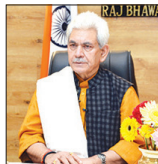


Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
Year Of Publication

Manoj Sinha
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Chaired a high-level security review meeting with the Chief Secretary, DGP, senior civil and police administration officials, DCs, and SSPs from Kashmir Division to assess the ground situation and strategic preparedness.

GMK

Srinagar • Saturday 31, October 2026 • Vol: 17 • Issue No: 257 • Pages: 08 • Price: ₹ 2/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

Cabinet Expansion
Triggers Dissent In NC

18 MLAs Hold Closed-Door Meeting,
Demand Removal Of 4 Ministers



UMER MAQBOOL

SRINAGAR: The growing discontent within the ruling National Conference (NC) over Tuesday's cabinet expansion-cum-reshuffle came to the fore on Friday as 18 legislators, including 17 NC MLAs and one Independent member supporting the government, held a marathon meeting here to deliberate on their future course of action.

As many as 18 legislators met at the residence of Lolab MLA Qaiser Jamsheed Lone at Friends Enclave, Humama Heights, here and held discussions for nearly five hours.

Sources said that the NC leadership became aware of the proposed meeting on Thursday evening and made attempts to persuade some legislators not to attend. However, several of those invited either did not respond to the calls or went ahead

with their participation.

Apart from the host, Qaiser Jamsheed Lone, the meeting was attended by Nazir Ahmad Gurezi (Gurez), Mubarak Gul (Eidgah), Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi (Pampore), Hilal Akbar Lone (Sonawari), Ajiaz Jan (Poonch Haveli), Javid Choudhary (Budhal), Muzaffar Khan (Thanamandi), Sajad Shafi (Uri), Javid Ahmad Mirchal (Karnah), Mohiuddin Mir (Rajpora), Mushtaq Ahmad Guroo (Chanapora), Er. Khurshid Ahmad (Gulabgarh), Arjun Singh Raju (Ramban), Abdul Majid Larmi (Anantnag West), Saifuddin Bhat (Khansahib), Bashir Ahmad Veeri (Bijbehara) and Pirzada Farooq Ahmad Shah(Tangmarg).

According to sources privy to the meeting, several legislators voiced strong reservations over the recent cabinet expansion.

During the **●P-06**

LG Sinha Chairs High-Level
Security Review Meeting

Directs Sustained Crackdown On Terror Networks Across Kashmir

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Friday chaired a high-level meeting with Deputy Commissioners, SSPs and senior officials to review the security scenario in Kashmir Division.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo; Chief Secretary Designate, Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav; DGP, Nalin Prabhat; Additional Chief Secretary Home Department, Chandraker Bharti; Special DG Coordination PHQ, S.J.M.Gillani; ADG CID, M.K. Sinha; Commissioner Secretary, GAD, M Raju; Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor, Shri Govind Jaiswal; IGP Kashmir, Shri Sujit Singh; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Shri Anshul Garg; Range DIGs, DCs, SSPs, and other senior officials.



The meeting focused on operational preparedness, security strategies, and future action plans to ensure a peaceful environment in Kashmir Division.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the officials for sustained and aggressive action against terror modules. He emphasized tightening counter-infiltration grids and fostering

seamless synergy between the District Administration, Jammu Kashmir Police, Army, and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) in executing counter-terror operations.

He directed the Deputy Commissioners and SSPs to closely monitor anti-national elements within the administration and prioritize efforts to combat

radicalization. The Lieutenant Governor also asked for monthly reviews regarding the attachment of properties belonging to narco-terrorists and the terror-supporting ecosystem. He said the action against narco-terrorists must continue unabated, besides relentless crackdowns on drug smugglers and peddlers, to realize the vision of **●P-06**

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas

LG Pays Tributes To
Sardar Patel On Eve Of
Birth Anniversary

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Friday paid tributes to Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, on the eve of his birth anniversary.

In a message, the Lieutenant Governor said, "On the occasion of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, which commemorates the

birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, I extend my warm greetings to the people of Jammu Kashmir.

I hope the National Unity Day celebration will further strengthen the spirit of oneness and peace in the Union Territory.

Sardar Patel remains a timeless symbol of selfless service, **●P-06**

J&K Govt Appoints Five
Members To Haj Committee



RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Friday appointed five members to the Union Territory Haj Committee for a period of three years, with Member of Parliament Mian Altaf Ahmad among those nominated.

According to a notification issued by the Revenue Department, the appointments have been made by the Lieutenant Governor under Sections 17(1) and 18(1) of the Haj Committee Act, 2002, read with Rule 20 of the Haj

Committee Rules, 2002.

The appointed members include MP Mian Altaf Ahmad, legislators Javid Iqbal and Mir Mohammad Fayaz, Zafar Iqbal Manhas and Ahsan Ul Haq Mirza.

The notification further states that the Executive Officer of the Haj Committee shall serve as an ex-officio member of the J&K Haj Committee.

The members will hold office for three years from the date of publication of the notification in the Official Gazette—(KNO)

Saffron Growers Fear Another Poor
Season, Say Flowering Remains Scanty

Cite Inadequate Irrigation, Shortage Of Quality Corms, Land Conversion

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Saffron growers in Kashmir fear another disappointing harvest as flowering remains significantly below normal levels across most saffron fields despite the peak flowering period, raising concerns over the future of the region's traditional crop.

Growers said flowering, which usually peaks after mid-October, has remained scanty this season, with comparatively better results reported in a few fields having access to irrigation. They said most growers continue to depend on rainfall, leaving their crops vulnerable to dry spells and changing weather conditions.



Abdul Majeed Wani, president of the Saffron Growers Association Kashmir, said the situation was worrying but expressed hope that flowering could improve in the coming week.

"Usually, saffron fields turn purple after mid-October, but this year flowers are appearing in very small numbers across most areas. Fields with better irrigation have shown comparatively encouraging results, and we hope flowering improves in the coming days," he said.

Wani said the difference between irrigated and rain-dependent fields highlighted the need to restore irrigation infrastructure and ensure adequate water supply across the saffron-growing belt.

Ashiq Hussain, a saffron grower from Chandhara in Pampore, said inadequate irrigation, shortage of quality corms, conversion of saffron **●P-06**

Cabinet Approves Two New Industrial
Estates Worth ₹162.72 Cr In J&K



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Council of Ministers, recently chaired by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, has approved the establishment of two new Industrial Estates in Jammu & Kashmir, involving a combined investment of ₹162.72 crore.

The approved projects include a New Industrial Estate at Pehlipora, Lar, Ganderbal, at a cost of ₹60.92 crore, and Industrial

Estate Bhagthali (Part-II), Kathua, at a cost of ₹101.80 crore.

The Chief Minister said the projects would strengthen industrial infrastructure, attract investment, promote local manufacturing and create new employment opportunities for the youth.

He added that these initiatives would contribute to sustained economic growth and further strengthen the industrial ecosystem across Jammu & Kashmir.

Gurez Tops List

Over 5.20 Lakh Tourists Visit J&K's
LoC Areas This Year So Far

Keran, Uri, Tangdhar, Machil, Teetwal Witness Growing Footfall

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: More than 5.20 lakh tourists, including local and non-local visitors, have visited border areas along the Line of Control (LoC) in north Kashmir this year so far, with Gurez in Bandipora district emerging as the most popular destination, followed by Keran in Kupwara, according to provisional estimates.

The figures, accessed, indicate that Gurez recorded around 1.50 lakh tourist visits, followed by Keran with nearly 1.20 lakh visitors, while Uri registered around 90,000 tourist visits.

Lolab recorded nearly



65,000 visitors, followed by Tangdhar with around 40,000, Machil with 30,000 and Teetwal

with nearly 25,000 visitors. The border destinations have witnessed growing tour-

ist interest in recent years, with visitors attracted by their scenic landscapes, traditional culture and improved security situation.

The areas, which were once frequently affected by cross-LoC shelling and clashes, have witnessed a significant transformation following the reaffirmation of the India-Pakistan ceasefire agreement in February 2021.

Residents who earlier had to leave their homes during periods of shelling are now opening them to tourists and running homestays and other tourism-related businesses.

Residents said the decline in cross-border **●P-06**

Run For Unity
Traffic Curbs On
Boulevard Road
Today

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Traffic Police on Friday issued a traffic advisory for October 31 in view of the 'Rashtriya Ekta Diwas and Run for Unity' event scheduled to be held between the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) and Botanical Garden in Srinagar.

According to the advisory, several VIPs and participants from different walks of life are expected to attend the event. To ensure smooth traffic movement and prevent congestion, restrictions and diversions will be implemented on several roads.

Traffic movement on Boulevard Road, from Lalit Ghat to Kralsangri, will remain restricted from 8:30 AM on October 31 until the conclusion of the event.

Motorists travelling towards Nishat, Shalimar and Harwan have been advised to use the Dal Gate-Rainawari - **●P-06**

Kashmir Fruit Traders Get
50% Return Freight Discount



AGENCIES

JAMMU: The Northern Railway has proposed a 50 per cent concession on return freight for transportation of apples and other horticulture produce from Kashmir through its joint parcel product - rapid cargo service (JPP-RCS) scheme, officials said.

The proposal was discussed at a joint meeting organised by Jammu division of northern railway in Srinagar to promote safe and economical transportation of Kashmiri fruits through railways, officials said.

The meeting, held at the office of the Director, Horticulture Planning and Mar-

keting, was attended by the Area Manager and other railway officials, representatives of the Horticulture Department, including Marketing Officers and Assistant Grading Officers from Parimpora, Bandipora and Anantnag, besides cargo aggregators.

Under the proposed arrangement, traders, aggregators and logistics service providers making advance bookings of parcel coaches for both directions through JPP-RCS trains will be charged 1.5 times the normal JP Scale rate for the round trip, effectively providing a 50 per cent discount on return freight, officials said.

The booking **●P-06**

Commissioner SMC reviews PMAY-U 2.0 implementation

Calls for faster verification and disposal of pending applications

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Friday reviewed the progress of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0), taking stock of the application process, beneficiary verification and measures being undertaken to ensure that eligible families can avail themselves of the benefits of the scheme without unnecessary delays.

During the meeting, the Commissioner stressed the need to expedite the verification and scrutiny of applications, particularly those pending at various levels. He directed the concerned officers to work in close coordination, resolve procedural issues promptly and ensure that all eligible applications are processed within the stipulated timeframe.

Dr. Basharat emphasised that the implementation of PMAY-U 2.0 must remain focused on reaching deserving households, particularly those belonging to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low-Income Groups (LIG). He stressed that the verification process must be conducted carefully and



transparently, ensuring that genuine beneficiaries do not face unnecessary difficulties.

The Commissioner also called for intensified awareness activities at the ward level, directing the concerned officers to organise awareness camps, facilitate online registrations and provide the necessary assistance through ward offices. He stressed the importance of ensuring that people are adequately informed about the eligibility criteria, documentation requirements and application procedures under the scheme.

Highlighting the role of Ward Officers and CLTC Experts, he called for their greater involvement at the grassroots level to guide applicants, address their concerns and assist families who may face difficulties with the online registration process. He underscored that wider public awareness and effective facilitation are essential

to ensure that no eligible household is left out due to a lack of information or procedural hurdles.

The Commissioner directed all concerned departments and field functionaries to maintain close coordination and pursue the implementation process with urgency, ensuring transparent verification and time-bound disposal of applications.

The meeting was attended by Joint Commissioner, Administration, SMC; Joint Commissioner, R&E, SMC; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, ACR; FA/CAO, SMC; Secretary, SMC; concerned Deputy General Manager, J&K Housing Board; Tehsildars of North, South, Eidgah, Central Shalteng, Khanyar, Panthachowk and Chanapora; representatives of District Social Welfare Officer, Srinagar, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs; besides Ward Officers and CLTC Experts.

MD NHM reviews NQAS implementation, PM-TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a strong push to enhance public healthcare delivery and accelerate TB elimination, Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM) J&K, Athar Aamir Shafi-ul-Khan, Friday chaired back-to-back review meetings regarding National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) and Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan today at State Health Society Office Old Secretariat, Srinagar.

Reviewing the National Quality Assurance Standards, the Mission Director underscored that quality infrastructure and patient-centric care remain core pillars of public health in Jammu and Kashmir.



Athar Aamir Shafi-ul-Khan directed all Chief Medical Officers to ensure thorough baseline assessments of every public health institution within their respective jurisdictions.

Chief Medical Officers were instructed to categorize facilities based on assessment findings, systematically bridge infrastructural gaps, and prioritize

resource allocation to ensure that 100 percent of targeted healthcare facilities achieve NQAS quality certification by March 2027. Reiterating the administration's commitment, he assured complete technical and administrative backing from the State Health Society to help every facility meet national benchmarks.

In a separate meeting, the

Mission Director evaluated the ground-level progress of the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP). Deliberations centered on population screening coverage, Differentiated TB Care, and TB Preventive Treatment (TPT).

Emphasizing aggressive case-finding and optimal technology deployment, the Mission Director called for 100 percent utilization of available diagnostic machines including Tru-NAAT, CBNAAT, and both handheld and fixed X-ray machines across all districts.

Furthermore, review discussions highlighted grassroots momentum, noting that JOSH (Joint Squad for

Health) Teams have been fully constituted across all 110 medical blocks in the Union Territory. Comprising designated Class-I officers, NCC cadets, and MY Bharat volunteers, these youth-led community squads are actively working alongside block medical officers to drive public awareness, eliminate social stigma, and support treatment adherence.

The meetings saw active participation both in person and virtually from the Directors of Health Services Jammu/ Kashmir, State Tuberculosis Officers, Chief Medical Officers (CMOs), District Tuberculosis Officers (DTOs), NHM Programme Managers, and other senior officers.

ADC Shopian reviews preparations for Rashtriya Ekta Diwas



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, Friday presided over a meeting here at Mini-Secretariat Shopian to review and finalize the arrangements for the upcoming observance of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas and the much-anticipated Run for Unity being held on October 31, 2026.

Speaking on the occasion, the ADC underscored the immense national significance of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, noting that the observance serves as a powerful reminder of our shared commitment to the nation's unity, integrity and security. He stressed that seamless

cross-departmental coordination is vital for making the event a grand success and ensuring participation of all employees, officers/officials of all departments.

The ADC directed officials for ensuring that all logistical, security, medical and transport arrangements are put in place with maximum efficiency. He urged every department to work in close coordination to guarantee enthusiastic public participation particularly from the youth transforming the Run for Unity into a memorable district-wide celebration.

The meeting concluded with a collective resolve to work together harmoniously to uphold and promote the enduring spirit of unity.

CIPMC Srinagar organizes “Khet Bachao Abhiyaan” at Pulwama



GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: The Central Integrated Pest Management Centre (CIPMC), Srinagar, in collaboration with the State Agriculture Department, Pulwama, organized “Khet Bachao Abhiyaan” and an awareness campaign on “Fake vs. Genuine Pesticides” at Parigam, Pulwama Friday.

Dr. Haroon Rashid Hakla, APPO (PP), sensitized farmers about the National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS) and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. He demonstrated the use of sticky traps, delta traps and botanical pesticides for effective and eco-friendly pest management. He also explained how to identify genuine pesticides through the CIB&RC-approved list

and emphasized essential safety precautions during pesticide application to prevent adverse health effects.

Manjeet Singh, SMS, SDL, delivered an informative lecture on the safe and judicious use of pesticides, highlighting the importance of such initiatives in protecting farmers' interests and promoting sustainable agriculture.

Kawal Nain Singh, SA, demonstrated the identification and conservation of beneficial natural enemies in agricultural fields.

The programme included an interactive session wherein farmers raised field-related concerns, which were addressed by the resource persons through practical demonstrations and simple explanations.

Cyber Awareness-cum-Hygiene Programme held in Bandipora



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: The Cyber Awareness-cum-Hygiene programme was held at Poshan Project Bandipora with an objective to create awareness regarding cyber-crime, online fraud, cyber hygiene, cybersecurity and other cyber-related threats.

During the programme, the participants were educated about preventive mea-

sures to safeguard themselves against such threats and crimes.

An interactive session was also held during which participants were sensitized about safe use of internet, social media and online transactions.

On the occasion, officers, officials including Anganwadi Workers and other frontline workers participated in the programme.

Director Colleges reviews facilities at Various City Colleges

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director Colleges, Professor (Dr.) Twinkle Suri, accompanied by Professor (Dr.) Seema Naz, Nodal Principal, Kashmir Division Colleges, visited three colleges in Srinagar to review the facilities available and assess their overall functioning.

Professor (Dr.) Suri began her visit at Government College of Education (IASE), M.A. Road, Srinagar. She subsequently visited Sri Pratap College (SP College), Srinagar, followed by Amar Singh College, Srinagar.

At Government College of Education (IASE), Professor (Dr.) Seema Naz briefed Professor (Dr.) Twinkle Suri about the institution, its academic activities, administrative functioning, various initiatives, notable achievements and future goals.

In her address, Professor (Dr.) Suri congratulated Professor (Dr.) Seema Naz on her achievements and appreciated her dedicated efforts towards the develop-



ment of the institution, particularly in strengthening its academic environment and institutional infrastructure.

Reassuring the faculty and staff of her full support, Professor (Dr.) Suri stated that she would make every possible effort to address their genuine demands and requirements, whether related to teaching or non-teaching staff. She further assured them that the doors of her office would always remain open to listen to their concerns and extend all possible assistance.

Later, she visited various facilities of the college, including the laboratories, library, research lab, multipurpose sports hall, classrooms, browsing centre and other important facilities.

At Sri Pratap College (SP College), Srinagar,

Dr. Haris Izhar Tantray, Principal of the college, apprised Professor (Dr.) Twinkle Suri of the institution's notable achievements, ongoing initiatives, academic accomplishments and future goals and vision.

Similarly, at Amar Singh College, Srinagar, Dr. Tahmeena Yousef, Principal of the college, briefed Professor (Dr.) Suri about the institution's notable achievements, academic accomplishments, ongoing initiatives, research activities and future vision.

During the visits, Professor (Dr.) Suri interacted with faculty members, students and non-teaching staff to gain first-hand insight into the functioning of the institutions, their academic environment and the facilities available on their respective campuses.

Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2027

Youth Festival held at Kashmir Government Polytechnic Gogji Bagh

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A Youth Festival under the banner of Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2027 was organised Friday at Kashmir Government Polytechnic, Gogji Bagh, Srinagar, with enthusiastic participation of boys and girls.

The festival provided a platform for young participants to showcase their creativity, artistic abilities and cultural talent through various competitions and activities, including folk performances, dance, music, Nukkad Natak (street play), painting and poetry.



The event aimed to encourage youth participation, promote India's rich cultural heritage and provide opportunities for young people to express their ideas, creativity and perspectives through art and cultural activities.

Approximately 235 participants took part in the programme, reflecting the

enthusiasm, talent and active involvement of the youth in constructive and meaningful engagements. The festival was conducted in a spirit of cultural participation, creative expression and youth empowerment, in line with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, which recognises the important role of young people in nation-building.

National Unity Day

ADC Budgam reviews arrangements for ‘Run for Unity’

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Budgam, Mehraj-ud-Din Shah, chaired a meeting to review and finalise arrangements for the ‘Run for Unity’, being organised tomorrow to commemorate National Unity Day.

The run will commence from Karipora Railway Bridge and culminate at Railway Station Budgam.

The meeting was attended by the PO ICDS, Additional Superintendent of Police, all Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs), Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Chief Education Officer (CEO), Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and other district officers.

During the meeting, the

ADC took a comprehensive review of the preparations and assessed the departmental responsibilities assigned for the successful conduct of the event. He emphasised the need for close coordination and effective inter-departmental cooperation to ensure the smooth, disciplined and hassle-free conduct of the programme.

The ADC directed all district officers to ensure maximum participation in the ‘Run for Unity’, including officers and subordinate staff, Anganwadi Workers and Helpers, lumberdars, students from colleges and schools, as well as senior citizens. He stressed that active participation from all sections of society would reinforce the message of unity, integrity and collective responsibility that National

Unity Day seeks to promote. The ADC also directed the Chief Medical Officer, Budgam, to ensure the deployment of adequate paramedical staff along the route and at the venue, besides making necessary medical and emergency arrangements to promptly address any eventuality.

The Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Budgam, was instructed to ensure proper cleanliness, sanitation and maintenance of the entire route and venue before and during the event.

Further, the ADC directed all Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) to organise similar ‘Run for Unity’ events and related activities at their respective sub-divisional headquarters to ensure wider outreach and participation at the grassroots level.

KVK Shopian celebrates PM-KISAN Utsav Divas

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: A district-level programme to celebrate PM-KISAN Utsav Divas, marking the release of the 24th instalment of the PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi scheme, was successfully organised Friday at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Shopian.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from more than 130 progressive farmers representing different parts of the district.

The event was graced by Dr. Mir Shabir Ahmad, Senior Scientist and Head, KVK Shopian; Dr. Bilal Ahmad Pandit, Scientist, Horticulture; Dr. Shaiq Ahmad Ganai, Scientist, Food Science and Technology, along with other staff members, progressive farmers, members of Self-Help

Groups (SHGs) and representatives of civil society.

Dr. Mir Shabir Ahmad, Senior Scientist and Head, KVK Shopian, highlighted the pivotal role of KVK in providing technical guidance, strengthening farmers' capacities and disseminating scientific knowledge through various flagship schemes and agricultural extension activities. He also emphasised the importance of adopting modern agricultural technologies and scientific practices to enhance farm productivity and farmer's income.

Dr. Bilal Ahmad Pandit, delivered a comprehensive lecture on the major challenges faced by orchardists and conducted hands-on training on pruning techniques in high-density apple plantations, highlighting practical

approaches to improving orchard productivity and management.

Live demonstrations and success stories shared by farmers highlighted the practical benefits of the PM-KISAN scheme and other allied initiatives. Several farmers also shared their positive experiences, expressing gratitude for the consistent financial assistance of Rs 6,000 annually provided under the scheme, along with the technical guidance and support extended by the Agriculture Department and KVK staff. The programme served as an important platform for strengthening farmer awareness, promoting scientific orchard management practices, and highlighting the role of government initiatives in supporting the farming community.

Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia appointed as IAF Vice-Chief

REHAN QAYOOM

NEW DELHI: Ministry of Defence on Friday appointed Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia as the next Vice-Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS).

Walia, who is presently serving as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Air Command, will succeed Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit, who is scheduled to take over as the 29th Chief of the Air Staff on October 31.

According to the details collected, Walia, an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA), was commissioned into the fighter stream of the Indian Air Force (IAF) on June 11, 1988.

His career spans nearly four decades, during which he has served in several important operational, command and staff appointments. Walia will assume charge on November 1.

A qualified fighter pilot, he has flown MiG-21, MiG-23, MiG-27, Jaguar and Su-30 MKI aircraft, logging over 3,200 hours of accident- and incident-free



flying.

During his career, he commanded a MiG-27 fighter squadron, the Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment (TACDE) and a frontline air base at Bareilly. He is also a Fighter Strike Leader and an Instrument Rating Instructor and Examiner.

Walia has held several senior appointments at Air Headquarters, including Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Training) and Air Commodore at the Directorate of Air Staff Inspection.

He also served as Air Defence Commander at the headquarters of Western Air Command,

an important operational command of the IAF.

His other assignments include serving as Defence Attache at the Indian embassies in Japan and South Korea. He has also undergone the Advanced Command and Staff Course in the United Kingdom and the National Defence College in Bangladesh.

Before taking over as the head of Eastern Air Command in February 2026, he served as its Senior Air Staff Officer.

In recognition of his distinguished service, Walia was awarded the Vayu Sena Medal in 2008 and the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal in 2018—(KNO)

Director Infor reviews functioning of DICs across Kashmir division

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director Information, Mamta Yadav Friday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the functioning of District Information Centres (DICs) across Kashmir Division, with a focus on strengthening district-level information dissemination, improving media coordination and ensuring effective coverage of government activities and public welfare initiatives.

Joint Director Information (Hqrs), Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina; Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shahnawaz Bukhari; Deputy Director Information (PR/AV), Javid Ahmad Rather; Deputy Director (PR) Kashmir, Mohammad Rafiq Zullah; Deputy Director (Hqrs), Kashmir, Zubair Ahmad; Cultural Officer, Field Publicity Officer, District Information Officers of Kashmir division and



other concerned officers also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the Director took a detailed assessment of the functioning of District Information Centres, reviewing their publicity activities, media outreach, field-level coverage, infrastructure, manpower requirements and overall performance.

Stressing the importance of District Information Centres as the grassroots communication network of the DIPR, Mamta Yadav said that these centres have a significant role in ensuring that information about government

policies, programmes, developmental initiatives and public welfare schemes reaches the people in a timely, accurate and accessible manner.

"DICs are the face of the DIPR at the grassroots level. Their role goes beyond disseminating information; they serve as an important link between the administration, media and the public. It is imperative that every district unit functions with dedication, professionalism and a clear sense of responsibility," she said.

The Director underscored the need to make publicity and informa-

tion dissemination more dynamic, result-oriented and responsive to the changing media landscape. She called upon the district officers to effectively utilise digital and social media platforms alongside conventional modes of publicity to ensure wider outreach and greater public engagement.

"Timely and credible information is the foundation of effective public communication. Our focus should be on taking verified information to the people through appropriate platforms, while ensuring that the achievements and initiatives of the Government receive adequate and factual coverage," Mamta Yadav remarked.

She also stressed the importance of proactive media engagement and maintaining cordial and professional relations with local media organisations. She called for improved

coordination with district administrations and concerned departments to ensure comprehensive coverage of important government events, public outreach programmes and developmental activities.

Highlighting the need for innovation in departmental publicity, the Director encouraged the district units to explore local success stories, developmental milestones, cultural heritage and public-oriented initiatives for wider dissemination through print, electronic and digital media.

"Every district has its own stories of development, innovation and public participation. Our officers must identify these stories and bring them to the forefront. Effective communication should not remain limited to official events but must also reflect the impact of government initiatives on the ground," she added.

Mandeep Kaur inspects ABC Facility at Tenggpora

Directs Strengthening of Animal Care, Operational Arrangements



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Commissioner Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department (H&UDD), Mandeep Kaur, accompanied by Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Friday inspected the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Facility at Tenggpora to take stock of its functioning, infrastructure and arrangements for animal care.

During the inspection, the Commissioner Secretary emphasised the need for adequate feed stock and uninterrupted availability of essential medicines, besides ensuring proper heating arrangements to safeguard the animals against the prevailing cold conditions. She also stressed maintaining proper sanitation and hygiene across the facility, with regular cleaning and effective upkeep of all sections.

Mandeep Kaur directed the concerned officers to ensure timely replenishment of essential supplies, close monitoring of day-to-day operations and proper care of animals housed at the facility. The officers were asked to address any shortcomings promptly and ensure that the facility remains adequately equipped and operationally efficient.

Emphasising that animal welfare and hygienic conditions must receive due attention, the Commissioner Secretary called for sustained supervision and accountability to ensure that all essential arrangements are maintained and the facility functions smoothly.

The inspection was attended by Joint Commissioner (Administration), Joint Commissioner (Works), Executive Engineers and other senior officers of SMC.

J&K Bank holds breast cancer awareness programme at Corporate Headquarters

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Promoting awareness about breast health and encouraging informed, supportive conversations, J&K Bank Friday organised a Breast Cancer Awareness Programme at its Corporate Headquarters. Held under the message "Know More, Fear Less, Act Early", the programme brought together medical experts, cancer survivors and Bank employees to discuss breast health, early detection, the role of caregivers and compassionate support.

Executive Director Sudhir Gupta chaired the programme in the presence of Chief General Managers Intiyaz Ahmad Bhat, Ashutosh Sareen and Rajesh Malla Tikoo, General Managers, DGMs, medical experts and other senior officers and staff. Divisional and Zonal Offices across J&K and outside also joined the awareness program through VC.

Speaking on the occasion, Executive Director Sudhir Gupta said, "Behind every cancer diagnosis is a person whose concerns extend to her family, her work and the uncertainties ahead. Through this programme, we want to encourage conversations that women can engage in without hesitation or embarrassment."

"Within the Bank, we must nurture a culture where our colleagues feel



General Manager Aneeta Nehru welcomed the guests saying, "Prioritizing our health is a necessity, and making time for screening and seeking medical advice promptly can make a crucial difference to treatment outcomes."

While thanking the Bank's leadership for conducting the awareness program, Renowned Surgical Oncologist Dr Shabnam Bashir provided a detailed overview of different types of cancer and underlined the importance of early diagnosis.

"Many cancers can be treated successfully when detected at an early stage. Yet around 60 per cent of the cases we receive are already at an advanced stage. We need to talk openly about cancer, recognize warning signs and seek medical advice promptly so that opportunities for early treatment are not lost," she said. She also highlighted the contribution of tobacco use and unhealthy lifestyle choices to cancer risk.

Pain management, palliative care specialist, Dr Henana Berjes, speaking on

Being present, listening to their concerns and offering practical help can make a meaningful difference to their experience of care."

Regarding the nutritional needs of breast cancer patients, Onconutritionist Dr Umi Laila said, "Nutrition is an important part of supportive care during treatment and recovery. The emphasis should be on informed, balanced dietary choices suited to each patient's needs and treatment requirements."

Two cancer survivors shared their experiences, bringing a personal perspective to the programme. An interactive question-and-answer session provided participants with an opportunity to raise their concerns and seek guidance from the experts.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by General Manager Hafeeza Rahim, who expressed gratitude to the chairperson, senior management executives, medical experts, survivors and participants, while encouraging them to carry the message of awareness and care into their families and communities.

Secretary reviews functioning of Social Welfare Department

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Secretary, Social Welfare, Dr. Sagar D. Doifode, Friday chaired an exclusive review meeting regarding functioning of the Social Welfare Department, Kashmir Division, at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by the Director, Social Welfare Kashmir; Director, Planning, Social Welfare Department; Director, Finance, Social Welfare Department; Deputy Director, Directorate of Social Welfare Kashmir and the District Social Welfare Officers of Kashmir Division.

A detailed PowerPoint presentation highlighted the status of implementation of various schemes and programmes of the Department, along with key issues concerning their execution, progress and overall functioning.

During the meeting, an extensive review of the physical and financial progress of various welfare schemes was undertaken. Focus was laid on ensuring effective implementation, timely delivery of benefits to eligible beneficiaries,

identification of implementation-related bottlenecks and resolution of issues hindering smooth execution of departmental programmes.

Dr. Sagar D. Doifode stressed the need for timely and judicious utilisation of available funds. He directed the concerned officers to ensure that all prescribed physical and financial targets are achieved within the stipulated timelines. He emphasised that funds should be utilised efficiently and strictly in accordance with the approved guidelines. He further directed that any bottleneck affecting expenditure or implementation progress be addressed promptly to ensure optimal utilisation of available resources.

He emphasised the need for close coordination among the Directorate, district offices and concerned sections of the Department to ensure efficient implementation of welfare initiatives and achievement of prescribed targets within the stipulated timelines.

The Secretary also directed the concerned officers to intensify awareness and outreach activities regard-

ing various welfare schemes of the department. He asked them for prioritising the grassroots level communities, to ensure that eligible beneficiaries are adequately informed about the benefits, eligibility criteria and application procedures of the schemes. He stressed the need for proactive dissemination of information through field functionaries and other available communication channels so that no eligible beneficiary is deprived of the benefits.

He emphasised the importance of strengthening the monitoring mechanism while ensuring accountability at all levels. He asked for taking prompt action on pending issues so that the benefits of various welfare schemes reach the intended beneficiaries in a timely and hassle-free manner.

Dr. Sagar D. Doifode directed the concerned officers to ensure regular follow-up on the issues discussed during the meeting. He asked them to take necessary measures to improve the delivery and implementation of welfare schemes across Kashmir Division.

NIT Srinagar Wins First Prize at Vibrant India 2026 in New Delhi



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar has won First Prize for Outstanding Contribution to Engineering Education and Academic Development at the 12th Vibrant India 2026 – Most Vibrant Expo on Government Achievements, held at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi, from October 23 to 25.

Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran, Mr. Aban Habib, and Mr. Shebaan Habib represented NIT Srinagar at the three-day national exhibition, showcasing an innovative drone prototype designed for high-altitude and low-temperature environments.

The demonstration highlighted the institute's efforts to develop indigenous unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technologies suited to the demanding environmental conditions of the Himalayan region and other

high-altitude areas.

Organised by NNS Media Group as part of Meri Dilli Utsav, Vibrant India 2026 brought together government organisations, public sector enterprises, institutions, and other stakeholders to showcase achievements and initiatives across various sectors.

The exhibition featured displays relating to Indian Railways, mines, coal, Jal Shakti, tourism, agriculture, animal husbandry, dairy, fisheries, and other areas of national importance.

The drone innovation showcased by the NIT Srinagar team addresses key engineering challenges associated with operating unmanned aerial vehicles in high-altitude environments, where low temperatures and reduced air density can affect battery performance, propulsion efficiency, flight endurance, and structural reliability.

The technology reflects the growing importance of

indigenous drone development for specialised applications in mountainous and remote regions. Such technologies have potential applications in infrastructure inspection, environmental monitoring, high-altitude observation, and other operations requiring reliable aerial systems in challenging conditions.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Anurag Misra, Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman, and Head of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (IEDC), Prof. Babar Ahmad, congratulated the team on the achievement.

They appreciated the team's efforts in showcasing the Institute's engineering capabilities on a national platform and highlighted the importance of innovation, indigenous technology development, and industry oriented research in addressing real-world challenges.

Sagar reviews Power Sector; emphasizes comprehensive winter preparedness

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Revenue, Power Development Department (PDD), Law, Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRRR), and Elections, Ali Mohammad Sagar, Saturday convened a review meeting of the Power Development Department (PDD) at the Civil Secretariat here.

The Minister took stock of overall functioning of the department besides assessing the preparedness for the forthcoming winter season. He reviewed the key initiatives and infrastructure projects aimed at strengthening the power sector and improving electricity services across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary PDD, Ashwani Kumar, Managing Directors of all power corporations, Director Finance, Power Development Department, Special Secretary (S/P), Director Planning, Additional Secretaries (A/Z and Legal), Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers of KPDCCL, JPDCL, JKPTCL, JKPCCL and JKPDCCL, besides Chief Electrical Inspector and other senior officers and concerned field functionaries of the department. Officers based in Jammu participated in the meeting through virtual mode.

During the meeting, the officers apprised the Minister of the working of the department, progress on ongoing developmental works, power generation and procurement arrangements, transmission and distribution infrastructure, financial performance, operational challenges and future requirements.



Emphasising that reliable, affordable and quality electricity is an essential public service, the Minister said that the ultimate objective of every departmental initiative must be to ensure improved power supply and better consumer satisfaction. He stressed that administrative efficiency, timely execution of projects and effective coordination at all levels must translate into visible improvements in public service delivery.

Reviewing preparedness for the forthcoming winter season, Sagar stressed the need for comprehensive advance arrangements to ensure reliable power supply, particularly in snow-bound, far-flung, hilly and remote areas. He directed the officers to maintain adequate stocks of transformers, cables, conductors and other essential equipment at strategically identified locations to facilitate immediate restoration of electricity in case of breakdowns and emergencies.

He emphasised that winter preparedness must be reflected in tangible arrangements on the ground. He called for regular inspection of vulnerable infrastructure, identification of potential bottlenecks and deployment of adequate technical manpower and machinery. He also directed the concerned officers to strengthen the field-level response mechanisms and ensure effective coordination among different wings of the department for speedy restoration of electricity during adverse weather conditions.

The Minister underscored that uninterrupted power supply to essential services including hospitals, health-care centres, drinking water installations, educational

institutions and other critical public utilities, must receive priority, particularly during periods of heavy snowfall and inclement weather.

The status of the electricity amnesty scheme was also reviewed, with the Minister emphasising that its intended benefits must reach all eligible consumers. He called for simplified procedures, effective public outreach and timely disposal of cases to facilitate people in availing the benefits of the scheme without unnecessary difficulties.

Taking stock of the overall power availability and demand-supply position, the Minister discussed the requirement for additional power procurement including the proposed procurement of approximately 200 MW from Uttar Pradesh through power exchange arrangements to bridge the demand-supply gap. He stressed the importance of advance assessment of electricity requirements and timely procurement planning to ensure adequate power availability, particularly during peak winter demand.

Reviewing the progress under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), Sagar called for expediting works aimed at strengthening the distribution network, replacing

overloaded transformers and other equipment, improving feeder infrastructure and reducing technical and commercial losses. He directed the officers to closely monitor the execution of these works so that the intended benefits of the scheme are translated into improved electricity supply and enhanced consumer satisfaction.

The Minister also reviewed the status of smart meter installation across Jammu and Kashmir. He stressed that technological interventions should promote transparency, accurate billing, accountability and improved consumer services. The existing power generation capacity, availability of electricity and possibilities of optimising available resources were also discussed.

The Minister stressed the need to explore all feasible avenues for enhancing generation, improving operational efficiency and ensuring better utilisation of available power resources. He also reviewed the status of transmission lines, grid stations, capacity enhancement and maintenance works. He directed the officers to identify infrastructure gaps, remove bottlenecks and expedite necessary interventions to strengthen the transmission network and improve the reliability of power supply.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Industrial Estates

Investment Should Lead To Jobs, Economic Revival

Announcing of two new industrial estates in Jammu and Kashmir with an investment of Rs. 162.72 crore is a positive step to improve the industrial infrastructure of the region. The decision of the Council of Ministers led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah assumes lot of significance at a time when economy needs fresh investment, employment generation and opportunities for local entrepreneurs. The proposed Industrial Estate at Pehlipora, Lar, Ganderbal, with an investment of 60.92 crore, and Industrial Estate Bhagthali (Part-II), Kathua, costing 101.80 crore, reflect an effort to expand industrial activity across both divisions. If implemented with proper planning, these projects can create new opportunities for businesses, encourage local manufacturing and provide much-needed employment to educated and skilled youth.

It will be judged by the number of industries that actually become operational, the investment they attract and the jobs they generate for local people. Jammu and Kashmir has considerable potential in sectors such as food processing, handicrafts, pharmaceuticals, packaging, agro-based industries and manufacturing. Yet, local entrepreneurs continue to face challenges ranging from procedural delays and inadequate infrastructure to financial constraints and difficulties in accessing markets. Industrial estates must therefore become more than designated plots of land. They should offer reliable electricity, water supply, road connectivity, waste management and a business-friendly administrative environment.

Equally important is ensuring that local entrepreneurs receive priority and are not pushed aside by those with greater financial resources. Industrial development should strengthen the existing business community, particularly small and medium enterprises, rather than merely create opportunities for outside investors.

The government must also ensure transparency in the allotment of industrial plots, timely completion of infrastructure and regular monitoring of projects. Investors need confidence that approvals will not remain trapped in official files and that genuine entrepreneurs will not be discouraged by unnecessary formalities.

For a region where unemployment remains a major concern, every industrial project must carry a clear employment vision. Local youth should be equipped with the skills required by upcoming industries, while industrial units should be encouraged to recruit and train young people from within Jammu and Kashmir. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's emphasis on attracting investment and creating employment is encouraging. The next challenge is to translate this vision into visible results on the ground.

Jammu and Kashmir does not merely need more industrial estates; it needs functioning industries, sustainable businesses and an economic environment in which local talent and enterprise can flourish. The approval of 162.72 crore is a beginning. Its real worth will be established when factory gates open, production starts and young people find meaningful employment close to home.

One Nation, One Destiny: The Imperative Of National Unity



OMKAR DATTATRAY

The country is celebrating the national Unity Day on October 31, 2026, with great enthusiasm and fanfare. It is the occasion on which people remember Sardar Patel as it is his birth anniversary, and it was Patel – the iron man of India who is credited with the integration and merger of more than 500 princely states with India. Thus, rightly, the birth anniversary of this great leader and first home minister is celebrated as the National Unity Day, and it is because of this unity in diversity that India is considered as a great nation.

It is our moral, constitutional duty and responsibility to uphold the national unity of India and for this we should take required steps so that all the states and union territories are kept as inseparable parts of the country even with the principle of federal structure, as India is a state which is unitary in character and federal in spirit and all of its people should endeavor to uphold and strengthen the national unity and the National Unity Day is celebrated by us with this aim in mind. On this day people take pledge and resolve to uphold and further national unity as it is the need of India and is also the need of the hour. We, should also take active part in the national parv to be launched by our prime minister Modi in Ekta Nagar, Gujarat. All the citizens belonging to various religions, castes, classes and regions are equal and there is no distinction between them.

As per the Indian constitution and various laws, all the citizens are equal and have equal opportunity for development, and therefore there is no distinction between them so far as the claim on the national and natural resources is concerned. All regions and languages are sacrosanct and are equal scope for development and therefore all regions and all languages are important means for information and transmitting knowledge, and there is no distinction between them. Citizens belonging to different religious faiths, sects and castes and regions are equal players in the development of the nation. There is unity in diversity and all of us should try to make sincere efforts to maintain national unity, communal harmony and national cohesion.

For maintaining national unity, it is all the more important and necessary that all citizens are given equal treatment, and the hard fact is that all the citizens belonging to various faiths have equal opportunity of development so that all feel honoured and dignified. All the citizens are duty-bound to uphold the national unity, pluralism and secularism, as these finer attributes and doctrines are enunciated in the constitution.



All the people are the sons and daughters of mother India and all of us should take pride that we are Indians first and foremost and secondly, we are Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, etc. We should discourage hatred and communal disharmony and condemn all acts which lead to disintegration in the country. We have achieved freedom from the British yoke after great sacrifices of the freedom fighters and national heroes and thus it is the bounded duty of all of us to safeguard and protect the much valued freedom. All the people are equal and there is no distinction between the citizens belonging to various faiths, religions, regions and languages.

There is great need to further national unity, national integration and national cohesion, and Sardar Patel is our torch bearer and guiding force as well as the great inspiration and all the citizens should follow the path of unity shown by the iron man of India. We should emulate and follow the ideals of Sardar Patel in letter and spirit to further the much-needed unity and communal amity. Rashtriya Ekta Diwas or National Unity Day is celebrated on October 31 every year in the memory of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Home minister of the country, affectionately known as the Iron Man of India. Rashtriya Ekta Diwas is celebrated across the country on the birth anniversary of Sardar Patel to honor his contributions to unifying India after independence. The Rashtriya Ekta Diwas was established by the central government in 2014. The main aim of this event is to pay homage to Sardar Patel for his remarkable efforts in integrating India after independence by integrating all princely states. In 2014 Prime minister

The main aim of this event is to pay homage to Sardar Patel for his remarkable efforts in integrating India after independence by integrating all princely states .

Narendra Modi led the celebrations of the first National Unity Day with the Run for Unity programme in Delhi.

The National Unity Day has its special significance as it affirms the inner strength and fortitude of the nation, reminding citizens about unity, integrity and security. Rashtriya Ekta Diwas is celebrated with enthusiasm in most public and private institutions, schools and colleges across the country. In 2019, PM Modi attended an event on National Unity Day at the Statue of Unity in Gujarat. The National Unity march was also organised on the occasion. In addition, National Unity Day provides

an avenue for rewarding those who have contributed to the unity of the country and national integration. The Sardar Patel National Unity Award, the highest civilian award in the field of contribution to the unity and integrity of India, was established by the central government. The awardees are conferred with this prestigious award on October 31 every year. Apart from this, schools and collages actively participate in the National Unity Day by hosting a range of cultural activities with the overarching theme of fostering unity. The observance of National Unity Day not only pays homage to a significant historical figure but also serves as a reminder of the importance of unity and integrity in the diverse and culturally rich nation like India .

On this important and auspicious occasion, besides remembering Sardar Patel and his contribution in unifying India after independence ,we should solemnly resolve to uphold, strengthen and further national unity and integrity by bridging the differences, if any between the different communities, castes ,regions and sects so that communal amity and mutual brotherhood are maintained, which gives strength to the country. The best tribute to Sardar Patel on his birth anniversary is that we should resolve to uphold national unity, integrity, security, pluralism and secularism which represent the very idea of India .Let us dedicate ourselves for the right cause of maintaining and furthering national unity at all costs and in this lies the good of the country.

The author is a columnist, social, KP activist

Khelo India Sports Goods Manufacturing Scheme

On October 28, the Union Cabinet approved the Khelo India Sports Goods Manufacturing Scheme with an outlay of INR 1,856.67 crore. The money will be spent from 2027 to 2034. This scheme was first announced in the Union Budget along with a timeline that matters, as often we have seen good ideas often stay on paper only.

Currently, India produces a lot of sports goods. A case in point is Jalandhar and Meerut. The two big centres are popular for making sports items and products. Together the two cities have over 250 exporting units. About 90% of production comes from small and micro firms.

Especially the bat manufacturing industry is massive, India producers are experts in the field. Indian brands and makers hold about 75% to 80% of the global cricket bat market. But our equipment exports are only \$275 million. The world exports about \$52 billion. That gap is massive.

Smaller firms find it hard to expand. As per the provision of this scheme they lack testing labs, design help and obviously financial assistance. They also struggle to get the certificates that foreign buyers ask for.

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How will the scheme work? The scheme will probably work on multiple fronts (six-stages). On the first level, it plans manufacturing zones. These will



bring makers, suppliers, testing labs and design centres to one place. There may be four such zones, each over 300 acres.

While on the second stage it offers money for investment. Anchor investors who put in at least INR 100 crore get 20% support on capital spending. Makers who invest INR 10 crore or more can get up to 15% as turnover-linked support. Together, these two parts have INR 1,130 crore.

In the third stage, it helps in holding up existing clusters that are already on the ground. Shared facilities will be upgraded, with costs split with the States. This is where small firms stand to gain most.

In the fourth stage, it pays for

certification. INR 105 crore is set aside. The government will cover 70% of the cost of a first certificate and 50% of renewals. A bat or a helmet with an international seal sells more easily abroad.

It backs new ideas on the fifth vertical. Centres of Excellence will study materials and protective gear. Start-ups registered with DPIIT can get grants of up to INR 20 lakh.

On the sixth level, which is the outreach stage, it covers skills and marketing. There will be training, an India Sports Expo and a Brand India campaign.

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Relying on other schemes Khelo India Sports Goods Manufacturing Scheme will take

assistance from other schemes. For instance the zones will use land and sheds from the BHAVYA scheme and NICDC industrial parks. Research will link with the Anusandhan National Research Foundation. Marketing will use the Export Promotion Mission.

This is termed to be a very sensible and useful measure. The government is not building everything new. It is patching the gaps from the already existing design. The design will not only give cash to the beneficiaries but will fix the whole chain, from factory to certificate to buyer.

However, there remains some pertinent questions. For example, large investors will gain from the

20% support. Will small firms see the same benefit? Nearly 90% of the sector is small, so the scheme must reach them. The cluster upgrades will decide that.

Land acquisition will be another test to determine the positive outcome. Zones of 300 acres need clearances and State cooperation. If there are any delays there it means it will slow down everything.

Besides, what matters more is the timing. As we know Los Angeles will be hosting the Olympics in 2028. Ahmedabad is also going to host the Commonwealth Games in 2030. Brisbane follows in 2032. So there is every possibility that the demand for equipment will rise in the coming years.

What authorities are trying to gain out of this scheme, is that it wants India to make more of its own sports goods and import less. It wants more exports, more jobs and better quality.

As per the official estimation predictions, the exports could reach \$8.1 billion by 2036 which implies as many as 54 lakh jobs. That is a big leap if executed well.

Furthermore, this scheme has been made to develop a strong relationship between sport and industry. As Khelo India builds players. This scheme is going to build the equipment they use.

If both work, an Indian athlete may one day train, and win, with gear made in Jalandhar or Meerut. That is the ultimate goal of Khelo India Sports Goods Manufacturing Scheme.

(COURTESY: PIB SRINAGAR)

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Good Morning

Kashmir

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B-11, Budshah Flats, Jehangir

Chowk, Srinagar-190001

Printed at:

Khidmat Offset Printing

Press, The Bund, Srinagar

Published From:

Main Bus Stand, Near Masjid Rehmat,

Lal Bazar, Srinagar - 190023

Layout Designer

Aijaz Ahmad Dar

More Than A Spice

Protecting Kashmir’s Saffron Heritage

MOHAMMAD HANIEF

Saffron is more than a precious spice in Jammu and Kashmir; it is a symbol of heritage, identity and the enduring relationship between people and the land. The purple flowers that bloom across the saffron fields of Pampore represent generations of agricultural knowledge, the hard work of farming families and a tradition that has earned Kashmir recognition far beyond the Himalayan region. Often called red gold, saffron remains one of the most valuable crops cultivated in the Union Territory, offering considerable economic potential despite the challenges facing its production.

Today, Kashmir’s saffron industry is passing through a critical phase. Climate variability, inadequate irrigation, rising cultivation costs, pressure on agricultural land and marketing difficulties have made the future of saffron farming a matter of growing concern. At the same time, Ladakh is exploring the possibility of cultivating this high-value crop under its distinctive cold-desert conditions. The emerging initiative offers a new agricultural prospect, provided it is supported by scientific research, responsible water management and sustained institutional assistance.

The developments in Kashmir and Ladakh underline a wider need to strengthen traditional agriculture, diversify rural livelihoods and protect the natural resources on which Himalayan communities depend.

Pampore, in south Kashmir’s Pulwama district, is widely recognised as the centre of saffron cultivation. The crop is also grown in other suitable parts of the region, including areas of Budgam and Kishtwar. Locally known as “kong”, saffron occupies a distinctive place in Kashmiri culture, cuisine and hospitality.

Its delicate crimson stigmas are valued for their colour, aroma and flavour. Saffron is used in traditional dishes, beverages, confectionery and various commercial products. Its exceptionally high value relative to its weight is linked to the labour-intensive process of harvesting flowers, separating the stigmas and drying them under carefully controlled conditions.

For generations, saffron cultivation has provided income to farming families and contributed to the rural economy. Yet its importance cannot be measured by its market price alone. The crop represents traditional knowledge, seasonal agricultural practices and a cultural landscape that has become inseparable from Kashmir’s identity.



The Geographical Indication tag granted to Kashmir saffron in 2020 further strengthened its distinct identity. This recognition provides an important foundation for protecting authentic produce, improving consumer confidence and ensuring that Kashmir’s reputation is not undermined by adulteration or misleading labelling.

Kashmir’s saffron sector has received renewed attention through government-supported rejuvenation programmes, irrigation development and efforts to improve marketing. Officially reported production figures indicate that output reached approximately 23.53 metric tonnes in 2023–24 before declining to around 19.58 metric tonnes in 2024–25.

These fluctuations demonstrate that production remains sensitive to seasonal conditions and the effectiveness of cultivation practices. While rejuvenation programmes have helped improve selected saffron fields, sustainable progress requires more than restoring land or distributing planting material. Farmers need reliable irrigation, healthy corms, technical guidance and a market that rewards quality.

Climate variability has become an important concern for saffron growers. Irregular rainfall, prolonged dry spells and changing temperature patterns can affect the crop’s development and flowering. Since saffron depends on suitable moisture conditions at critical stages, water scarcity can sig-

nificantly undermine productivity.

The expansion of settlements and commercial activities has also placed pressure on agricultural land in parts of Kashmir. Protecting traditional saffron fields is essential not only for safeguarding farmers’ incomes but also for preserving the agricultural heritage of the region.

Another persistent difficulty is the gap between the premium reputation of Kashmiri saffron and the returns received by individual growers. High cultivation costs, dependence on intermediaries, limited processing facilities and the risks of adulteration can reduce farmers’ earnings. Strengthening quality testing, transparent trading, modern packaging and direct links with buyers is therefore essential.

The future of Kashmir’s saffron industry depends on making cultivation more productive, climate-resilient and financially rewarding. First, irrigation infrastructure must be strengthened and maintained. Farmers need dependable access to water at appropriate stages of cultivation, particularly when rainfall is inadequate. Water-efficient irrigation methods, soil-moisture monitoring and locally suitable cultivation practices can help improve the use of available resources.

Second, agricultural research must be translated into practical support at the farm level. Regular soil testing, healthy planting material, improved field management and scientific harvesting and drying techniques can help

protect both yield and quality.

Third, the marketing system requires greater transparency. The India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre at Pampore offers an important platform for organised trade. Stronger quality certification, traceability, digital marketing and direct connections with buyers could help farmers obtain better prices.

Finally, farmers’ cooperatives and producer organisations should be encouraged to participate in processing, packaging and branding. Greater local involvement in the value chain would allow farming communities to capture a larger share of the economic benefits generated by this valuable crop.

Ladakh’s New Saffron Experiment
While Kashmir works to strengthen its traditional industry, Ladakh has begun exploring saffron cultivation as a possible avenue for agricultural diversification. In October 2026, a pilot saffron plantation was initiated at Spituk Pharka in Leh. The project reportedly involved approximately 90,000 saffron corms, weighing around 800 kilograms, planted across nearly 4,000 square metres of restored land under Project Him Sarovar.

The initiative aims to assess whether saffron can grow successfully in Ladakh’s high-altitude, cold-desert environment. The region receives limited rainfall, experiences considerable temperature variations and has a short agricultural season. These conditions

make the experiment particularly significant, but they also require careful scientific evaluation.

The pilot plantation should be viewed as an opportunity to generate evidence rather than as proof that saffron can immediately become a major commercial crop in Ladakh. Its performance will depend on soil conditions, drainage, seasonal temperatures, water availability and the ability of the plants to flower and produce quality stigmas.

If the pilot project proves successful, saffron could offer several potential advantages for Ladakh’s rural economy. Saffron could provide an additional source of income for farmers in suitable locations, complementing existing crops rather than replacing those essential for local food security. Cultivation, flower harvesting, stigma separation, drying, grading and packaging could generate work for local residents. Related activities may also create opportunities for small businesses and agricultural entrepreneurs.

Women’s self-help groups could participate in processing, packaging, branding and marketing. Appropriate training, access to credit and reliable market connections would be necessary to turn these activities into sustainable sources of income. Where soil and water conditions permit, saffron may help bring selected underutilised plots into productive use. However, land restoration must be guided by scientific assessment, and not every barren area will be suitable for cultivation.

Kashmir and Ladakh possess different agricultural environments, but their experiences could complement one another. Kashmir offers generations of knowledge in saffron cultivation, harvesting, processing and marketing. Ladakh provides an opportunity to examine the crop’s adaptability under different Himalayan conditions.

With effective government support, farmer participation, improved technology and responsible resource management, Kashmir can strengthen its position in the saffron industry while Ladakh explores a promising new agricultural opportunity. The ultimate measure of success will not simply be the expansion of saffron fields, but the creation of sustainable livelihoods, stronger rural economies and a more resilient agricultural future for the Himalayan region.

(The author is a senior analyst and environmentalist. Feedback can be sent to m.hanief@gmail.com. Twitter/X: @haniefmha)

Different Coloured Capsicums? It’s More Than What You See

THERESA LARKIN

Raw, grilled, roasted, stuffed – there are many ways to enjoy capsicums, also called bell peppers, sweet peppers or paprika. Capsicums originated in Central and South America and belong to the nightshade family along with tomatoes and eggplants. Like tomatoes, we consider capsicums a vegetable because they’re lower in sugar than most fruits and are usually eaten in savoury dishes. But botanically speaking, capsicums are a fruit – more specifically, a berry – because they develop from a flower and contain seeds.

Spicy chilli peppers such as jalapeño, bird’s eye and many others are also a type of capsicum. What makes these spicy is the molecule capsaicin, which activates heat and pain receptors on our tongue. Capsicums are sometimes called sweet peppers because they don’t contain capsaicin.

You might think green, yellow, orange and red are different types of capsicum, but they’re all actually the same fruit. All capsicums start out green, and their colour changes to yellow, then orange and finally red as they ripen. But the difference between the colours isn’t just superficial – it affects nutrition, flavour and more.

The link between colour and flavour

First, let’s bust the myth that a capsicum with three bumps on the bottom is “male” and one with four bumps is “female”, and therefore sweeter. This is entirely false. Fruits don’t come with male and female parts the way flowers do. A capsicum will typically have two to five lobes (bumps). The shape mostly depends on the genetics of the plant and doesn’t affect the flavour.

But colour does affect a capsicum’s flavour because this reflects how ripe the capsicum was when it was picked. A capsicum starts out green because



it contains lots of chlorophyll, the pigment that makes plants green. Chlorophyll is the plant chemical of photosynthesis and makes energy for the capsicum to grow. As a capsicum ripens, chlorophyll breaks down and is replaced by carotenoids: yellow, orange and red pigments. Green capsicums also contain some carotenoids, but these colours are hidden by chlorophyll.

Green capsicums are ready to be picked about eight weeks after planting. Because they are not ripe, they are slightly bitter with a firm, crunchy texture. They suit stir-fries, fajitas, casseroles and add crunch to salads.

Yellow and orange capsicums are in the middle of ripening and are picked roughly two (yellow) and three

(orange) weeks after green capsicums. These have a mild, sweet flavour. They are quite crisp when raw – great for adding colour to salads and lunchboxes. They soften when cooked, so are also good on the barbecue.

Red capsicums are the ripest, having stayed on the plant four weeks longer than green capsicums. They are the sweetest and richest in flavour, and the softest when cooked. They are excellent for roasting, soups and dips.

Colour affects nutrients too

All capsicums have several health benefits and are nutrient rich. They contain lots of vitamin C and antioxidants such as flavonoids, phenolic compounds and carotenoids. Capsicums are also a good source of fibre, which supports digestive health.

But there are differences in nutritional benefits based on colour, and whether you eat the peppers raw or cooked. Carotenoids – particularly capsanthin, beta-carotene, lutein, violaxanthin and zeaxanthin – impact the colour of capsicums based on the proportions in which they’re present. All carotenoids and chlorophyll are antioxidants, but with different health benefits. Green, yellow and orange capsicums are rich in lutein, violaxanthin and zeaxanthin. These are essential for eye health and protect against age-related macular degeneration and cataracts.

Orange and red capsicums have the highest vitamin C and beta-carotene. Beta-carotene gets converted to vitamin A in the body, which is important for good cell health, vision, and

immune and cognitive functions. Red capsicums contain the most capsanthin, the carotenoid with the strongest antioxidant activity. This protects our body’s cells against damaging free radical chemicals.

For all capsicums, cooking increases the availability of carotenoids and polyphenols but reduces vitamin C. For the greatest nutritional benefits, it’s best to eat a combination of raw and cooked capsicums of different colours. In fact, eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables provides many beneficial compounds. We have measured carotenoids in the skin using a non-invasive device to assess vegetable intake, because most Australians don’t eat enough fruit and vegetables.

All capsicums are good capsicums

It’s interesting to note a capsicum’s colour can also affect its price. Green capsicums are usually the cheapest because they’re picked earlier, which makes them cheaper to grow. Red capsicums remain on the plant the longest, increasing growing costs. However, yellow capsicums are typically the most expensive, as they’re harder to grow with a shorter picking period.

A cheaper and equally healthy option is “imperfect” capsicums. Two-toned capsicums, for example part green and part orange, provide a greater mix of different carotenoids. Malformed capsicums are only imperfect in appearance, not flavour or health benefits. Ultimately, all capsicums, whether red, green, yellow or orange, and raw or cooked, are a nutritious choice.

(The authors Theresa Larkin is an Associate Professor of Medical Sciences, University of Wollongong and Megan Hammersley works as Lecturer, Public Health, University of Wollongong. The article is part of ‘The Conversation’)

Police busts jail-linked intra UT fundraising module in Shopian; 10 arrested

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Police in south Kashmir's Shopian district have arrested 10 people for allegedly raising funds to finance terrorist activities linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and The Resistance Front (TRF), a police statement said on Friday.

The arrests followed an investigation into suspected financial networks linked to terrorist activities. Police analysed suspicious online transactions conducted through various payment platforms and traced money trails across multiple layers, the statement said.

The investigation revealed a wider network of individuals allegedly

involved in terror financing and linked to militants and their associates lodged in different jails across the union territory, police said.

Ten people have so far been arrested in connection with the case. A first information report (FIR No. 231/2026) has been registered at Shopian police station under relevant sections of law, the statement said.

The arrested persons were identified as Owais Shafi Naikoo, son of Mohammad Shafi Naikoo of Saidpora Bala, Shopian; Tajamul Ahmad Shah, son of Ab. Rashid Shah of Rawalpota, Shopian; Moiz Iqbal, son of Mohammad Iqbal Hajam, and Imdad Yousuf Ganie, son of Mohd Yousuf Ganie, both resi-

dents of Chitragam Kalan. The others were identified as Saqib Zahoor Wani, son of Zahoor Ahmad Wani, and Liyaqat Nazir Lone, son of Nazir Ahmad Lone, both residents of Murran, Pulwama; Aamir Ahmad Ganie, son of Gh Nabi Ganie of Armolah, Pulwama; Firdous Thokar, son of Gh Qadir Thokar of Nadigunf, Trenz; and Mohd Hanief, son of Kaju Sheru, and Kaju, son of Haji Sheeru, both residents of Check Haria, Kathua, police said.

Initial investigations indicated that the accused were allegedly collecting money clandestinely from the public and channeling it through established financial networks to sup-

port the activities of LeT and TRF, police said.

The funds were also allegedly being used to provide logistical support, including smartphones, to facilitate terrorist activities, the statement said.

Further investigations are under way to establish additional financial links, identify other people involved in the network and determine its wider reach. More arrests are expected, police said.

Police said the operation was part of efforts, in coordination with other security agencies, to dismantle networks supporting terrorism and disrupt unlawful financial channels across Jammu and Kashmir.

■ B2B Networking Meet

J&K Tourism showcases diverse destinations, business opportunities at IITM Mumbai

GMK NEWS NETWORK

MUMBAI: Jammu & Kashmir Tourism showcased its diverse tourism offerings, emerging destinations and business opportunities at the B2B Networking Evening organised as part of IITM Mumbai-2026 at Club Mumbai.

The impactful presentation was delivered by Waseem Raja, Joint Director Tourism, Kashmir and Vivek Puri, CEO, Surinsar Mansar Development Authority. They highlighted the immense tourism potential of Jammu and Kashmir and its growing appeal as a preferred destination for the travellers.

The networking evening provided a vibrant platform for meaningful B2B interactions, with officers from J&K Tourism and tourism stakeholders



showcasing a wide range of tourism products, destinations and experiences across the Union Territory.

The presentation elucidated both the established and offbeat destinations of Jammu and Kashmir besides highlighting the recently organised major tourism events, including successful conduct of Kashmir Marathon. The event was projected as an important addition to J&K's

tourism calendar, further enhancing the destination's visibility among the travel trade and visitors.

The presentation generated considerable interest among the travel trade professionals, who raised queries, shared suggestions and offered valuable inputs. The visiting J&K Tourism officials actively responded to the queries and apprised the participants of the diverse tour-

ism experiences, destinations and investment and business opportunities available across Jammu and Kashmir.

The B2B interaction provided an important opportunity to strengthen engagement with the travel trade and explore new avenues for collaboration, partnerships and promotion of Jammu and Kashmir in key tourism markets.

12 years after 2014 floods, damaged siphon still awaits restoration in Pulwama

JAHANGEER GANAIE

PULWAMA: More than 12 years after the 2014 floods, farmers in Pulwama and Shopian are still awaiting restoration of a key irrigation siphon damaged during the deluge, forcing them to rely on an inadequate pumping system.

Located in Rakh village of Pulwama, the siphon, carried water across the Ranbiara rivulet to agricultural fields in villages including Rakh, Zahid Bagh, Darbagh, Naina, Batpora and Watchi. Its destruction disrupted irrigation supplies, affecting farm productivity for years.



Farmers said repeated appeals for reconstruction have gone unheeded. With the next agricultural season five to six months away, they have renewed

their demand for immediate restoration.

"The siphon has remained damaged since the 2014 floods. Our fields continue to suffer due to

inadequate water supply," farmers said.

They said parts of the canal network have fallen into disuse, while the temporary pumping arrangement has proved unreliable.

Abdul Rashid, a farmer from Batpora, said the system depends on erratic electricity and often fails to supply enough water to distant fields.

"We need a permanent solution, not temporary arrangements," he said.

Another farmer, Shabir Ahmad of Zahid Bagh, said authorities have offered assurances for years without visible progress.

Farmers said restoring

the siphon would revive the original irrigation network, ensure a dependable water supply and reduce dependence on electricity-driven pumps.

An Irrigation and Flood Control Department official acknowledged the delay, saying a project for reconstruction of the siphon and restoration of the canal network had been prepared but could not be executed due to certain issues.

"The matter is being pursued and work is expected to commence soon," the official said, adding that pumping stations are being used as an interim measure—(KNO)

ADC Handwara finalises arrangements for NUD Celebrations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

HANDWARA: Additional Deputy Commissioner, (ADC), Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi, Friday chaired a meeting in his chamber to discuss and finalise arrangements for the celebration of National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas), observed every year on October 31 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Iron Man of India.

During the meeting, the ADC reviewed preparations for the smooth and successful conduct of the celebrations and emphasised the importance of promoting national unity, integrity and solidarity among citizens. He stressed the need for close coordination among all concerned departments to ensure that the programme is organised in a



befitting manner.

The ADC directed the officers to ensure timely completion of all necessary arrangements and discharge their assigned responsibilities with dedication and commitment. He underscored that National Unity Day serves as an important occasion to reaffirm the collective resolve towards preserving the unity, integrity and security of the nation.

The meeting was attended by the DSP DAR Handwara, Tehsildar Handwara, Deputy Chief Education Officer, Kupwara/Handwara, Principals of Boys' and Girls' Higher Secondary Schools, Handwara; Zonal Education Officer Handwara, Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Handwara, and Zonal Physical Education Officer Handwara, besides other concerned officials.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
SUB TRANSMISSION DIVISION-Ist (KPDCL), BEMINA, SRINAGAR

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-NIT No. STD I / 25 of 2026-27 dated 30.10.2026

For and on behalf of the Managing Director KPDCL, e-Tenders, (In Two Cover System) is hereby invited from reputed A-class Electrical Contractors / registered firms/suppliers enlisted with CPWD/MES/Railways/DGS&D/JKPPD, for the work mentioned as:-

S.No	Description of Work	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Cost of document (In Rs.)	AA/TS	Allocation of Funds	Last date of submission of e-bid (online)
01	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 33kV, Three core 400 mm ² Aluminum , Flat Strip Armoured XLPE Cable , FRLS (Single Circuit + one spare cable) Underground from Waganpora Grid to Firdous Colony as alternate Route for 33KV Waganpora-Soura Line as per relevant IS Standards	Rs 2,86,200.00 Two Lacs Eighty Six Thousand and Two Hundred only "No Exceptions allowed for MSME holders"	Rs.3000.00 (Three Thousand only) Non refundable "No Exceptions allowed for MSME holders"	Accorded	Rs. 25.00 Lacs approved for the current financial year 2026-27	21/11/2026; 03:00 PM

1.	Document Download/Sale (start) Date.	31/10/2026 ; 09:00 AM
2.	Document Download /Sale (End) Date.	21/11/2026; 02:00 PM
3.	Bidding Queries/Clarifications	02/11/2026 up to 04.00 PM
4.	Bid Submission Start Date	03/11/2026; 09:00 AM
5.	Bid Submission End Date	21/11/2026; 03:00 PM
6.	Commercial/Technical Bid Opening Date & Time	23/11/2026; 02:00 PM
7.	Financial Bid Opening	Shall be declared later on for the technically qualified bidders
8.	Venue of Commercial/ Technical Bid Opening	Electronically in the office of Executive Engineer STD-Ist Bemina Srinagar, J&K.
9.	Cost of e-Bid document	Rs.3000.00 (Rupees Three Thousand only) Non refundable
10.	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	Rs.2,86,200.00 Two Lacs Eighty Six Thousand and Two Hundred only
11.	Allocation of Funds	Rs.25.00 Lacs approved for the current financial year and out of which 12.50 Lacs stands already released. The balance funds will be reflected in the next years Works Programme under On-going works.

The bidders need to submit the proof/ cost of e-Bid document as stated in the above table through non-refundable Demand Draft pledged to Executive Engineer, STD-I, Bemina, Srinagar. The scanned copy of the Demand Draft must be uploaded on e-tendering portal in Commercial / Technical Bid Documents & hard copy of the same to be submitted in the office of the Executive Engineer, STD-I, Bemina, Srinagar before opening of techno-commercial bids.

1. All the e-Bids must be accompanied by the scanned copy of EMD in the form of CDR/ FDR only, pledged to the Executive Engineer, STD-I, Bemina, Srinagar. No Interest would be payable on Earnest Money deposited with the Department.

2. Hard Copy of original instrument of EMD shall be submitted to the office of the Executive Engineer, STD-I, Bemina, Srinagar, before opening of techno-commercial bids. In case any bidder shall submit/upload the bid declaration instead of EMD, his bid shall be summarily rejected and shall not be considered for techno-commercial evaluation.

3. The date and time of opening of financial bids shall be notified on web site http://jktenders.gov.in. This is conveyed to the qualified bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The financial bids shall be opened accordingly online on the same web site at the office of the Executive Engineer, STD-I, Bemina, Srinagar.

4. The e-Bids will be electronically opened in the presence of bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the identified venue on indicated date and time mentioned in the above table or any subsequent day to the convenience of the Tender Opening Committee. An authority letter of bidder' representative will be required to be produced.

5. The Department reserves the right to cancel any or all the e- Bids/ the e- Bid process without assigning any reason thereof .The decision of department will be final and binding.

6. In the event of date specified for e-Bids opening being a holiday/closed day for department's office then the due date for opening of e-Bids shall be the following working day at the same time and place.

7. All the required documents excluding Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded by the e-Bidder electronically in the PDF format, whereas Price Schedule/BOQ should be up loaded electronically in the same BOQ sheet provided with the SBD.

8. To participate in e-bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' As per Information Technology Act-2000, to participate in online bidding.

9. Hard copy of technical bid, technical specification and commercial bid documents (complete) of L1 Bidder must be delivered to the office of the Executive Engineer, STD-I, Bemina, Srinagar.

10. The sealed cover shall be scribbled as "Techno-Commercial Bid against e-NIT No. STD-I/25 of 2026-27 dated 30/10/2026. The name of the L1 bidder and e-NIT no. shall be clearly written on the cover. It may be noted that the hard copy should be an exact replica of the uploaded offer documents. For evaluation purposes the uploaded documents will be treated as authentic and final. The hard copy shall be used only for reference purpose.

11. The name of the bidder and e-NIT no. shall be clearly written on the cover. It may be noted that the hard copy should be an exact replica of the uploaded offer documents. For evaluation purposes the uploaded documents will be treated as authentic and final. The hard copy shall be used only for reference purpose.

12. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents.

Any other information regarding e-tendering process can be had from the office of the Executive Engineer, STD-I, Bemina, Srinagar

No.- STD-I/ 4722-25
Dated:- 30/10/2026
DIPK-NB-1982-26
DT: 30/10/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Sub Transmission Division-I,
Bemina, Srinagar.

Government of (UT) Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
PWD (R&B) DIVISION LANGATE

OFFICE ADDRESS: LANGATE, NEAR BOYS HIGHER SECONDARY, 193302

Mr. Aamir Hussain Baba,
S/o Mohd Ashraf Baba,
R/o Trehgam Kupwara,
Mobile 6006712125.

FINAL NOTICE

Subject: Construction of ACR at Middle School Gundrazak.
Reference: 1) Allotment No. EE/RnB/L/1056-58 dated 20-06-2026.
2) AEE, R&B SD Qalamabad's Notice No. AEE/SDQ/264-65 dated 17.08.2026.

The above subjected work stands allotted to you vide the allotment referred above, as per the terms and conditions of the allotment, the work was required to be completed within a stipulated period of Thirty (120) days from the date of allotment.

It is observed with serious concern that, despite the lapse of the stipulated time period and repeated directions issued to you through Notice-I vide AEE/SDQ/205-06 dated 30-07-2026 and Notice-II vide AEE/SDQ/241-42 dated 10-08-2026, you have failed to execute the said work.

Your continued failure to start the work despite repeated notices reflects non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the allotment and has caused unnecessary delay in the execution of the work, thereby causing inconvenience to the general public.

Now therefore, you are hereby given a final opportunity through this final notice to mobilize men and resources and resume the said work within two (02) days positively. Failing compliance, the contract shall be foreclosed, your performance security as well as the additional performance security shall be forfeited, and you shall further be debarred from participating in the future tendering process of this Division for a period of one (01) year.

No: EE/RnB/L/3926-29
Dated: 30.10.2026

DIPK-7233-26
DT: 30/10/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Langate.

Government of (UT) Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
PWD (R&B) DIVISION LANGATE

OFFICE ADDRESS: LANGATE, NEAR BOYS HIGHER SECONDARY, 193302

M/s. Shan Constructions,
Prop: Farooq Ahmad Paul,
R/o Lasjan Budgam.

FINAL NOTICE

Subject: Construction of Drains, Lanes, Protection Bunds and Tiles at Different Places of MC Langate.
Reference: 1) Allotment No. SE/R&B/K/530-33 of 2025-26 dated 02-05-2026.
2) AEE, R&B SD Langate's Notice No. AEE/SDL/445-47 dated 21.10.2026.

The above subjected work stands allotted to you vide the allotment referred above, as per the terms and conditions of the allotment, the is scheduled to be completed within a stipulated period from the date of allotment.

It is observed with serious concern that the pace of work is very slow, and repeated directions issued to you through Notice-I vide AEE/SDL/265-66 dated 06-07-2026 and Notice-II vide AEE/SDL/464-65 dated 22-08-2026, you have failed to compliance for the same.

Your continued failure to start the work despite repeated notices reflects non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the allotment and has caused unnecessary delay in the execution of the work, thereby causing inconvenience to the general public.

Now therefore, you are hereby given a final opportunity through this final notice to mobilize men and resources and resume the said work within two (02) days positively. Failing compliance, the contract shall be foreclosed, your performance security as well as the additional performance security shall be forfeited, and you shall further be debarred from participating in the future tendering process of this Division for a period of one (01) year.

No: EE/RnB/L/3909-13
Dated: 30.10.2026

DIPK-7221-26
DT: 30/10/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Langate.

CMYK

CMYK

CMYK

India Announce 23-Member Squad For AFC U17 Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers

IAN S

NEW DELHI: India U17 men's national team head coach Mehrajuddin Wadoo has named a 23-member squad for the AFC U17 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2027 Qualifiers, scheduled to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from November 11 to 20.

India will aim to secure qualification for back-to-back editions of the continental tournament and have been placed in Group E alongside hosts Malaysia, Palestine, Singapore and Guam.

India will begin their qualifying campaign against Singapore on November 11, followed by matches against Guam on November 17, Palestine on November 19 and Malaysia on November 20. All matches will be played at the MP Selayang Stadium in Selayang.

Only the group winners will qualify for the final tournament, which is scheduled to take place in Uzbekistan from



May 12 to 29, 2027.

As part of their final preparations, the Indian team will play two international friendly matches against the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in Ras Al Khaimah on November 1 and 4. Both matches are scheduled to kick off at 8:30 PM IST.

The same 23-member squad will feature in the two friendlies before travelling directly to Kuala Lumpur on November 5 for the qualifiers.

The Blue Colts recently played two friendly matches against Myanmar in Thanlyin earlier this month. India drew

the opening match 1-1 before registering a convincing 4-0 victory in the second encounter.

Following the Myanmar tour, the team continued its preparatory camp in Goa before travelling to the UAE on October 30.

The squad comprises three goalkeepers, eight defenders, six

midfielders and six forwards.

The squad:
Goalkeepers: Arnav Pandhare, Maroof Shafi and Newton Irengbam.

Defenders: Jinesh Thoudam, Lawmsangzuala, Leo Thongbam, Malem Laishram, Malsawmtluanga, Sailex Oinam, Maldino Singh Yumnam and Zoramdinthara.

Midfielders: Dallalmon Gangte, Henthoba Keisam, David Mangang Irom, Mukundo Singh Ningthoujam, R Lawmsangzuala and Thiyan Sambay.

Forwards: Hrishikesh Charan Manavathi, Kangouhao Doungel, Md Sahir Ali, Raj Singh Wahengbam, Ristik Maity and Felix Meitei Saikhom.

India's qualifying campaign will begin at 6:30 PM IST against Singapore, while the matches against Guam and Palestine will start at 1 PM IST. The final group-stage fixture against Malaysia is scheduled for 6:30 PM IST on November 20.

Iconic Jersey

Rohit Sharma Reveals The Story Behind Picking Number 45

IAN S

MUMBAI: Indian cricketer Rohit Sharma, who hosts the gaming reality show 'Family Full House with Rohit Sharma', has shared the story behind his iconic number 45 jersey.

The personal story involves an early cricketing memory, a conversation with his mother, and a number that simply felt right to him.

During the conversation on the show actor Rahul Lohani asked Rohit about the significance of the number 45, saying, "Sir, 45 number jersey dekhte hi ya sunte hi samajh aa jaata hai logon ko ki Hitman aa gaya hai, Par ye 45 number kyun choose kiya aapne, sir?"

Recounting the story behind his choice, Rohit said, "It was a very simple logic, when I played cricket in a jersey for the first time, because when you wear a jersey, you have to choose a number. So people had already chosen all the numbers, number 5, number 8, number 9. I wanted a single-digit number, but everyone had already chosen. So, the only number left for me was 19. Because I just liked the number 19. So I put on the number 19 and I played too, in the Under-19."

However, Rohit realised that he would have to reconsider his choice if he went on to represent the Indian team. Explaining how he discovered this, he shared, "Then after that, I think we were playing



together at that time, but I can't remember the name right now. They told me, 'Hey brother, this is Under-19, you will play in the India team, you can't take this number.' So I said, 'Why?' dude, and he said, 'It's Rahul Dravid's number,' and Rahul Dravid was playing with number 19 at that time, and he was the captain".

Rohit then sought advice from his mother, as he said, "So right after that, immediately in the evening, I reached the hotel and called mom. I told Mom, 'Mom, I can't play with this number.' Now you tell me which number I should play with. So, mom picked this number '45' for me".

"Mom told me, 'Play with number 9, it will be good for you.' The number 9 had gone, I didn't want to play with the number 27. So I was really liking 4 and 5 being around. So I also gave this feedback to my mom that 45 looks much better, so I said, 'Mom, I'll take this number. This is also 9, and the number on the jersey 4-5 will look very good too', he added.

'Family Full House with Rohit Sharma' is available on Sony Entertainment Television and streaming on Sony LIV.

Indian Boys Beat Cuba To Finish 87th At FIFA U15 World Cup Festival

IAN S

BAKU: Indian boys concluded their campaign on a winning note in the FIFA U15 World Cup & Festival, defeating Cuba 6-4 in the 87th-place play-off at the Hovsan Competition Complex Pitch 1B in Baku, Azerbaijan, on Friday.

Victor Lalawmpuia, Nibas Meetei Wahengbam and R. Lalremruatfela scored twice each as the Blue Colts secured victory in their 10th and final fixture of the tournament. India built a commanding 6-1 advantage before Cuba struck three late goals to narrow the margin.

In the inaugural FIFA U15 World Cup & Festival, India registered five wins over Laos, Cameroon, Bahrain, Trinidad and Tobago, and Cuba, suffered four defeats to Senegal, Honduras, Afghanistan and Kazakhstan, while drawing once against Grenada to finish in 87th place out of 189 competing nations.

In the last fixture, Bibiano Fernandes' side were on the charge from the outset and needed less than a minute to take the lead. Lalawmpuia stole possession from Cuba's central defender, evaded a challenge and calmly placed his shot into the bottom-right corner.

India doubled their advantage in the sixth minute through a well-worked move down the left. Lalremruatfela and Muhammad Sohil Khan combined before the latter delivered a cross across the face of goal, beyond the reach of the Cuban defence and goalkeeper. An unmarked Nibas arrived at the far post and tapped it home.

Cuba responded by testing Dhannya Desai from distance and close range, but the India goalkeeper produced several important saves to preserve his side's two-goal cushion, the AIFF reports.

India extended their lead in the 12th minute following a set piece. Sohil floated a free-kick into the area from the left, and although Cuba cleared the initial delivery, Nara Meitei Loushambam sent the ball back into the penalty box. Lalremruatfela was left unmarked and tapped it home to make it 3-0.

Cuba pulled a goal back in the 19th minute after an error in the Indian defence, but the Blue Colts returned with renewed attacking intent and restored their three-goal advantage in the 22nd minute. Nibas struck powerfully from long range to score his second.

4th T20I

'We Fell A Bit Short In Our Bowling,' Says Iyer After 87-Run Loss

IAN S

AUCKLAND: India captain Shreyas Iyer admitted that his team fell short with the ball in the fourth T20I against New Zealand, saying the hosts gained momentum during the powerplay, particularly in the third over, which proved costly in their 87-run defeat at Eden Park here on Friday.

New Zealand registered their first victory of the five-match series after Glenn Phillips smashed a sensational 107 off 49 balls, and Michael Bracewell contributed 65 off just 25 deliveries to power the hosts to a mammoth 259/7, their highest-ever T20I total. In reply, India were restricted to 172/9 in 19 overs, with Jacob Duffy claiming four wickets.

Speaking after the match, Iyer acknowledged that India's bowling performance was below expectations and praised Phillips for his outstanding knock.

"Yeah, absolutely. I think we fell a bit short in our bowling to start with. Powerplay, especially in the third over, they got that momentum from there on, and yeah, a couple of bowlers, they tried to squeeze in, but I think an exceptional knock by Glenn. Some phenomenal shots, which were like pure bliss. So kudos to him. He's been consistent throughout the series, so there's a lot to learn from him," Iyer said.

The Indian captain said the team would review its performance and work on improving its execution ahead of the fifth and final T20I in Hamilton.

"Yes, absolutely. I feel that it's



important to retrospect, see where we can actually bounce back, come into Hamilton and just have a day off. So I personally feel that we can probably go back to the drawing board and see to it we analyse and try to execute to the best of our abilities in the next game," he added.

Iyer also acknowledged that adapting to the dimensions of New Zealand grounds had been a challenge for some Indian players, particularly those experiencing such conditions for the first time. He, however, backed the team's efforts in the first three matches and described the defeat as a learning experience for the visitors.

"Conversation was just that we knew that the dimensions are going to be like this, and some

of them, it's their first time playing on such grounds. So it takes a bit of time for them to adapt to the challenge. It's not that easy; I understand that, but the way they executed the first three games, it was magnificent, and yeah, this is just a learning curve, I feel, that next time when they come here, they would probably have a better idea of how to go about their business. So a great learning curve, and hopefully we come back positive in the next game," he said.

India had already sealed the five-match series by winning the first three games, and the defeat reduced their lead to 3-1. The two teams will now meet in the fifth T20I in Hamilton, with India looking to finish the series on a winning note.

4th T20I: Phillips, Duffy Guide NZ To 87-Run Win Over India

IAN S

AUCKLAND: New Zealand gave India a taste of their own medicine as Glenn Phillips' century and Jacob Duffy's four-wicket haul powered New Zealand to a huge 87-run win over India in the fourth T20I at Eden Park here on Friday.

Phillips smashed 107 from 49 balls, while Michael Bracewell hit 65 from 25 deliveries to take Kiwis to a record 259/7, before the bowlers replied well to restrict India to 172/9 in the chase.

This is now the first win for New Zealand in the ongoing T20I series, with India having already taken an unassailable lead of 3-0 as the series now stands 3-1.

The New Zealand batters meted out a punishing treatment to the Indian bowlers. Phillips and Bracewell put up a 115-run stand from 40 balls for the fifth wicket to power the Kiwis to their highest T20I total and the highest against India in the format.

Duffy was the star with the ball for New Zealand in what was a rare blip from the Indian batters. With a task so steep, it was always going to be extremely hard, and the visitors gave it a go but could

not find the boundaries at will.

Duffy removed opener Sanju Samson (4) and No.3 returnee Ishan Kishan (0) in the first over to rock the Indian batting. Abhishek Sharma (27) and Shreyas Iyer (22) looked for quick runs but the former miscued it to mid-off in the fifth over as Matthew Fisher got his first.

Shreyas followed soon, getting cleaned up by Adam Milne in the sixth over for India to be struggling at 61/4 at the end of the powerplay.

In-form Naman Dhir (28) and Tilak Varma (35) were in the middle as Naman slammed 28, but he was dismissed in the 12th over by Duffy, with Daryl Mitchell and Nathan Smith taking a brilliant tag team catch on the deep mid-wicket fence.

Duffy had another when he got Arshdeep Singh for a golden duck caught at a deep point. Tilak was left alone with the tail, and he did find some boundaries, but the required rate had already climbed near 25 before the death overs for India to only do damage control.

Tilak made a run-a-ball 35 and was dismissed in the second-to-last over of the match by Fisher for his second wicket. Tilak skied



one high in the air as wicketkeeper Tim Seifert took a well-judged running and diving catch.

Prince Yadav found a boundary off an edge on the final ball of the 19th over and a six in the final over, but India were restricted to 172/7 with Prince going unbeaten on 18. Duffy took a four-wicket haul for a strong performance with the ball.

Earlier, New Zealand had probably batted India out of the contest with a jaw-dropping show in the first innings. The 259/7 is the highest T20I total, surpassing the previous highest score of 254/5, which they had smashed four years ago against Scotland

and is the most by any team against India, going past the previous 257/3 that England had hit in Southampton earlier this year.

The Indian bowlers had a very tough time in the middle. They were meted out a tough treatment, similar to what the Indian batters have generally done against the Kiwis this series.

Nitish Kumar Reddy was hit for a huge 32-run over, while Axar Patel, Mayank Yadav and Prince Yadav were also meted out with some punishing treatment. Arshdeep Singh also achieved a significant milestone during the game as he completed his 150 T20I wickets, becoming the first Indian to reach the milestone in the format.

For India, Mayank Yadav was the pick of the bowlers as he scalped 3-48 in his four overs on return, while Arshdeep, Prince Yadav and Nitish Kumar Reddy also picked one wicket each.

Brief Scores: New Zealand 259/7 in 20 overs (Glenn Phillips 107, Michael Bracewell 65; Mayank Yadav 3-48, Arshdeep Singh 1-38) beat India (Tilak Varma 35, Naman Dhir 28; Jacob Duffy 4-23, Mitchell Santner 2-24) by 87 runs.

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