer higher salaries, broader professional exposure and greater independence. Families can feel proud when their children succeed outside Kashmir, yet the same success may bring loneliness, separation and concern about the gradual weakening of family connections. Migration, therefore, is both an achievement and a reminder of what the local economy may be unable to provide. The satisfaction of seeing a child succeed can coexist with the sadness of seeing that child build a life far from home.

The middle class is particularly vulnerable to the pressures of rising living costs because its expectations are higher than those of households struggling only to meet immediate necessities, while its financial resources remain limited compared with those of the wealthy. Housing, education, healthcare, transport and household expenses compete for a substantial share of monthly income. A regular salary may provide stability, but stability is not the same as financial freedom. A family can maintain a respectable lifestyle and still worry about tuition fees, medical expenses, home loans, marriage costs or the need to support elderly parents. Unexpected expenditure can quickly disrupt a carefully planned budget. Social expectations can intensify this pressure. Weddings, family celebrations and the maintenance of social respectability sometimes involve spending beyond what a household can comfortably afford. The desire to provide children with the opportunities available to their

peers can also encourage expenditure on private coaching, electronic devices, fashionable clothing and other markers of social advancement.

Consumer culture has expanded the meaning of a successful life. A larger home, a modern car, overseas travel and access to premium services increasingly influence how families evaluate their progress. Social media makes these comparisons more immediate, exposing people to lifestyles that may be financially unattainable or carefully curated to conceal their own difficulties. The result is a paradox: a household may be materially better off than the previous generation and yet feel less satisfied because its expectations have expanded even faster than its income.

Kashmir's social and political history has made questions of stability and uncertainty especially significant. Experiences of disruption, restrictions, security concerns and interrupted economic activity have affected communities in different ways and at different times. The intensity of these experiences varies considerably across individuals, locations and occupations, but uncertainty can influence how families plan their lives. For a salaried employee, predictability may be more valuable than the possibility of a higher income. For a shopkeeper, the ability to conduct business without interruption is central to financial security. For a student, confidence in examinations, recruitment and future opportunities can be as important as academic ability. When people cannot confidently anticipate the conditions in which they will work, travel, study or invest, they may become cautious about long-term decisions. A business owner may delay expansion, a young professional may seek employment elsewhere, and a family may postpone a major purchase. Such caution can be rational, but it can also



restrict opportunity and reinforce dissatisfaction.

The psychological consequences should not be overlooked. Persistent uncertainty can generate fatigue, irritability and a feeling of limited control over one's future. These experiences should not be simplistically attributed to a single political or social cause, nor should the people of Kashmir be reduced to a narrative of suffering. Their lives also contain humour, ambition, creativity, achievement and ordinary pleasures. The important point is that a stable environment allows people to enjoy these aspects of life without having to devote so much energy to anticipating disruption. Peace, in this sense, is not merely the absence of visible conflict. It is also the presence of dependable institutions, predictable opportunities and confidence that tomorrow will permit the continua-

tion of today's plans.

The younger Kashmiri middle class is negotiating a significant cultural transition. It inherits strong family relationships and established social expectations while being exposed to global ideas about careers, personal freedom, gender equality, consumption and individual identity. Digital connectivity has widened horizons. Young people can explore educational programmes, professional networks, creative industries and entrepreneurial opportunities beyond their immediate surroundings. They can compare their circumstances with those of peers in Bengaluru, Delhi, Mumbai or international cities. This exposure can inspire ambition, but it can also intensify dissatisfaction when local opportunities appear inadequate. The generation gap is not always a conflict between tradition and modernity. Many young Kashmiris wish to preserve their language, cultural identity and family bonds while also seeking greater personal autonomy. They may respect their parents' sacrifices yet reject the idea that a secure government job is the only respectable career. They may value community life while demanding greater privacy and freedom in personal decisions.

Women, too, are reshaping the aspirations of middle-class families through higher education, professional employment and wider participation in public life. Their opportunities, however, can still be influenced by family responsibilities, mobility, workplace conditions and social expectations. Meaningful progress requires not only educational access but also safe transport, supportive institutions, employment opportunities and recognition of women's professional choices. The challenge for families is to distinguish genuine well-being from conformity to social expectations. A successful life need not follow a single formula. Young people should be able to pursue



different careers and personal goals without being judged solely by income, status or conventional definitions of respectability.

Improving middle-class satisfaction requires a broader and more resilient economic base. Public employment remains important, but sustainable prosperity also depends on the growth of private enterprise, tourism, agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts, information technology, education, healthcare and other services. Kashmir possesses considerable economic and cultural assets. Its horticultural products, traditional crafts, natural beauty and skilled workforce offer opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship. Tourism can support livelihoods across accommodation, transport, food services, guiding, cultural activities and local retail.

However, tourism-dependent livelihoods can be vulnerable to seasonal

fluctuations, external shocks and changes in visitor confidence.

Economic development must therefore go beyond counting tourist arrivals or announcing investment proposals. It should examine the quality, duration and security of the jobs created. Small enterprises need access to credit, digital infrastructure, markets, business guidance and dependable administrative support. Young entrepreneurs should be able to test ideas without facing unnecessary barriers, while workers require fair wages and reasonable working conditions. Education and training must also be linked more effectively with emerging economic needs. Vocational education, digital skills, language proficiency and practical business knowledge can expand career choices. Universities and professional institutions should strengthen their engagement with employers and local enterprises, without reducing education to a narrow exercise in producing workers for immediate market demand.

A more diversified economy would give families greater freedom to choose how they live. It could reduce excessive dependence on a limited number of employment pathways and allow young people to build careers without automatically viewing migration as their only route to advancement. Perhaps the deepest question is whether middle-class dissatisfaction is necessarily a sign of social failure. A degree of dissatisfaction can be productive. It can motivate students to learn, professionals to improve their skills and citizens to demand better public services. A society that is entirely satisfied with existing conditions may lose the impulse to reform. The problem begins when dissatisfaction becomes chronic because the gap between effort and reward appears impossible to bridge. When education fails to provide reasonable opportunities, when hard work does not offer economic security, or when families feel unable to plan beyond the immediate future, aspiration can turn into frustration.

Happiness should not be confused with passive acceptance. Nor should dissatisfaction be treated as ingratitude. People can appreciate their families, culture, natural surroundings and existing achievements while demanding better employment, more effective public institutions and greater certainty about the future. The middle class is often described through its income, consumption and occupational status. But its deeper character is defined by its relationship with hope. It wants to believe that the next generation will live better than the previous one. When that belief remains credible, even modest circumstances can produce contentment. When it weakens, material improvements may not be enough to restore confidence. Kashmir's middle class is neither uniformly happy nor uniformly dissatisfied. Its experiences differ according to income, occupation, gender, geography, family circumstances and personal history. Yet the coexistence of contentment and frustration provides a useful lens through which to understand its changing aspirations.

The real task is not to persuade people to be satisfied with less, nor to encourage them to measure happiness by ever-increasing consumption. It is to create conditions in which their efforts have a fair chance of succeeding. Good education must lead to meaningful possibilities; employment must offer dignity; public services must be dependable; women and men must have room to fulfil their potential; and families must be able to plan their futures with reasonable confidence. Kashmir's mountains may remain timeless, but the lives unfolding beneath them are changing rapidly. The middle class continues to find happiness in family, culture, community and the beauty of its surroundings. Its dissatisfaction is the voice of a population that wants those sources of happiness to coexist with opportunity, security and progress.

A society's well-being cannot be measured by smiles alone, just as its difficulties cannot be measured by complaints alone. The more revealing question is whether people feel that their lives are moving forward. For Kashmir's middle class, genuine happiness will become more sustainable when the hope of a better tomorrow is supported by real opportunities today.

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...Youth Empowerment Programme

DIPR Organises Debate Competition On AI At GHSS Chhanni Himmat

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Department of Information & Public Relations Thursday organised a debate competition on the use and threats of Artificial Intelligence here at Government Higher Secondary School Chhanni Himmat. The event was held under the government’s Youth Empowerment Programme.

Students of the school took part in the competition with

great enthusiasm, presenting their views on the topic with confidence and clarity. Aliya clinched the first position, while Versha and Vansh secured the second and third positions, respectively. The winners were felicitated on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Director Information (PR), Moksha Dogra said the Youth Empowerment Programme aims to equip young people with the knowledge

and skills to make them confident, skilled and self-reliant. She stressed that AI, like any other powerful technological tool, requires safe and careful use. She encouraged students to learn and adopt new technology positively for the benefit of society and their personal growth.

Deputy Chief Education Officer Pardeep Singh also attended the event. He appreciated the DIPR for organising the debate competition on such an important topic

to help students build confidence and sharpen their communication skills. He urged students to stay curious about emerging technologies like AI while using them responsibly and with a sense of purpose. He also encouraged them to participate actively in such initiatives for their all-round development.

A large number of students attended the programme and actively interacted with the guests, who answered their queries.

Cultural Unit DIPR Jammu promotes Nasha Mukh Bharat campaign at SIKS

GMK NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR: To promote under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan and motivate students to contribute towards building a drug-free society, the Cultural Unit Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Jammu, in collaboration with its District Centre Udhampur, on Thursday organised a cultural programme here at Shaheed Inspector Kamal Singh Government Model Higher Secondary School (Boys).

The programme featured theme-based songs presented by the artists of the Cultural Unit Jammu and students of the school. Through their

performances, the artists conveyed a strong message against drug abuse and highlighted the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle, making informed choices and staying away from drugs.

The musical presentations generated awareness among students and encouraged them to act as ambassadors of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan in their schools, families and communities.

The programme emphasised the importance of collective efforts by educational institutions, government departments in combating the menace of drug abuse.

The programme was conducted

under the direction of Joint Director Information Jammu Deepak Dubey and under the supervision of Cultural Officer Rajinder Kumar Diga.

Manoj Kumar Jad, Principal of the school, was the Chief Guest on the occasion. He appreciated and thanked the Department of Information and Public Relations for organising the awareness programme for the students. He also lauded the efforts of the Cultural Unit Jammu and the District Information Centre, Udhampur, for using cultural performances as an effective medium to spread the message of drug de-addiction. The School Principal also presented a captivating cultural item, adding more significance to the event.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Youth J&K's Strength,

that the Civic Action Programmes of the Jammu Kashmir Police have created new opportunities for youth engagement, skill development and sporting excellence, fostering confidence and constructive participation in society.

“The story of Jammu Kashmir is no longer confined to the challenges of the past but it is also the story of the efforts of the present and the possibilities of the future,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor noted that Jammu Kashmir is emerging as a land of possibilities where youth are excelling in sports, education, innovation and entrepreneurship. He emphasized that the true progress of any region is secured when its youth have access to opportunities, confidence in their abilities and a strong sense of unity.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that initiatives like ‘Pedal Through Paradise’ and ‘Jashn-e-Dal’ are more than sporting competitions and they inspire discipline, perseverance and resilience among participants. He called upon citizens to embrace positive ideas, knowledge and innovation for collective advancement.

He said the youth power is the nation’s greatest asset and encouraged young generation to actively participate in sports and community programmes. He also reiterated the importance of building a drug-free Jammu Kashmir, stressing that society must support and rehabilitate those affected by substance abuse with empathy and care.

The Lieutenant Governor urged all stakeholders to work together for peace, progress and a healthy, prosperous and secure Jammu Kashmir, and congratulated all participants for carrying forward the spirit of positive change through sports.

“It is the collective responsibility of all of us to provide the youth with platforms where their energy receives a positive direction, their talent receives encouragement, and their dreams receive the opportunity to be realised.

All sections of society must participate in the fight against drugs. We must take three resolves today- first, we will always move forward for peace, we will move forward for progress and we will move forward to build a healthy, prosperous, secure, and bright Jammu Kashmir,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Shri Nalin Prabhat, DGP; Shri S.J.M. Gillani, Special DG Coordination PHQ; Shri Abdul Ghani Mir, Commandant General Home Guards; Shri Nitish Kumar, ADGP Armed; Shri Ashok Yadav, ADG, BSF; Shri Alok Kumar, Director, Fire & Emergency Services; senior officers of Police and Civil Administration; members of Cycling Associations, prominent citizens and youth in large number attended the felicitation ceremony.

LG Felicitates

that positions and designations are not personal possessions but a trust reposed in them by the people. He emphasised that humility remains the foremost qualification of good governance and effective administration.

Speaking to the JKAS officers, the Lieutenant Governor said that their success reflected not only individual merit but also the aspirations, resilience and democratic spirit of Jammu Kashmir. He highlighted UT’s rich intellectual and cultural heritage and expressed confidence that the young officers would contribute significantly to truth, justice and public welfare.

The Lieutenant Governor also recalled Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel’s vision of the civil services, which he had termed as the “steel frame” of the nation. The Lieutenant Governor urged the successful candidates to preserve the dignity of public service and focus on meaningful work rather than public recognition. He observed that the true test of an administrator lies in responding sensitively to the concerns of the most vulnerable citizens.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted lessons of compassion, courage, service, leadership, evidence-based decision-making and commitment to humanity from the lives of

well-known personalities across the globe. He advised the future public servants to look beyond procedures and files and recognise the human realities and aspirations behind every decision.

“Behind every file lies a precious life. I urge you to also look at the data hidden behind files, and to recognise the people standing behind those figures and understand their needs.

Leadership is not a special privilege, but a great responsibility to serve others, guide them, support them, and empower them,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also outlined a three-stage framework for their future professional journey. He urged young officers to first understand realities on the ground by engaging directly with citizens and local institutions. In the second stage, he advised them to build transparent, technology-enabled systems that minimise delays and improve service delivery. In the third stage, he called upon them to safeguard institutions and uphold ethical standards while occupying leadership positions in the future.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the India of 2047 would be shaped by the values, work culture and decisions of today’s young public servants. He urged them to dedicate themselves to public welfare and ensure that their legacy is defined not by the prestige of office but by the positive impact they make in the lives of ordinary citizens.

“Responsibility of the future rests upon your shoulders. There are moments when the course of history changes with extraordinary speed. I believe we are passing through such an era today. I hope you will serve the people in such a way that it becomes visible in their lives, and that your life is recognised not by the prestige of your office, but by the outcomes of public welfare,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Ms. Rehana Batul, Director General, J&K Institute for Management, Public Administration and Rural Development (JKIMPARD); Dr GV Sundeeep Chakravathy, SSP Srinagar; Shri Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Shri Owais Ali Bhat, Director, Exceptional Academy, and office bearers of the Academy attended the felicitation ceremony.

Sacrifices Of Martyrs

He said excessive mobile phone use and screen addiction have become a concern across the world, affecting individual health and society, adding that participation in sports could help young people develop healthier habits.

The DGP said the police, in coordination with the administration, have been organising sporting events at the district level to encourage wider youth participation.

Referring to recent events, he said participation in the Kashmir Marathon had been encouraging, while ‘Jashn-e-Dal’ also witnessed participation from women and young people.

DGP Prabhat said the upcoming sporting calendar included Martyrs Memorial football and hockey tournaments to honour police personnel who laid down their lives in the line of duty and encourage young people to participate in sports.

The cycling event was organised by J&K Police to promote fitness, discipline and a healthy lifestyle among young people—(KNO)

J&K's New Media

social media and online attacks on public representatives.

During the discussion, several legislators called for a regulatory framework to tackle the issue, while others cautioned against restrictions that could undermine press freedom.

It was said politicians could not hold the media solely responsible for the misuse of social media, noting that political actors also contributed to the problem. She also called for greater accountability for content circulated on online platforms—(KNO)

MeT Predicts Light

and a minimum of 2.6 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara recorded a maximum of 24.6 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 2.3 degrees Celsius.

In Jammu division, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 31.5 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 14.1 degrees Celsius. Katra recorded a maximum of 29 degrees Celsius, while Kathua recorded 30.8 degrees Celsius.

The Meteorological Centre has advised farmers to continue harvesting and other agricultural operations—(KNO)

NC MLA's Praise For

the Budhal MLA added.

Pertinently, Javid was among the 11 MLAs who did not attend the oath ceremony of the new ministers on Tuesday—(KNO)

India Ready To Share

the second ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise had been conducted.

Singh said the Indian Navy had maintained an uninterrupted operational presence in volatile maritime corridors, including the Gulf of Aden, since 2008, escorting thousands of merchant vessels and thwarting dozens of hijackings.

He said India’s commitment to freedom of navigation and overflight, in accordance with international law, was aimed at protecting the shared interests of regional stakeholders and ensuring the safety of global trade routes.

The Defence Minister also proposed a dedicated defence ‘Youth Bridge’ to strengthen India-ASEAN people-to-people connections, promote digital innovation and support capacity-building initiatives. He said greater youth engagement would help build a peaceful, resilient and prosperous Indo-Pacific—(KNO)

Ruhullah Firm On Nov

vacating the Srinagar Lok Sabha seat amounts to abandoning his constituents, Mehdi said he felt “collectively betrayed” by the NC’s shift in political stance post the 2024 elections.

“I felt collectively betrayed, not isolated,” Mehdi said, adding “we committed one thing to the people, and after winning elections, we turned away from those commitments. The consistency and conviction with which I fought were maligned by my own party, casting aspersions on my struggle.”

He claimed that the friction reached a tipping point when the top party leadership explicitly asked him to step aside.

“When the head of the party asks you to resign and ease them of any accountability, that’s when you have to take a call. He precisely said if I think Article 370 can be restored, I should go and fight for that — which means they don’t want to continue with the struggle or be held accountable to their promises,” Mehdi alleged.

Commenting on the Jammu and Kashmir government’s two-year report card under Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the parliamentarian dismissed claims of political and governance achievements.

“They passed one resolution in 2024 asking for the restoration of special status and two years later passed another resolution diluting the earlier one. They dilute their own stand within two years,” Mehdi remarked. “Their chief, on record, said multiple times that his fight is only for the restoration of statehood, forgetting the constitutional protections 370 provided us.”

Mehdi added that his primary lesson from his two years as an MP with the

NC was “not to trust individuals in that party on face value”.

When asked about his critics warning of a potential “political blunder”, Mehdi asserted he is unconcerned with electoral calculations or materialistic benefits.

Looking ahead, the outgoing MP expressed a desire to return to the grassroots and build a broader, principled political force.

“I would want to go back to the people and search for like-minded individuals who believe in principles and can fight this fight with conviction,” Mehdi said.

On the possibility of aligning with other regional parties, he noted that his sole priority remains the restoration of constitutional rights and dignity for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and he would explore any route that enables that objective.



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'World Stroke Day' Stroke increasingly hits younger people, doctors warn

Says uncontrolled BP, smoking and inactivity raise stroke risk in youth

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Doctors on Thursday cautioned that stroke is increasingly affecting younger people, warning that changing lifestyles, uncontrolled hypertension, diabetes, smoking, obesity and physical inactivity are contributing to the growing burden of the condition.

On World Stroke Day, they said that many strokes can be prevented through timely identification and management of risk factors, regular health check-ups and healthier lifestyle choices, while emphasising that recognising warning signs and seeking immediate medical attention can significantly improve outcomes.

Doctors said stroke, which occurs when the blood supply to a part of the brain is interrupted or when a blood vessel in the brain ruptures, can lead to serious complications, including paralysis, speech difficulties, cognitive impairment and, in severe cases, death.

Although stroke has traditionally been associated with older people, an increasing number of younger individuals are also

at risk, making awareness about preventive measures and early symptoms particularly important.

Dr Syed Maqbool, a cardiologist at Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu, said changing lifestyle patterns have emerged as a major contributor to the increasing risk of stroke among younger people. "Stroke is increasingly affecting younger people, and our changing lifestyle is a major contributor. Uncontrolled hypertension, diabetes, smoking, obesity, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and chronic stress are silently increasing the risk," he said.

He said the growing burden of stroke was a matter of concern, particularly because many such incidents could be prevented through timely intervention and better management of underlying health conditions. "The real concern is not just the rising burden of stroke, but our failure to prevent many of these devastating events," he said.

Stating that stroke should not always be viewed as an unavoidable medical emergency, he said, "Most impor-

tantly, stroke is not always inevitable. Early detection and control of risk factors can prevent many strokes. Prevention saves lives. Early recognition saves the brain. Every minute matters."

The cardiologist advised people to pay particular attention to blood pressure, blood sugar levels, body weight and daily physical activity instead of waiting for symptoms to develop, and that adopting a balanced diet, avoiding tobacco, maintaining a healthy weight and engaging in regular exercise can help reduce cardiovascular risks and, in turn, lower the risk of stroke.

Dr Showkat Ahmad Shah, a cardiologist at GMC Anantnag, said protecting cardiovascular health was essential for reducing the risk of stroke, as several major risk factors affect both the heart and the brain. "On World Stroke Day, my message as a cardiologist is simple: protecting your heart also protects your brain. The growing burden of stroke is linked to uncontrolled blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, obesity and lack of physical activity, alongside an ageing popula-

tion," he said.

He said hypertension was particularly concerning because it often develops without noticeable symptoms, leaving many people unaware that they are at risk. "High blood pressure often causes no symptoms, and feeling well is no reason to stop treatment. Check your blood pressure, take prescribed medicines regularly and make time to walk every day," he said.

Highlighting the importance of recognising stroke symptoms, Dr Shah said sudden facial drooping, arm weakness, difficulty speaking, loss of vision or loss of balance may indicate a stroke and should never be ignored. "Seek emergency care immediately, even if the symptoms improve, and note when they started," he said, warning that delaying treatment in the hope that symptoms would subside could have serious consequences, including permanent disability.

"Do not wait for morning; a few minutes can make a lasting difference to someone's ability to speak, walk and live independently," he added.

JKBRSETI Anantnag takes self-employment training off-campus for rural women

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Responding to local demand, J&K Bank Rural Self Employment Training Institute (JKBRSETI) Anantnag has started a Fast Food Stall Udyami (Laghu Udyami) course for rural poor women of District Anantnag at Hakura Badasgam. This is the first time the institute has taken a training programme to a remote, off-campus location in the district.

The course is designed to help these women start their own ventures, such as food kitchens and fast food stalls, in their native villages. Amandeep, a Domain



Skill Trainer (DST) from Hoshiarpur, has been specially invited to train the participants.

At the start of the course, the Director of JKBRSETI Anantnag assured the trainees of

every possible support from J&K Bank and the district administration. The Director and staff of the institute are working to bring self-employment to rural unemployed women of the district through such

courses.

The local Handicrafts Department supported the programme by offering its office as the venue for the training.

To curb rising unemployment in the district, JKBRSETI Anantnag staff are regularly visiting families to encourage participation in such courses.

J&K Bank Rural Self Employment Training Institute (JKBRSETI) Anantnag offers free skill development and entrepreneurship training to rural unemployed youth and women, helping them set up their own self-employment ventures.

DC Pulwama reviews arrangements for Rashtriya Ekta Diwas

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Thursday chaired a meeting at the Circuit House, Pulwama to review arrangements for the celebration of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas on October 31, 2026, with particular emphasis on the successful conduct of the Run for Unity and other activities planned across the district.

During the meeting, the DC emphasized the importance of broad-based and inclusive participation in the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations, calling upon all departments to ensure the presence of their officers, officials, support staff, volunteers and other stakeholders. He stressed that the occasion should reflect the spirit of unity and collective participation, with representation from all sections of society.

The Run for Unity will be held from the DC Office Complex, Pulwama to New Bus Stand, Pulwama and is scheduled to be flagged off at around 8:30 AM. The DC emphasized active participation of police personnel, NCC/NSS volunteers, students, ex-servicemen, Home Guards, youth, volunteers and other stakeholders. Family members and children have also been encouraged to participate.

The DC specifically emphasized that persons with disabilities and other specially-abled participants should be facilitated to join the Run for Unity, with suitable arrangements to ensure



that their participation remains comfortable and safe, including a manageable distance of up to 100 metres wherever required. The District Youth Services & Sports Department and District Social Welfare Department were asked to facilitate participation of specially-abled persons and members of the third gender, ensuring that the celebrations remain genuinely inclusive.

Similar Run for Unity events will be organized at sub divisions Tral and Awantipora. At Tral, the event will be led by the ADC Tral, while at Awantipora, ADC Awantipora and SP Awantipora will lead the programme. The DC stressed the need for synchronized arrangements and effective participation at all three locations.

Emphasizing the importance of safety and smooth movement of participants, the DC asked Police and Traffic authorities to ensure proper route sanitization and regulation, while security agencies were called upon to undertake necessary security checks along the identified routes in Pulwama, Tral and Awa-

ntipora. Adequate traffic management and security arrangements were also emphasized throughout the programme.

The DC stressed the need for adequate health and medical arrangements, with ambulances and medical teams kept ready at the venues and along the routes. The Health Department was also asked to organize blood donation camps as part of the celebrations. The Education Department was asked to ensure participation of students, besides organizing essay, quiz and other competitions in schools and colleges on the legacy and contribution of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The meeting also reviewed arrangements for the Ekta/Unity Pledge and Signature Campaign, which will be administered at the culmination point, with similar pledge ceremonies to be held in government offices. The DC emphasized meaningful participation of all departments in these activities.

The Deaprtment of Social Forestry was asked to undertake Tree Plantation Drives at prominent locations, including

plantation in the name of martyrs. The Rural Development Department and Municipal bodies were asked to organize special cleanliness drives across Panchayats and municipal wards, with focus on Amrit Sarovar sites and heritage locations.

The Youth Services & Sports Department was asked to facilitate cycles for cycling activities and organize sports-related events, while concerned departments were encouraged to ensure participation of farmers, youth and other sections of society in the activities planned as part of the celebrations.

The DC emphasized the need for proper arrangements for refreshments, adequate dustbins and overall cleanliness at the venues, besides ensuring orderly conduct of the programmes. R&B authorities were asked to facilitate installation of required banners and other public-event infrastructure wherever necessary.

Emphasizing the importance of effective documentation and public outreach, District Information Officer was asked to ensure comprehensive coverage of the celebrations at all locations.

The DC called upon all officers and officials to treat participation in the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations as a collective responsibility and ensure that the programmes are conducted in a disciplined, safe, inclusive and dignified manner, reflecting the spirit of national unity and the ideals associated with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, IRRIGATION & FLOOD CONTROL DIVISION SUMBAL.

IRRIGATION COLONY SUMBAL SONAWARI. 193501 - Email: habibullah.ifc@jk.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS FRESH E-NIT NO 07-I&FCD /SUMBAL OF 2026-2027

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor, J&K Union Territory, e-tenders are Invited (In single cover system) on "percentage rate basis" from Reputed and resourceful Contractors/ Firms of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other State Governments for the following works: -

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (In Lacs)	Earnest Money @2%	Cost of T.D	Time for Completion	Class of Contract	M.H of Account	Position of Funds
1	Construction of Sumps, intake channels including providing of Trash Guards and allied works for Hakabara Drought, Galibal Drought, LIS Darwazbal, LIS Bonikhan Hajin and LIS Kartargund. Chek-Salamkhan, Naninara-I and II, Shadipora Main, Duslipora, Sonabem, Wangipora New, Panzinara, Zalpora Old, Dumkhan, Chek-Hakeem Sadiq, Zalpora-III, Shalteng, Sarai Dangerpora of 1 and FCD Sumbal including constr of washrooms (fresh for e-NIT No.04 and 05 of 2026-27)	₹33.97	₹67940.00	₹500	30 days	AAY/ BEE	UT CAPEX 4701	Assured
2	Construction of Cement concrete drain near Orchard of Mohammad Sidiq Malik towards land of Ghulam Mohammad and others at Khurwan Wangipora (fresh for e-NIT No.05 of 2026-27)	₹1.45	₹2900.00	₹200	25 days	DEE	CDF Grants	
3	Construction of Foot Bridge at Gunddaji D/Cut NLO Gh. Hassan Bafanda at Nowgam A f(fresh for e-NIT No.05 of 2026-27)	₹1.45	₹2900.00	₹200	25 days	DEE	CDF Grants	

Position of Technical Sanction Accorded.

Position of Administrative Approval Accorded.

- Accorded vide Order No. SE/HYD/BPR/03 of 2026-27 Dt.14.08.2026.
- Accorded vide Order No. 198-DDCB of 2026 Dt.14.09.2026
- Accorded vide Order No. 227-DDC/BPR of 2026 Dt.03.10.2026.

BID INFORMATION:

- The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, drawings (if any), book of quantities (BoQ) set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below.

S. No	Description	Time	Date
01	Publishing date of NIT	05:30 pm	28/10/2026
02	Download start date	05:30 pm	28/10/2026
03	Bid submission start date	05:30 pm	28/10/2026
04	Bid submission end date	04:00 pm	03/11/2026
05	Bid opening date	12:00 pm	04/11/2026

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document as specified above, deposited in the Treasury under M.H 0702 in favour of Executive Engineer, (Jal Shakti) I&FC Division Sumbal (NIT No. and S. No. of Work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt) and Earnest money @ 2% of advertised amount in the shape of CDR/FDR/DD or BG valid upto 45 days beyond bid validity period. The Earnest money (2%) of LI shall be released only upon the receipt of Performance Security (3%).
- The lowest bidder shall have to furnish Performance Security for an amount equal to 3% of contract value in shape of CDR/FDR before fixation of contract, which shall be released only after successful completion of work. In case the Performance Guarantee being BG, the same should be valid upto 60 days beyond the Defective Liability Period.
- In case the bid submitted by bidder being substantially lower than the advertised cost, the bidder shall have to furnish Additional Performance Security In the form of CDR/FDR/DD/BG as per the Finance Department Circular No.: FD-Code/441/2021-02-158, Dtd.: 08.08.2025, as follows:
 - Where the bid price quoted by a bidder is below 10% of the project cost put to bid, the bidder shall be required to furnish additional performance security in addition to the normal performance security prescribed in the tender.
 - The quantum and method of calculation of such additional performance security shall strictly be in accordance with the procedure prescribed in the above-mentioned circular, and shall be calculated proportionately for the notional project cost.
- Online bids will be opened In the office of the Executive Engineer I&FC Division Sumbal on scheduled date. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue. The hard copies of bid shall be obtained as per Finance Department Circular, O.M. No. A/24(2017)-651 Dated: 07-06-2018.
- The date and time of opening of bids shall be notified on website www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an email message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same website in the office of the Executive Engineer I&FC Division Sumbal (Tender Receiving Authority)
- The bids shall be valid for a period of 90 Days reckoned from the date of opening of bids.
- The contractor shall be liable for debarment for next two years in respect of competing in the tendering process in I&FC Department including forfeiture of Earnest Money if: -
 - Any bidder/ Tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in the terms and conditions of the bid.
 - Failure of successful bidder to furnish the required bidding documents and performance security within the specified time limit.
 - Failure of successful bidder to execute the agreement within 07 days after fixation of contract.
 - In case of submission of any forged / fake / manipulated or wrong information in the Bid Submitted.

No: -IFCDS/e-N IT/3559-62
Dt: -28-10-2026

DIPK-7178-26
DT: 29/10/2026

(Er. Umar Jan Bhat)
Executive Engineer
I&FC Division Sumbal

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

IRRIGATION DIVISION PULWAMA

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

E- NIT NO. (17) OF 2026-27 (e-Tendering)

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K U.T, e-Tenders are invited on percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. for the following works.

S. No.	Name of work	Adv. Cost in Lakhs	Cost of Tender Doc. in Rs.	Earnest Money (Rs)	Time of completion	Class of Contract	Head of Account
1	Improvement of Kushwani Khul Ph. 2 nd	20.00	1500/-	40000/-	25 days	CEE/BEE	District Capex

Position of Funds: Budgetary Provision.

Position of AAA: Accorded vide District Development Commissioner, Pulwama's Order No. 181-DDCP of 2026 Dt. 24-09-2026.

Position of T/S: Sanctioned vide this office No. TS/District Capex/03 of 10/2026 dt. 27-10-2026.

The Bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, set of terms and conditions and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:

01	Date of issue of Tender Notice	28-10-2026 (06:00 pm)
02	Date of start of downloading	28-10-2026 (06:00 pm)
03	Bid submission start date Technical/ Financial.	28-10-2026 (06:00 pm)
04	Bid submission end date	13-11-2026 (06:00 pm)
05	Date & Time of opening of Bids	14-11-2026 (10:00 AM)

Terms and Conditions: -

1. Bids must be accompanied with proof of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury receipt/e-challan under (MH: 0702-PWD Remittance) in favour of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Pulwama (tender inviting authority), and Earnest Money/ Bid Security in shape of CDR/ FDR from any schedule or nationalized bank pledged to Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Pulwama (Tender Receiving Authority).

2. The date and time of opening of Technical Bids shall be notified on departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial Bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same web site in the office of the Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Pulwama (Tender Receiving Authority).

3. The bid for the work shall remain valid for period of 90 days from the date of opening of bid.

4. Bidders are advised to use the (My Documents) area in their user on www.jktenders.gov.in portal to store, the required documents as given below:

a. GST, Adhaar Card, 16- Digit Bank Account No. GST linked and PAN No.

b. Registration card with latest renewal.

c. Card verification letter.

d. Registered mobile number and E-mail ID in the shape of Bidders address form.

e. BOQ.

f. Acknowledgment/ certificate w.r.t. filing of GST returns of previous quarter.

g. Acknowledgment/ certificate w.r.t. filing of Income Tax returns of Previous financial year.

h. Self-declaration form

i. The successful bidder is bound to register himself with Assistant Labour Commissioner, Pulwama for CESS Registration after issuance of allotment.

5. The bidders or their authorized representatives shall take geotagged photographs of themselves at the site and upload the same along with other documents prescribed in the NIT as per letter No. CE/I&FCDK/13521-55 Dt. 27-08-2026 issued by Chief Engineer, Kmnr. I&FC department in this regard.

6. The earnest money shall be forfeited if: -

a. Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in terms and conditions of the bid.

b. Failure of successful bidder to execute the agreement within 07 Days after fixation of contract.

No.: PID/CS/ 3012-21

Dated: 28/10/2026

DIPK-7193-26

DT: 29/10/2026

sd/

Executive Engineer

Irrigation Division Pulwama

CMYK

Ranji Trophy: Kotian, Bhut grab eight-fors as Mumbai, Saurashtra register big wins

NEW DELHI: Tanush Kotian and Parth Bhut both claimed eight-wicket hauls on the final day of the latest round of Ranji Trophy matches on Thursday. Kotian's effort set up Mumbai's 10-wicket rout of Haryana, while Bhut bowled Saurashtra to victory over Assam by an innings and 12 runs.

At the BKC Ground in Mumbai, off-spinner Kotian finished with 8-81. He had taken the first wicket of Haryana's second innings on day three and added seven more on the final day. Kotian removed overnight batters Himanshu Rana (46) and Nishant Sindhu (44), and later ended a lower-order fight-back led by Samant Jakhar.

Mumbai needed only 97 runs for victory, and they knocked off the runs in under 11 overs. Ang-

krish Raghuvanshi, who scored a hundred in the first innings, smashed an unbeaten 67 off 39 balls.

At the Niranjan Shah Stadium in Rajkot, Player of the Match Bhut, who had six wickets by stumps on day three, was even more destructive, finishing with 8-17 in 18 overs and had a match haul of ten wickets as Saurashtra wrapped up a bonus-point win. Ravindra Jadeja, who will be a part of India's Test series against New Zealand next month, took 2-58 wickets in 22 overs, including 4 maidens.

Bengal crushed Kerala by 287 runs in Thiruvananthapuram, with Pradipta Pramanik taking 6-51. Pramanik had claimed all four Kerala wickets that fell on day three and added two more on the final morning as the hosts were bowled out for 120.

Captain Shreyas Gopal's 5-36 bowled Karnataka to an innings-and-116-run win over Tripura in Mysuru, with the visitors dismissed for 180 in their second innings. Vidarbha thrashed

Goa by an innings and 27 runs in Nagpur, with Harsh Dubey taking 4-38. He struck twice in quick succession to remove Manthan Khutkar, who top-scored with 70, and Yash Kasvankar, before taking wickets off consecutive deliveries to bowl Goa out for 195.

Several matches ended in draws. In Vadodara, Abdul Samad's 143 off 152 balls, which included 16 fours and seven sixes, and Sahil Lotra's unbeaten 96 rescued defending champions Jammu and Kashmir against Baroda. The pair added 225 runs after J&K had slumped to 53/4 after being made to follow-on.

In Pune, Gujarat declared their second innings on 446/5 against Maharashtra after Aaryya Desai hit 151, followed by an unbeaten 119 from Jaymeet Patel and 96 from Urvil Patel, but the hosts held on for a draw.

ISL 2026-27: Unbeaten NorthEast United face Bengaluru FC test in Guwahati

GUWAHATI: Unbeaten Northeast United FC will take on Bengaluru FC in an Indian Super League (ISL) 2026-27 clash in Guwahati on Friday, with both sides looking to maintain their positive starts to the season.

The Highlanders were held to a goalless draw by Odisha FC in their previous outing, while Bengaluru registered a 2-0 victory over Chennaiyin FC, with Ryan Williams and Mihailo Perovic finding the net.

NorthEast United head coach Juan Pedro Benali stressed that his team must approach every match with a winning mentality rather than prioritising defensive solidity. He also backed Moroccan forward Alaaeddine Ajaraie to take the next penalty despite missing from the spot against Odisha.

"I prefer to win 4-3. I don't want 0-0. I want to win. If there is a penalty tomorrow, Alaaeddine Ajaraie will take it. There is no doubt about it," Benali said on the eve of the match.

Ajaraie had struck the post with a penalty deep into stoppage time against Odisha, denying NorthEast United a chance to secure all three points.

Goalkeeper Gurmeet Singh will be another key figure for the Highlanders as they prepare to face a Bengaluru side that has scored five goals in its opening two matches. NorthEast United have conceded just once in their first three games, making defensive organisation and composure in possession important against the visitors' pressing approach.

Bengaluru head coach Pep Muñoz acknowledged NorthEast United's clear playing identity and tactical flexibility but expressed confidence in his team's ability to exploit spaces while maintaining control. "They have an identity, some patterns that they like to create and a clear style of play," Muñoz said, adding that Bengaluru were prepared to face either a back four or a back five.

Midfielder Lalremtlunga Fanai said the team must remain focused on the next challenge despite their unbeaten start. "We need to focus on the next game. It's not about losing or winning; we want to keep going and show what we can do," Fanai said.

The two sides last met in February 2026, playing out a 1-1 draw at the Sree Kantarava Stadium in Bengaluru. Braian Sánchez gave the hosts the lead before substitute Lalrinzuala Lalbiaknia equalised for NorthEast United in the second half.

Munoz said his squad were in good spirits after having a break during Gameweek 3, while NorthEast United also have a healthy roster ahead of the contest.



India lose 1-2 to Afghanistan in FIFA U15 World Cup QF

BAKU: India suffered a 1-2 defeat to Afghanistan in the FIFA U15 World Cup & Festival Azerbaijan 2026 quarter-final for positions 81 to 88 at the Hovsan Competition Complex Pitch 1A in Baku on Thursday.

Despite creating early chances, India fell behind to goals from Mohammad Mustafa (15th minute) and Shahzada Sultani (27th). Nibas Meetei Wahengbam pulled one back in the second half, but India could not find an equaliser.

India started on the front foot and came close to scoring in the sixth minute. R Lalremruatfela's low cross from the left was spilled by the Afghanistan goalkeeper, but Victor Lalawmpuia failed to react in time. The loose ball subsequently reached Lalremruatfela, whose left-footed attempt forced the goalkeeper into a diving save.

Three minutes later, Nibas played a through ball towards Lalawmpuia, but the Afghanistan goalkeeper came off his line to collect before the Indian forward could get to it.

Afghanistan, however, broke the deadlock against

the run of play. Sultani delivered a cross from the left, and Mustafa escaped the marking of Birjit Singh Amom before connecting with a right-footed volley to give his side the lead.

India's task became more difficult in the 27th minute following a defensive error. Pressed by Khair Mohammad Nazari, Nara Meitei Loushambam misplaced a pass that Sultani intercepted. The Afghanistan forward then worked his way past the Indian defenders before unleashing a powerful shot into the roof of the net at the near post.

India looked to respond

through counterattacks but struggled to convert their corners and set-piece opportunities. Their persistence paid off in the 37th minute when Lalremruatfela controlled a long ball inside the box and laid it off for Nibas, who finished to reduce the deficit.

India pushed for an equaliser in the closing stages but Afghanistan held firm to secure the win.

India will next face Kazakhstan in the semi-final for positions 85 to 88 later on Thursday at 7:45 pm IST. Kazakhstan suffered a defeat to Hungary in their quarter-final.



Hylo Open: Sindhu, Lakshya prevail in opener as Prannoy exits

SAARBRUCKEN: PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen advanced to the second round of the BWF Hylo Open on Wednesday, as several other Indian shuttlers progressed in the BWF Super 500 tournament.

However, HS Prannoy was among those eliminated, with the sixth-seeded Toma Junior Popov of France claiming a victory in straight sets.

Sindhu, the second seed in women's singles, continued her impressive run following her runner-up finish at last week's French Open. The Indian needed only 28 minutes to defeat Pradipta Pramanik of the UAE 21-10, 21-10, controlling both games to secure a comfortable opening-round victory.

Sen faced a tougher test in the men's singles draw but recovered well after losing the first game against Finland's Joakim Oldorff. The seventh seed raised his level in the subsequent games to complete a 16-21, 21-9, 21-13 comeback win in just over an hour.

Kiran George also moved into the next round after overcoming Malaysia's Cheam June Wei 21-18, 21-17 in straight games.

Prannoy, meanwhile, was unable to convert a closely fought opening game against Popov, losing 21-23, 16-21 to bow out of the competition. The Indian had an opportunity to take the first game but could not capitalise, allowing the Frenchman to close out the contest in two games.

Tharun Manneapalli and Sankar Subramanian also exited the men's singles competition after defeats against Chi Yu Jen of Chinese Taipei and Finland's Kalle Koljonen, respectively. Ayush Shetty, who was scheduled to compete in Germany, withdrew before the tournament began because of an injury sustained at the French Open last week.

In women's singles, sixth seed Unnati Hooda recovered from a slow start to defeat Czechia's Tereza Svabikova 17-21, 21-12, 21-11. Hooda dropped the opening game but took control of the contest thereafter, winning the next two games to progress.

Isharani Baruah produced a steady performance against Germany's Miranda Wilson, registering a 21-19, 21-9 victory. Anmol Kharb also advanced, holding her nerve in a tight second game to beat Sri Lanka's Ranithma Liyanage 21-18, 22-20.

Malvika Bansod came through an all-Indian encounter against Devika Sihag. After surrendering the opening game 18-21, Bansod responded strongly to take the next two 21-10, 21-14 and book her place in the second round.



'I am enjoying vice-captaincy': Tilak Varma on leadership role in India's T20I team

AUCKLAND: India's T20I vice-captain Tilak Varma stated that he is enjoying the leadership role he has been given as he keeps sharing his inputs with captain Shreyas Iyer on the field.

Tilak was named India's T20I vice-captain in a leadership reshuffle when Shreyas was announced as the captain after the T20 World Cup 2026. He has experience leading his state team, Hyderabad, across all formats and has also led India A sides too.

He spoke on his leadership role in the Indian T20I side, detailing how he shares his inputs with the current skipper. "I have done (captaincy) in every format for my state. And for a year now, I have done (captaincy) for India A too. So, I have that experience. I have that knowledge. Whatever message I can pass, I always convey it on the field to Shreyas," Tilak said in the pre-match press conference ahead of India's fourth T20I against New Zealand at Eden Park in Auckland.

"T20 is a pressure game. Especially, nowadays there is always pressure as games are very high scoring. So, as a captain, it is difficult to cover everything. So, I communicate with Iyer where I can help him. He also asks. So, I am enjoying those small roles," Tilak added.

Tilak also stated that he enjoys fielding in the middle. During the ongoing T20I series against New Zealand, Tilak set the record for having taken most catches as a fielder in a single calendar year. He has 26 grabs in 2026, going past the previous record of 25 catches that Indonesia's Danilson Hawoe took last year.

"I have been a good fielder since childhood. Whenever I practice fielding, I never look at it as a burden. When playing overseas, there's wind, cold weather, and the ball wobbles in the air, but I've always genuinely enjoyed fielding. I never complain about spending long hours on the field."



4th T20I: India eye 4-0 lead, chance to test bench strength against depleted NZ

AUCKLAND: India, already 3-0 up in the five-match series, could hand game time to wrist-spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakaravathy when they face New Zealand in the fourth T20I at Eden Park on Friday.

A sell-out crowd of nearly 40,000 is expected at Eden Park, which will break the record attendance for a bilateral series match in New Zealand. The previous best attendance record was of 36,523 set during the New Zealand men's and women's double header against India at the same venue in 2019.

Both Kuldeep and Varun have featured sporadically in recent months as the team management has stacked the side with batters down to number eight, an approach that has paid off in a series of high-scoring games.

Kuldeep, who played two matches in the home series against West Indies, hasn't played a game in Wellington. If India prefers to sit out either Axar Patel or Naman Dhir, with the latter being in sparkling form, then Kuldeep or Varun could get their chance to play.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar, playing his first international series in four years, nailed yorkers at the death overs in Wellington but has leaked 139 runs off 72 balls. Prince Yadav has kept Mayank Yadav out for the last two games, and he might be persisted with by the Indian team management.

Ishan Kishan's availability remains unclear after he missed two matches with an adductor strain. If he sits out again, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi will get another chance to play and become the perfect second fiddle alongside an in-form Abhishek Sharma.

New Zealand, without Matt Henry and now Lockie Ferguson, who has been ruled out of the series with a calf injury, have struggled to contain India's top order, especially smashing a record 118 runs in the powerplay in Wellington. Captain Mitchell Santner has bowled well but received little support, and it's something which the Black Caps will want to change in Auckland, which is an unforgiving venue for bowlers.

According to CricViz, India have won 22 of their 34 T20Is against New Zealand, with 11 defeats and a tie. They have won five games in a row against the Black Caps and nine of their last 10 T20Is in the country, two of them via super overs.

India have already got their third straight T20I series win in New Zealand, who last beat them at home in Hamilton in 2019. Abhishek's 35-ball hundred in Wellington was his fourth ton in T20Is and 11th century overall in all T20s, the most by an Indian men's batter.

Since the start of 2025 in T20Is, Abhishek has hit 1,984 runs at an average of 35.4 and a strike rate of 200.6, with 13 fifties and 3 hundreds. Moreover, Abhishek has struck at 228.3 against Jacob Duffy and 338.1 against Kyle Jamieson.

Santner has dismissed Sanju Samson four times in seven innings, while Indian batters have swept just 6.6 per cent of balls against spin in 2026. Axar has removed Glenn Phillips five times, and Kuldeep has dismissed him four times in five innings, which makes his case for inclusion in the playing eleven stronger.

When: October 30, 2026, 12:30 PM

Where: Eden Park, Auckland

Where to watch: The match will be shown live on the Sony Sports Network channels on TV, and live streaming is available on the Sony LIV app and website.



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MOVIES WATCHLIST

Friday, 30th October

MIRZAPUR: THE MOVIE (A)
HINDI - 04:40 PM

UDAA TEER (UA 13+)
HINDI - 01:50 PM
HINDI ATMOS - 03:20 PM, 06:10 PM

DRISHYAM: THE CONCLUSION (UA 16+)
HINDI - 02:30 PM, 05:30 PM

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