



Kavinder Gupta appointed as LG for Ladakh

Says will work together with everyone for UT's development

JAMMU: The Rashtrapati Bhavan on Monday announced the appointment of senior Bharatiya Janata



Party (BJP) leader and former Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Kavinder Gupta, as the new Lieutenant Governor (LG) of the Union Territory of Ladakh.

This historic appointment marks Gupta as the first Jammu-born leader to hold this prestigious constitutional position, signalling a significant move by the central government to strengthen political engagement and governance in the region.

President Droupadi Murmu also accepted the resignation of Brigadier (Dr) B.D. Mishra (Retd), the outgoing Lieutenant Governor, paving the way for Gupta's appointment.

Reacting to his appointment, Kavinder Gupta expressed gratitude and humility, emphasising his commitment to the people of Ladakh.

Speaking to the media, he said, "It is an honour to serve the people of Ladakh. I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble President, Prime Minister, Union Home

■ See On P/6

Pahalgam Terror Strike Was Aimed At Crushing Kashmir's Economy: LG Sinha

FE NEWS NETWORK

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha took responsibility for the Pahalgam attack, calling it a Pakistan-sponsored act to disrupt Kashmir's economy and incite communal discord.

While acknowledging the security lapse, he highlighted the decline in local terrorist recruitment and emphasized the government's commitment to countering terrorism.

Sinha noted the temporary setback to tourism activities post-Pahalgam attack, but hoped the ongoing Amarnath Yatra would be a turning point.

In an interview to The Times of India, Sinha described the attack as a Pakistan-sponsored act of terror intended to sow communal discord and derail the region's economic progress.

"I take full responsibility for the incident, which was undoubtedly a security failure," Sinha said. He added that while the attack was a deliberate attempt to target India's unity, it should not be seen as evidence that terrorism is resurgent across the Union Territory.

"The intention of the neighbour (Pakistan) was to create a communal divide and trigger a backlash against people of J&K living in other parts of

the country, adding to the feeling of alienation," he said.

According to Sinha, the timing and location of the assault were aimed at undermining Kashmir's booming tour-

TOI, while also stressing that the widespread condemnation by ordinary Kashmiris was a "befitting reply to Pakistan and terror outfits."

Asked whether the participation of



ism sector and overall economic revival.

"In the past five years, the J&K economy's size has doubled. Tourists have been flocking in high numbers. This was a hit by Pakistan at the economic well-being of Kashmir," he told

local accomplices in the attack posed a fresh challenge for security forces, Sinha maintained that local recruitment of militants had fallen to record lows.

"There has been just one

■ See On P/6



"THERE HAS BEEN JUST ONE INCIDENT OF LOCAL RECRUITMENT THIS YEAR COMPARED TO 6-7 LAST YEAR. There was a time when this figure used to be 150-200. But it is also a fact that Pakistan has facilitated the infiltration of a large number of terrorists in both Jammu region and Kashmir region," he noted.



Need To Address De-Escalation; Competition Should Not Turn Into Conflict: EAM Jaishankar

FE NEWS NETWORK

BEIJING/NEW DELHI: India and China should build on "good progress" in normalising the bilateral ties to address border-related issues including de-escalation, and it is essential to avoid "restrictive trade measures and roadblocks", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday during talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi.

In his opening remarks at the meeting, Jaishankar said the bilateral relations can develop in a "positive trajectory" on the foundation that differences should not become disputes and nor should competition become a conflict, adding that the ties can be built only on the basis of mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity.

The external affairs minister said India hopes "zero tolerance for terrorism" will be upheld at the upcoming meeting of the SCO, noting that its primary mandate is

to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism, comments seen as a reference to Pakistan's support to cross-border ter-



rorism.

In New Delhi, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), describing the talks as "constructive and forward-looking", said the two sides agreed to take "additional practical steps", including travel to each other's country and direct flight connectivity, for facilitating

■ See On P/6

BJP MLAs protest in Jammu

Demand rollback of Urdu as compulsory language for NT posts

FE NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) on Monday staged a protest outside the Civil Secretariat and Assembly here, demanding the revocation of a government order mandating

Urdu as a compulsory language for the Naib Tehsildar recruitment examination



in Jammu and Kashmir. Led by Leader of Opposition in

■ See On P/6

Parts Of Kashmir Receive Fresh Rains, Mercury Dips

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: After a recent rise in maximum temperatures, the mercury has once again plummeted across the valley, with



several parts recording rainfall on Monday. The weather department here has predicted continued wet weather until 17 July.

The recent rains further lowered temperatures in Jammu and Kashmir.

Yellow and Orange alerts have been issued for J&K for the next week. "For Jammu division, an Orange alert has been issued.

There is a possibility of isolated heavy rains, thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds until 16 July," the details reveal. A Yellow alert has been issued for the division from 18 to 20 July.

The Yellow alert has also been issued for the Kashmir division for the next seven days.

Director of the Meteorological Department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said, that generally cloudy weather is expected, with the possibility of intermittent spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places, with intense showers and heavy rain at a few locations until 17 July.

He said that fresh spells of rain and thundershowers are expected at scattered places from 18 to 21 July.

Moreover, the MeT has issued an advisory saying that there is a possibility of intense showers at a few places in J&K, with heavy rain expected at isolated

■ See On P/6

Adventure Tourism Vital For Boosting Repeat Visits To Kashmir: CM Omar

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said that in order to promote repeat tourism in Kashmir, it is essential to offer something new and refreshing each time—like adventure tourism.

He was speaking at the launch of the book "Valleys of Jammu and Kashmir - A Tribute to the Soul of Jammu and Kashmir" authored by Mehmood A. Shah, Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited, at a local hotel here.

"If we aspire to promote repeat tourism, we must recognize that tourists won't return solely for our Mughal gardens or the Tulip bloom, nor just for the gondola rides. They return when offered something new—something refreshing each time. Adventure tourism provides

exactly that. No two experiences are ever the same. The trail looks different in the morning than it does at sunset. Each trek offers a unique story," the Chief Minister said.



Calling for preservation and promotion of the region's historic trekking routes, he said these trails, connecting Jammu with Kashmir and Kashmir with Ladakh—are

not just physical pathways, but cultural corridors of heritage and sustainable tourism.

"It is imperative that we market

Referring to the current situation, **Omar Abdullah** said it was **unfortunate** that the book is being released at a time when many of the trekking routes described in it remain **inaccessible** due to recent developments.

our trekking routes not just as a tourism product, but as part of our ecological and cultural legacy. We must not confine ourselves

■ See On P/6

'No healthy power factor in Kashmir'

Kashmir DISCOM lack power capacitor: Power Ministry

SRINAGAR: In Kashmir valley, there is no power capacitor available for the local DISCOM to improve the quality in electrical systems by compensating for reactive power and improving power factor. The official documents states that the Ministry of Power for Government of India (GoI) has provided the capacitors to industrial consumers to

keep healthy power factor. "In the meeting, it was informed from J&K side that presently no capacitors are available in Kashmir DISCOM although capacitors have been provided by industrial consumers to keep healthy power factor," reads the documents of (MoP).

The documents further states that

■ See On P/6

Amarnath Yatra

2.20 lakh devotees perform darshan in 12 days

■ 13th batch of 6,143 pilgrims leaves from Jammu

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The annual Amarnath Yatra has entered its twelfth day and continues to proceed smoothly, witnessing a steady rise in the number of pilgrims each day.

As of Monday, over 2.20 lakh devotees have offered prayers at the holy cave shrine since the pilgrimage began on July 3.

Officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer that a total of 20,448 pilgrims performed 'darshan' at the 3,800-meter-high holy cave shrine on Monday including 14,145 men, 5,214 women, 242 children, 84 sadhus, six sadhvis and 757 security force personnel paid their respects at the holy cave shrine.

Over the last twelve days, a total of 2,20,511 pilgrims have undertaken the ongoing pilgrimage, officials said.

They said the annual pilgrimage has been progressing smoothly amid tight security arrangements and favourable

weather conditions.

On Sunday, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha announced that the ongoing Amarnath Yatra has surpassed the 2-lakh mark, with devotees



continuing to throng the holy cave shrine.

In a post on X, LG Sinha expressed his joy, stating, "With Baba Amarnath Ji's blessings, the holy pilgrimage has crossed the 2 lakh mark today. This is a sacred journey of a lifetime, and I welcome all the devotees to discover and experience the divinity. Har Har Mahadev!"

Meanwhile, the 13th batch of 6,143 pilgrims undertaking the annual Amarnath Yatra left from the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu on Monday morning amid tight security arrangements.

Officials said that the pilgrims were

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divided into two escorted convoys heading towards the twin base camps of Baltal and Pahalgam. The first convoy comprising 100 vehicles left for the Baltal base camp in Central Kashmir's

■ See On P/6

CS pushes for 100% digital health records under ABDM

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, chaired a meeting to review implementation of the Ayushman

Taking stock of the ongoing initiatives under ABDM, the Chief Secretary underscored the urgency of linking patient health records with ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health



Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) in Jammu and Kashmir with a focus on ensuring seamless integration of healthcare data and digital services across the UT.

The meeting was attended by Secretary, Health & Medical Education; Managing Director, ABDM; Principals of Government Medical Colleges; Director Coordination (Medical Colleges) and other senior officers of the Department.

Account) IDs, emphasizing that no stone should be left unturned to complete this vital digital transition without any further delay. He called for interlinking of Sehat, ABDM and HMIS portals, to create a unified digital ecosystem that empowers the patients, healthcare professionals and institutions to access and share data effortlessly through a single platform.

■ See On P/6

India witnessed startup boom in last 10 yrs; students must focus on entrepreneurship: Jitendra Singh

JAMMU: Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Monday highlighted the startup boom in the country, noting that the number of startups has grown from 350 to nearly 1.75 lakh in the last decade and urged the student fraternity to shift their focus from being job seekers to becoming job creators.

He said the creation of the Rs 1 lakh crore National Research Foundation (NRF-Anusandhan) marks a significant push to encourage private sector investment in research and development, thereby strengthening the country's research ecosystem.

"From just 350 startups a decade ago, India now has over 1.75 lakh startups—creating 17.56 lakh jobs, more than many government recruitment initiatives," Singh said while addressing events, first at IIM and then at IIT in Jammu.

"We urge students to shift their mindset from being job seekers to becoming job creators, leveraging the enormous support available through various startup schemes," he said.

The Minister said that this

■ See On P/6

Kishtwar admin rolls out action plan for effective implementation of NTCP

Shri Machail Mata Yatra being declared as a No Tobacco Zone

KISHTWAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pankaj Kumar Sharma presided over a Workshop cum District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC) Review Meeting to assess the implementation of National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) in the district.

At the outset, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rajinder Kumar highlighted the anti-tobacco measures launched in the district.

He also discussed key components of the NTCP, including the prohibition of smoking in public places, the ban on the sale of tobacco products within a 100-yard radius of educational institutions and the restriction on both direct and indirect advertising of tobacco products.

The meeting deliberated on the need for concerted efforts, incorporating a comprehensive set of activities such as conducting Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaigns in schools and communities, declaring educational institutions as Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions (ToFEI), designating at least 40 villages as Tobacco-Free Villages by the next quarterly review and conducting aggressive enforcement drives to ensure compliance with tobacco control regulations.

The DC called for adopting all laid down procedures and guidelines in implementing the

NTCP in the district. He directed the Chief Education Officer to ensure that all educational institutions register on the ToFEI application and update the

in all offices and institutions to ensure the smooth implementation of anti-tobacco measures. A power presentation was given by Divisional

tobacco products, and enforcement measures. The police and other designated authorities were directed to conduct enforcement drives at regular intervals to strengthen anti-tobacco measures across the district.

The meeting also emphasized the importance of engaging ambassadors and role models to inspire youth to refrain from tobacco use and raise awareness about its harmful effects.

The DC declared Shri Machail Mata Yatra as a No Tobacco Zone and order in this regard shall be notified shortly.

He further directed concerned officers to ensure extensive channelling to curb tobacco use during the yatra.

He also directed all district and sectoral officers to declare their institutions as No Tobacco Zones and display necessary signage.

The meeting concluded with a resolve to enhancing coordination among the health, education, police and civil administration to ensure the effective implementation of the National Tobacco Control Program in Kishtwar.

The meeting was attended by ACD/CEO KDA Kaiser Bhawani, SDM Chatroo Nayeem UR Rehman Mughal, CMO Dr. Rajinder Kumar, CEO Kishtwar, ARTO, DIO, BMOs, BDOs besides others.



required 10-point Tobacco-Free attributes.

He also called for random inspection by the police, civil administration, and officers designated under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003.

The Block Development Officers were asked to educate all stakeholders and strengthen community-based efforts in combating tobacco use.

It was also decided to designate a Nodal Officer

Coordinator NTCP Shiveta Raina, under the enforcement benchmarks of the COTPA 2003, including 85% above score in declaration of Tobacco free Educational Institutions via ToFEI application.

The session also included detailed discussions on the provisions of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003, particularly sections 4, 5, 6 and 7, which focus on restrictions on smoking in public places, the sale and advertisement of

DC pitches for intensive efforts to make Reasi District TB-Free



REASI: Deputy Commissioner Reasi, Nidhi Malik, today chaired a high-level meeting to review the implementation and progress of the Intensified TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan under the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP).

The meeting focused on intensifying screening, providing better treatment, and enhancing inter-sectoral coordination to ensure the successful execution of the TB elimination drive. District Tuberculosis Officer Dr. Anil Saloach gave a detailed overview of the current status of TB in the district.

The DC issued a string of directives stressing on extensive screening to identify potential patients.

She instructed healthcare officials to achieve the set screening targets at the earliest.

She emphasized the need to prioritize high-risk groups, particularly individuals in close contact with TB patients – including family members, friends, and colleagues – to ensure timely treatment and prevention of further transmission.

In a significant move under the Nikshay Mitra initiative, DC Malik directed all doctors and healthcare officials to adopt at least one TB patient, providing them with nutritional basket kits and necessary amenities to support their recovery and overall well-being.

To enhance outreach and public engagement, the Deputy Commissioner instructed the Health Department to organize TB screening and awareness camps in collaboration with the Rural Development Department to ensure comprehensive community participation.

DC Malik also highlighted the urgent need for strengthening ongoing efforts, directing the Health Department to ensure the availability of diagnostic facilities in all health institutions across the district.

Reaffirming the administration's commitment to a TB Mukht Bharat, she encouraged collective action, robust monitoring and streamlined treatment delivery mechanism. She reiterated that Reasi is firmly aligned with the national mission to become TB-free by 2025.

The meeting was attended by CMO Dr. Ashraf Kohli, Deputy CMO, Medical Superintendent, BMOs and other concerned officers.

DC Samba reviews beneficiary verification under PMAY-U 2.0

SAMBA: Deputy Commissioner Samba Rajesh Sharma reviewed the beneficiary verification under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0 here at a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC).

The Committee reviewed applications received from Municipal Council Samba and the Municipal Committees of Vijayapur, Bari Brahmana, and Ramgarh.

After thorough scrutiny and joint spot verification by the Revenue and Urban Local Body (ULB) staff, eligible cases under the Beneficiary-Led Construction (BLC) component were recommended for further processing through the Unified Web Portal.

DC Samba directed the concerned officers to facilitate the applicants of pending cases for their expeditious disposal.

He emphasized the importance of transparency and proper identification of genuine beneficiaries to ensure that timely assistance reaches deserving households under the scheme.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Champa Devi Thakur; Assistant Commissioner Revenue; Senior Manager, Housing Board; District Social Welfare Officer; Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council Samba and other concerned officers and officials.

DDC Chairman Doda reviews finalization of Annual Action Plan 2025–26

DODA: A meeting of the District Development Council (DDC) was held in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex, under the chairmanship of DDC Chairman Dhanan Singh Kotwal, with the active participation of Deputy Commissioner, Harvinder Singh. The meeting was convened

all 17 blocks and 237 panchayats of the district.

The meeting was attended by DDC councilors, besides key officers and officials, including District Programme Officer ICDS Akhtar Qazi, ACD Din Mohammad Afaqi, ACP Mushraf Haif, Superintendent Engineers of PWD (R&B), Hydraulic, JPCL

of healthcare and power infrastructure; Promotion of livelihood opportunities and support to weaker sections of society; creation of adequate sports and youth engagement facilities and strengthening of Anganwadi centres through better monitoring and infrastructure.

Addressing the participants, DDC Chairman Dhanan Singh Kotwal directed the stakeholders to accelerate the works under JJM and to ensure that finalized plans are inclusive, realistic, and aligned with the needs of the people. He underscored the importance of consulting all stakeholders, maintaining transparency and accountability and ensuring timely and quality execution of projects. He also emphasized proactive field visits, stronger inter-departmental coordination and equitable development across all panchayats.

Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh stressed on plans that reflect the aspirations of the people and close monitoring during the implementation. He also highlighted the importance of maintaining financial discipline and prioritizing projects with maximum public benefit.

In his concluding address, DDC Chairman Dhanan Singh Kotwal appreciated the contributions of officers, councilors and MLA Mehraj Malik, acknowledging their dedicated approach to public service.

He assured that genuine demands raised during the meeting would be incorporated in the final plan.

He called for stronger ground-level execution to translate the plan into tangible and impactful outcomes.



to discuss and finalize the Annual Action Plan for the financial year 2025–26 with the focus on identification of developmental priorities, ensuring inclusive planning and addressing pressing local issues.

The meeting was also graced by the presence of MLA Doda East, Mehraj Malik, who actively participated in the discussions and shared valuable suggestions for the comprehensive development of the district.

A detailed PowerPoint presentation was delivered by Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Manesh Kumar Manhas, showcasing the ongoing works and proposed plans under various schemes, including DDC grants, Aspirational grants, ABDP and BDC grants.

The presentation highlighted the proposed projects for the upcoming financial year, covering

and PMGSY, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer and heads of Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry departments.

Representatives from Forest, PHE, REW, Social Welfare, Regional Transport, Youth Services and Sports, JAKEDA, Block Development Officers, Municipal Committees and BDC chairpersons were also present.

During the deliberations, departmental heads and BDOs presented proposed plans, while councilors and MLA Mehraj Malik raised demands and suggestions seeking improvement of road connectivity, especially in remote and hilly areas; strengthening of water supply schemes and accelerating works under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

Measures were also sought for environmental protection, including large-scale tree plantation drives, upgradation

the importance of maintaining unhindered access to public

by ACR Idress Lone and officers/officials from PWD, Jal Shakti,



infrastructure. The DC directed the Tehsildar to serve notices and seal vehicle washing points creating nuisance by throwing water on the road.

He asked stakeholder departments to safeguard public assets and uphold the convenience and safety of the general public.

The DC was accompanied

Revenue, Municipality, RDD and GREF Team, besides other concerned staff.

The inspection aimed to ensure proper maintenance of civic infrastructure and roads to provide a safe and convenient experience to the public, particularly during the upcoming yatra.

Rajouri gears up for grand Independence Day celebrations

DC, SSP discuss arrangements for National Event

RAJOURI: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma alongside Senior Superintendent of Police Gaurav Sikarwar reviewed the arrangements for the celebration of Independence Day 2025 at a meeting held here in the Dak Bungalow.

The Deputy Commissioner laid emphasis on making elaborate and coordinated preparations for the smooth conduct of the national function. He directed for proper stage arrangements, systematic seating for invitees and the public, appropriate length and content of cultural programs, and timely installation of a reliable Public Address (PA) system.

The DC emphasized that contingents from across the district will participate in the ceremonial March Past to reflect inclusiveness and discipline.

The DC also directed the concerned departments to ensure illumination of prominent government buildings, bridges, and key installations in the district as a mark of celebration.

He further suggested that stalls and displays highlighting the achievements and developmental milestones of the district be set up at the venue to showcase progress

under various government schemes.

DC directed ADCs and SDMs to monitor and ensure celebration in all Government institutions within their jurisdictions.

SSP Gaurav Sikarwar elaborated the security

urged all departments to work in a coordinated manner and finalize all arrangements well before time to ensure a grand and smooth celebration of Independence Day 2025

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner



arrangements. He emphasized the need for meticulous planning to ensure foolproof security and smooth movement of participants and visitors. He stressed on enhancing surveillance and increasing deployment at vulnerable points to ensure peaceful conduct of the celebrations. He also underscored the need for coordination among the security agencies to maintain law and order.

The Deputy Commissioner

Chander Prakash; ADC Kalakote Tanvir Ahmed; ADC Sunderbani Ramkesh Sharma; SDM Thanamandi Abid Hussain; Commandant JKAP Nasir Khan; ACD Auqil Naveed; SE PWD Tilak Raj; Executive Engineer PWD Aftab Ahmed; CMO Dr. Manohar Lal; DySP Traffic, ARTO, Tehsildar, representatives from defence forces, representative of BRO, Ex En PMGSY, Executive Officers of Municipal Committees and other sectoral and district officers.

Chairperson DDC Poonch discusses implementation of Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram

11 Development projects proposed for boosting infrastructure

POONCH: Chairperson District Development Council (DDC) Poonch Tazeem Akhter chaired the District Level Committee meeting on the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJKV) to review and approve the development proposals aimed at strengthening infrastructure in the District.

Member Legislative Assembly Haveli Ajaz Jan joined the meeting through virtual mode.

The meeting was also attended by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Pankaj Magotra, along with other Committee members including Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan; Chief Education Officer, Iftikhar Ali Shah; Lead District Manager, Ravi Kumar; District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO), Khalid

Ahmed Banday and Assistant Director, Goods, Adil Shabir. During the session, a total of 11 proposals—previously



approved and recommended by the Block Level Committees—were placed before the District Level

Committee. Each proposal was thoroughly discussed and deliberated upon by the members.

MLA Ajaz Jan offered valuable suggestions and emphasized the need for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) after thorough ground visits by the concerned departments.

Chairperson Tazeem Akhter underlined the importance of timely execution, maintaining transparency and ensuring active community participation in all developmental initiatives under PMJKV. She stressed that collective efforts are key to realizing inclusive growth and addressing the developmental needs of minority-concentrated areas.

The meeting concluded with a unanimous commitment to expedite the execution process for approved projects and to closely monitor progress for impactful outcomes.

Horticulture Department launches fruit plantation drive in Akhnoor Zone

JAMMU: The Horticulture Department today kick-started monsoon Plantation Drive in Zone Akhnoor. The drive took off with the ceremonial planting of a fruit sapling by Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu Rakesh Kotwal at Village Gandharwan of block Akhnoor. The initiative marks a significant step toward sustainable horticultural development and aims to boost fruit cultivation in the region's rainfed and sub-tropical areas.

District level subject Matter Specialist Rakesh Bhagat, Horticulture Development Officer (HDO) Akhnoor Virender Kumar and HDO Khour Amit Saraf were also present. The event drew enthusiastic participation from local farmers and community members, reflecting a growing awareness and interest in horticulture-based

livelihood opportunities. After the plantation drive, Kotwal addressed the farmers, sensitizing them about various Central and UT Government Sponsored Schemes being implemented by the Horticulture Department. He highlighted flagship initiatives such as the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH). These schemes, he explained, are specifically designed to provide financial assistance, technical know-how and market linkage support to orchardists and aspiring horticulturists. Emphasizing the importance of adopting scientific and modern horticultural practices, Kotwal encouraged farmers in the rainfed and sub-tropical belts of Akhnoor to switch to improved cultivation techniques

for fruit crops like guava, mango, citrus, and aonla—crops well-suited to local agro-climatic conditions. He called upon the farming community to actively participate in these developmental schemes to enhance productivity and profitability.

DLMS Jammu, HDO Akhnoor and HDO Khour, also engaged with the farmers during the event, addressing their queries and providing guidance on best practices in orchard management, pest control strategies and soil health improvement measures. The event concluded with a shared commitment from both the department and the local farming community to work collaboratively toward promoting horticulture as a sustainable and economically viable means of livelihood in the region.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah meets various delegations at Raabita Office



FE News Network

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today met several delegations at the Public Outreach Office, Raabita, and held wide-ranging discussions on development, overall functioning of Institutions and public welfare issues.

Dr. Mohd. Jaffar Akhoun, Chief Executive Councillor from Kargil, led a deputation to apprise the Chief Minister of several challenges being faced by students and patients from

Ladakh, particularly from Kargil, in different educational and healthcare institutions across Jammu and Kashmir. The deputation also raised various civic issues affecting the residents of Ladakh living in the J&K, seeking timely redressal and support.

Prof. Jawaid Iqbal, Vice Chancellor of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU), Rajouri, briefed the Chief Minister about the functioning of the university. The VC discussed several ongoing academic and administrative

initiatives at the university and sought the Chief Minister's support for strengthening higher education in the region.

Sandeep Sharma, Zonal Head of ICICI Bank, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed matters related to the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. He informed the Chief Minister about the rescue vehicle provided for Dachigam and initiatives aimed at employment generation and community welfare.

Brigadier Deepak Sajjan Har from NCC, Srinagar, met the Chief Minister to present a memento in connection with the NCC Everest Expedition-2025, highlighting the achievements and commitment of the NCC cadets to contribute to national pride and adventure sports activities.

Later, Sameer Bakto, Chairman of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), J&K Chapter, met the Chief Minister along with a visiting team from SKAL INTERNATIONAL. The team, currently on a visit from Mumbai, discussed the upcoming SKAL India Convention and proposed to make the event Kashmir-centric in the post-Yatra season, with an aim to promote the region's tourism potential globally.

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to all deputations and assured appropriate action and continued government support as may be necessary.

CS for harnessing ONDC to promote e-commerce in J&K



FE News Network

SRINAGAR: In a move to catalyze the growth of small businesses through digital integration, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, chaired a high-level meeting with the CEO of Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to explore opportunities for leveraging the ONDC platform to promote e-commerce in J&K.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Executive Director, J&K Bank; Secretary, Labour & Employment; Secretary, Tribal Affairs; Secretary in Industries & Commerce; Director General, Budget; Director, Labour & Employment; State Informatics Officer, NIC; Representative from BISAG-N besides other senior officers.

During the deliberations, the Chief Secretary emphasized the immense potential of digital commerce in strengthening the local economy and creating new livelihood avenues. He underscored the importance of initiating the digital push with simple, scalable models, and expanding gradually by addressing implementation challenges in a phased manner.

Dulloo emphasised on the fact that J&K must embrace the digital shift by harnessing the capabilities of ONDC to empower the small and nano entrepreneurs first to serve locally. He directed the Labour & Employment Department to begin with a hyper-local delivery system within a defined

radius around businesses.

He also called for onboarding service providers such as electricians, plumbers and other technicians on the digital platform, enabling the citizens to avail their services conveniently here.

The CEO, ONDC, shared success stories from other states, including that of Sri Vidhya Handlooms and Himira in Himachal Pradesh and their initiatives taken in Andhra Pradesh where ONDC played a transformative role in supporting the entrepreneurs to reach national markets in shorter time durations. He elaborated on ONDC's potential to digitize local economy of J&K and link the same with the national digital market, thereby uplifting key economic drivers here.

Speaking on J&K's roadmap, Director, Labour & Employment, Shahzad Alam, informed that the UT is looking to adopt a hyper-local delivery model within a 3-4 km radius through a seller app developed by BISAG-N. He added that various categories of service providers would soon be onboarded to offer their services through an integrated online hiring platform.

Moreover, he said that the Department is contemplating establishment of district and UT-level collection hubs to facilitate the sale and distribution of goods produced by J&K's weavers, artisans, and other small-scale manufacturers, thereby ensuring better market access and fair value for their products.

DLIC Kulgam approves 106 fresh cases under Mission YUVA

FE News Network

KULGAM: In a significant push towards fostering self-reliance and entrepreneurial growth among the youth, District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) Kulgam, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, approved 106 new self-employment proposals under the ambitious Mission YUVA scheme.

The meeting held at the DC Office Complex, witnessed detailed deliberations over the proposals that had been scrutinized and recommended for approval by the Small Business Development Unit (SBDU) after due verification and feasibility assessment.



The SBDU had conducted a rigorous appraisal of each application before presenting them to the DLIC.

The newly approved cases span over a diverse array of sectors, including agriculture and allied activities, retail ventures, services, small-scale manufacturing and other skill-based enterprises. The variety of business ideas reflects the growing entrepreneurial spirit among the youth of the district and their willingness to explore innovative livelihood options.

While speaking on the occasion, DC lauded the collective efforts of the SBDU, BHDs and field functionaries in identifying, guiding, and mentoring aspiring youth entrepreneurs. He emphasized that Mission YUVA is not just a scheme, but a movement aimed at empowering the younger generation with tools for sustainable income generation and self-worth.

DC issued instructions to ensure timely disbursement of financial assistance, active mentoring post-approval, and continuous monitoring of the performance and viability of the sanctioned units. He reiterated the importance of structured weekly review mechanisms, with BHD meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays, SBDU sittings every Friday, and DLIC reviews every Saturday, to maintain momentum and transparency in the implementation process.

GMDIC, DSWO, AD Employment, Lead Bank Manager, DDM NABARD, DNO JKEDI, CCO & EO DE&CC Kulgam attended the meeting and shared their insights regarding inter-departmental coordination and timely support to the approved beneficiaries.

Nasha Mukht JK Abhiyan: DC Budgam reviews progress of IEC campaign Stresses structural IEC drive & proactive campaigns at hotspots of the district

FE News Network

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of the ongoing Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign under Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, aimed at curbing the menace of drug abuse in the district.

DC reviewed the implementation and outreach of awareness activities conducted across educational institutions, panchayats, and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

While reviewing the progress, DC took detailed stock of the campaigns carried out by the nodal departments and raised concern over key issues such as inadequate display of IEC materials, irregular conduct of video screenings,

delayed or incomplete uploading of event details and participant data, and absenteeism of designated resource persons during the events.

He directed all concerned officers and event coordinators to ensure that all awareness programs are properly documented and promptly uploaded on the designated portal.

He further emphasized the importance of enhancing community participation and improving the visibility and reach of awareness content to create a lasting impact.

Stressing a more targeted and impactful approach, DC called for structural IEC campaigns and regressive outreach activities at identified drug abuse hotspots in the district.

He said that intensive and structured



campaigns at vulnerable locations will play a vital role in building awareness, promoting rehabilitation, and discouraging substance abuse at the grassroots level.

Dr. Bilal also urged departments to maintain inter-sectoral coordination and ensure the presence of trained

resource persons during awareness drives to effectively engage the community, especially the youth.

The ongoing campaign under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan seeks to foster a drug-free environment through education, community involvement, and targeted intervention strategies across the district. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Chief Planning Officer, Chief Medical Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, Excise & Taxation Officer, DySP Hqrs and other officers including event coordinators.

DLIC Kupwara approves 98 cases under Mission YUVA

FE News Network

KUPWARA: In a major step towards promoting youth entrepreneurship and self-employment in the district, District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) Kupwara Monday met under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan and approved 98 cases under the Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyamita Vikas Abhiyan) scheme.

The objective was to review and approve applications submitted by young aspiring entrepreneurs under the Mission YUVA initiative, which aims to provide financial assistance and capacity-building support to youth for starting and sustaining their businesses.

Officers from the concerned departments presented a detailed review of the applications. After careful scrutiny and discussions, the Committee approved 98 eligible cases for further financial support and guidance.



Speaking on the occasion, DC highlighted the importance of Mission YUVA in empowering local youth and helping them build sustainable livelihoods. She emphasized the need for effective awareness campaigns and asked the District Employment & Counselling Centre Kupwara to reach out to more eligible youth and encourage their participation in the scheme. The meeting was attended by ADDC Kupwara, Mufti Fareed ud Din; Assistant Director Employment, Arshid Qadir Bhat; officers from DIC, Social Welfare, JKEDI and other concerned officials.

Secy RDD reviews progress on Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin Asks to accelerate sanitation projects

FE News Network

SRINAGAR: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, chaired a review meeting on Monday to evaluate the progress on the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) 2025-26, assess the status of locational plans, verify water assets and review progress on the GOBARdhan plants.

The meeting was attended by Director General Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra; Director Rural

Development Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat; Director Rural Development Jammu, Shahnaz Akhter; Superintending Engineer REW Jammu, Rajesh Kumar Agastam; Superintending Engineer REW Kashmir, Shafat Hussain besides Deputy Directors Rural Sanitation, Assistant Commissioners Panchayat (ACPs) and Executive Engineers of REW from all districts. During the review, the Secretary emphasized the need for timely tendering, land identification and rapid execution of all planned works under the AIP 2025-26. He urged the district teams to eliminate procedural delays and ensure real-time progress reporting. A detailed district-wise discussion was held on pending locational plans for various sanitation-related assets, including Compost Pits, Soak Pits, Community Sanitary Complexes (CSCs), Segregation Sheds, Plastic Waste Management Units (PWMUs), GOBARdhan units, Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs), Waste Stabilization Ponds (WSPs) and Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS).



The Secretary emphasized that Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin is not just about building sanitation infrastructure, it is about bringing systemic change, ensuring sustainability and achieving

measurable outcomes. He asked the ACPs to take ownership at the ground level. From DEWATS and FSTPs to compost pits and segregation sheds, the success of these interventions lies in timely land identification, proactive coordination and a mission-mode approach, he added. Aijaz Asad directed the districts to submit all pending locational plans to the Directorate of Rural Sanitation within five days. The Secretary underscored the importance of 100% digital asset verification through the mWater platform. He directed all the districts to ensure that every completed asset is geo-tagged and digitally verified in accordance with SBM-G protocols to maintain full transparency and accountability.

A detailed status of the GOBARdhan was also reviewed, with a focus on organic waste management and bio-energy production. Districts were instructed to expedite physical work progress, highlight challenges if any, and regularly update progress with the Directorate.

DC Bandipora visits Ziyarat Sharief Hazrat Nanga Baji Sahib, Malangam Reviews arrangements for annual Urs

FE News Network

BANDIPORA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, on Monday visited the Ziyarat Sharief of Hazrat Nanga Baji Sahib in Malangam village to review the arrangements for the upcoming Annual Urs Mubarak, scheduled to commence on August 04.

During the visit, DC was accompanied by DDC Member Mewa Jan, ACR, Tehsildar Bandipora, and officers from KPDCI, Jal Shakti, and other concerned departments.

On the occasion, DC interacted with the management committee, listened to their concerns, and issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned departments for prompt redressal of genuine



issues. He assured full support from the district administration for the smooth and hassle-free conduct of the Urs.

The management committee, among other things, requested uninterrupted power and water supply during the Urs days. In

response, the DC directed KPDCI to ensure maximum possible uninterrupted electricity during the event.

He also instructed the Jal Shakti Department to make the borewell functional at the earliest and to keep water

tankers available as a backup. Additionally, he emphasized the need for adequate availability of firewood and foodgrains.

BDO Aloosa was directed to ensure proper cleanliness and sanitation in the area, while the Health department was instructed to deploy medical teams and ensure availability of healthcare facilities throughout the Urs.

DC also directed the Police department and the Motor Vehicles department to coordinate efforts for ensuring smooth traffic movement during the event.

Qadri urged all departments and stakeholders to adopt a collaborative approach in making the necessary arrangements to ensure that the Annual Urs is conducted in a smooth, peaceful, and well-organized manner.

DC Budgam Conducts Surprise Inspection Of Distt Hospital Calls for efficient and compassionate public health service delivery

FE News Network

BUDGAM: In a bid to ensure effective functioning of healthcare services, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat paid a surprise late-night visit to District Hospital Budgam.

The visit, aimed at reviewing the emergency services, maternal and child health care, and overall hospital operations, led to the identification of several gaps that require immediate action.

During his thorough inspection, DC closely examined the facilities being provided to patients, and interacted with both staff and visitors to understand their concerns.

While acknowledging the hospital's critical role in serving the population of district, Dr



Bilal stressed that government health services must be delivered efficiently and with compassion.

He inspected various wards and the emergency department, identifying areas where improvements are necessary.

DC emphasised the need for the hospital administration to focus on the gaps and directed swift action against any dereliction of duty by the staff.

Additionally, DC highlighted the importance of maintaining accurate medical records and the timely issuance of essential medicines to patients.

Medical Superintendent (MS) Budgam was directed to ensure the availability of doctors as per the roster and to

implement a more efficient duty management system, especially in critical areas like the emergency ward, to avoid any disruption in services.

Among others, DC was accompanied by CMO Budgam, MS Budgam and other medical staff during his visit.

Editorial

Amarnath Yatra: Successful Progress

The annual Amarnath Yatra, the most revered pilgrimages, has entered its twelfth day with remarkable smoothness, reflecting not only the unwavering faith of devotees but also the meticulous planning and security arrangements by the authorities. With over 2.20 lakh pilgrims having paid their respects at the holy cave shrine since the yatra began on July 3, this year's pilgrimage stands as a shining example of devotion, discipline, and efficient administration. The figures speak for themselves, 20,448 pilgrims performed darshan on Monday alone, including men, women, children, sadhus, and security personnel. The fact that the pilgrimage has crossed the two-lakh mark within just twelve days underscores its growing popularity and the deep spiritual significance it holds for millions. Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha rightly expressed his joy over this milestone, acknowledging the divine blessings of Baba Amarnath and welcoming devotees to experience the journey's sanctity.

One of the key reasons for the yatra's smooth progress is the tight security arrangements and favourable weather conditions. Given the challenging terrain and the need for heightened vigilance, the administration, along with security forces, has ensured that pilgrims can undertake their journey without hindrance. The well-organized convoys from Jammu to the base camps of Baltal and Pahalgam, escorted under strict security protocols, reflect a well-oiled logistical mechanism. The division of pilgrims into systematic groups and the use of hundreds of vehicles daily highlight the precision with which the yatra is being managed.

The Amarnath Yatra is more than just a religious expedition; it is a unifying force that brings together people from diverse backgrounds in a shared spiritual quest. The participation of thousands of women, children, and ascetics (sadhus and sadhis) showcases the inclusive nature of this pilgrimage. Moreover, the presence of security personnel paying their respects at the shrine is a reminder of the silent efforts of those who work tirelessly to ensure the safety of devotees. The success of the Amarnath Yatra so far is a testament to the collective efforts of the government, security forces, local communities, and the pilgrims themselves. It reaffirms the spirit of faith and resilience that defines this sacred journey. As the yatra progresses, may it continue to be a beacon of peace, devotion, and harmony.

Next-gen talent: Shaping the future together



VINOD CHANDRASHEKHARA DIXIT

Swami Vivekananda said "My hope of the future lies in the youths of character, intelligent, renouncing all for the service of others, and obedient – good to themselves and the country at large". The U.N. has designated the World Youth Skills Day on July

15 to create awareness on the importance of technical, vocational education, training and the development of other skills relevant to local and global economies to reduce unemployment and underemployment among the youth across the globe.

There is no doubt that India needs to equip its youth with greater work skills. At present, the country churns out a mostly semi-literate workforce without the requisite marketable skills in a globalised world. Skill and talent are the results of education and training, and India must lay greater stress on its educational infrastructure before it can attain higher levels of growth. The skill set of India's youth have to necessarily match that of the world's best.

The several key announcements in education, skills and youth development shall have structural and long term impact on

the world. Even the developed countries have to deal with this problem. It not only affects the individual but also affects the growth of the country.

It is estimated that by 2020, the average age of the Indian citizen will be 29 and set to become the world's youngest country. The skill India's main motive is to provide the youths with training and guidance in all the occupation as per their choice like construction, Jewellery, Agriculture, Tourism, etc. Train, build confidence and make them aware of the new opportunities from the school level itself.

It is a well established fact that the youngsters of today are the most likely to be un-



With over 54 per cent of the Indian population aged below 25, it is not surprising the government is looking at them as potential resources to scale new economic heights. According to the draft National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015, the country presently faces two challenges – a severe paucity of highly-trained, quality labour and large sections of the educated workforce that possess little job skills. Youths are the backbone of the nation; they are the main pillar of our growing society, hence they need to be nurtured. World Youth Skills Day is celebrated around the world to spread the awareness and im-

quality of education, availability of qualified manpower and preparing the next generation for the hyper age of automation and AI. The quality of higher education is sought to be improved through greater autonomy for colleges based on quality metrics and accreditation.

Youths are everything, they have the capability to do anything out of the box, the only thing they need is the direction or a mentor for the future of our country. Only graduation certificate is not enough.

It is estimated that young adults are more likely to be unemployed than adults in our society and are continuously exposed to the lower quality of jobs. Similarly, it goes for the women also who are underemployed, doing a job on a part-time basis or are underpaid. The issue of unemployment is a major concern for industry and also for the country. It is one of the major issues in

employed than adults in the labour market. Apart from a lower quality of jobs and market inequalities, there is a major insecurity of transitioning from the school mode to the work force. The rising unemployment makes a negative impact on people's mind. It discourages qualified people to find the job. Hence they lose the hopes of having a job and earning. This type of unemployment is called as voluntary unemployment.

Certainly there is also a need to add technology to the mix: to seize the opportunities in technology as an education and training delivery mechanism, as well as to improve and scale the uptake among youth of digital skills that will position them for success in new types of jobs and in emerging sectors.

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Why AI Literacy and Skilling Go Hand in Hand



VIJAY GARG

India is at a pivotal moment in its technological journey. Since 2022, generative AI has progressed rapidly, accelerating innovation and unlocking new potential to tackle complex challenges. This wave of technological advancement aligns closely with India's development priorities, opening up opportunities for transformative impact across key sectors. Early use cases are already emerging, from personalised learning solutions in education, to predictive analytics for improved crop management in agriculture, and enhanced diagnostics and access in health care.

As AI solutions become integral to daily digital interactions, the question is no longer just about access to AI tools; it is about the capacity of citizens to engage with them effectively and as responsible users. To truly harness this opportunity, investing in AI literacy is a national imperative, paving the way to empower every citizen to navigate an AI-driven world and actively shape the future.

India's AI compute capacity has seen a dramatic leap through deliberate investment, now standing at 34,333 GPUs (Graphics Processing Units) following the empanelment of multiple providers. This scale positions the country to support world-class AI research and innovation, develop sovereign models and support impactful AI solutions that address real-world challenges. To foster indigenous AI model development, institutions have been selected to build and deploy foundational AI models. Data quality and availability are also being enhanced through initiatives

Moreover, India's talent pool is already making a global impact. According to the Stanford AI Index Report 2025, India ranked second world-

wide in AI skill penetration from 2016 to 2024 with a 252% increase, and has led the world in year-over-year AI talent hiring rates. Alongside this, the Mission is focused on nurturing a robust talent pipeline. Notably, AI skills are being strengthened among the youth in Tier 2 and Tier



3 cities through the launch of the India AI Data Labs, which will provide foundational courses in data and AI.

Sustaining this momentum requires building a broader foundation. To ensure that every citizen, not only researchers and developers, can participate meaningfully in an AI-driven future, foundational AI literacy for all has become a strategic national priority. This is especially critical for young learners, our future citizens, who are growing up in a world where AI is already shaping their everyday experiences.

Today's children are already immersed in an environment deeply shaped by AI. More than 80% of rural Indian children aged 14-16 regularly use smartphones, interacting with recommendation engines, autocomplete tools, and chatbots often without realising how these algorithms shape their choices, opinions or behaviour.

This silent immersion offers both promise and peril. AI-driven platforms can deliver personalised learning and adaptive feedback that may have been otherwise inaccessible to learn-

ers. At the same time, without the tools to critically engage with AI, learners, especially those from lower-income segments, are more vulnerable to misinformation, privacy risks, and algorithmic bias.

The influence of AI on agency, equity and

empowerment will depend on how well individuals are prepared to understand and navigate this technology. Without foundational literacy, young people risk remaining passive consumers rather than active contributors to an inclusive and innovative digital future.

As India accelerates its leadership in AI, building foundational AI literacy at scale is essential. AI literacy refers to the knowledge and practices that help students, teachers and parents understand what AI is, how it shapes their digital lives and how to use it safely and thoughtfully.

AI Samarth is India's first large-scale AI literacy programme designed for underserved communities from Bharat. The initiative aims to empower 50 lakh students, parents and educators across government and affordable private schools with essential knowledge and practices for meaningful and responsible AI engagement.

Curriculum integration: Developed in partnership with CSF and IIT Madras, the AI Samarth AI Literacy Curriculum is tailored for Bharat's classrooms and available as a public good for

states and designed for flexible integration within existing school routines and subject areas

Contextual content: Designed as a multilingual repository of contextually relevant learning materials to make AI literacy accessible, engaging, and comprehensible for students, teachers, and parents across India. The content stack will include curriculum-aligned videos, in-class teaching materials, lesson plans, and assessments tailored to the diverse learning environments in India.

Scalable delivery: Disseminated through online platforms and cascaded teacher training to reach learners across geographies pan-India.

Together, these strategies aim to embed AI literacy into the fabric of school education, nurturing a generation that approaches technology with curiosity, confidence and safety.

This early foundation in AI literacy is critical for enabling the next step: equipping learners with practical skills to thrive in an AI-driven world. Building on this groundwork, the government is advancing skilling in AI through targeted initiatives under the 'Future Skills' pillar of the India AI Mission. Designed for scale and inclusivity, the initiative is ensuring that high-quality, hands-on AI and data skills reach learners across the country with focus on Tier 2 and Tier 3 locations.

As India advances its AI capabilities through the India AI Mission, which encompasses infrastructure investments, skilling programmes, improved access to high-quality datasets, and the development of AI solutions across critical sectors, the next frontier is ensuring that every citizen is empowered to engage meaningfully and responsibly with AI.

This means recognising that AI literacy and skilling are not separate paths but part of a continuum: literacy enables awareness, informed use, and critical thinking; skilling builds deeper expertise for professional application.

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Javed Rana reviews welfare initiatives for Tribals in J&K

FE NEWS NETWORK

Calls for proactive inter-departmental coordination



SRINAGAR: Minister for Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, chaired a meeting of the Tribal Affairs Department (TAD) at the Civil Secretariat to review the initiatives aimed at furthering empowerment of tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting aimed to fast-track the tribal welfare initiatives and review ongoing projects, schemes and infrastructure development for tribal communities across J&K.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo; Divisional Commis-

sioner Kashmir, Secretary TAD, Secretary Health & Medical Education, Commissioner SMC concerned Deputy Commissioners and other senior officers.

Rana emphasized Omar Abdullah led Government's commitment to inclusive

support to the students from these marginalized groups.

Rana asked the Secretaries of concerned departments to establish effective and proactive coordination mechanism to push faster execution of key infra projects in

The Minister also reviewed the progress on Tribal Bhawan Jammu and instructed the concerned authorities to immediately identify suitable land for its establishment, as the funds have already been transferred to JDA.

Reviewing the Human Resource (HR) management in TAD, the Minister stressed the need for concerted efforts to fill vacancies to ensure administrative efficiency and timely resolution of issues affecting the tribal people.

Rana also took note of deployment of Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) to tribal areas, designed to facilitate access to public healthcare, particularly for people living in remote and under-served areas.

Secretary Health informed that six MMUs are ready to be deployed and work on other units is in progress.

The Minister directed the TAD to utilize available manpower and resources judiciously, ensuring transparency, efficiency and timely execution of welfare schemes. He reaffirmed the Government's commitment to empower the tribal communities through improved access to education, healthcare and livelihood opportunities.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo emphasized the importance of taking forward programs and policies related to tribal welfare, ensuring their effective implementation in a time bound manner.

growth and social justice, particularly for the tribal population.

He said that upliftment of downtrodden and backward communities is our collective responsibility. The present government has taken a slew of measures to ensure inclusive growth and social justice for all, especially the tribal population, he added.

The meeting focused on resolving land-related issues concerning the hostels for Gujar-Bakerwal tribe, which are crucial for providing educational and residential

tribal areas. He directed the concerned officials to expedite the resolution of land matters and ensure timely completion of tribal welfare projects.

Regarding establishment of hostels, the Minister was assured that the land has been identified for establishment of hostels in Srinagar, Jammu and Poonch districts and all issues will be sorted out within 10 days. He emphasized that all Gujar-Bakerwal hostels should have proper buildings with requisite facilities to provide students with a nurturing environment.

DC Kupwara reviews arrangements for Independence Day celebrations

FE NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan chaired a meeting of district officers

Force, students of various government schools will participate in the march past parade.

Besides, various cultural programmes and Display of tableaux would

power supply, drinking water/ tanker service, availability of ambulance, deployment of fire tenders, transportation facilities, refreshment, invitations, PAS system, cleanliness and sanitation measures were discussed threadbare in the meeting while as special emphasis was laid on march past parades, cultural programmes, display of tableaux by different departments showcasing achievements.

DC directed concerned departments to send the nominations for awards by or before 10 days of the Independence Day.

She said that in the run up to the Independence Day function, all the important buildings and main offices will be illuminated.

Ayushi emphasized the importance of National event and directed the departments to make sure that every arrangement is meticulously planned and executed.

She exhorted all departments to work in close coordination to ensure the seamless celebration of the Independence day functions.

SSP Kupwara, Gulam Jeelani; ADDC Kupwara, Mufti Fareed ud Din; ADC Handwara, Javid Naseem Masoodi; ACR, SDM Lolab, CMO, CEO, Officers from CRPF, Police, District Officers of different departments and other concerned attended the meeting.



and various security agencies to review the preparedness for ensuing Independence Day-2025 celebrations.

The meeting was informed that the main function of the Independence Day shall be held at DPL- Zangli while similar functions will be held at sub-division and Tehsil levels also.

It was further informed that contingents of JKP, CRPF, Forest Protection

also be part of national event celebrations.

Different departments viz. Education, PHE, R&B, Information, Health, Sports, Traffic, Motor Vehicles, Police, Floriculture, PDD, Municipality and Paramilitary Forces were directed to look after their respective assignments.

The decoration of the main venue, seating arrangements, uninterrupted

DC Bandipora approves 75 Youth Entrepreneurship cases under Mission YUVA

FE NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: The District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) meeting under Mission YUVA was held on Monday under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, at Mini Secretariat Bandipora.

The meeting aimed at detailed review of applications received under the scheme through the Skill and Business Development Unit (SBDU). After thorough scrutiny and technical evaluation, the committee approved 75 cases for financial assistance and institutional support under the Mission YUVA framework.

On the occasion, DC emphasized that Mission YUVA serves as a key platform for equipping young individuals with the resources and support needed to translate their business ideas into viable enterprises.

DC directed all concerned departments to ensure prompt processing of sanctions, timely disbursement of benefits, and continuous handholding of the beneficiaries to ensure the sustainability and success of the

approved units.

The meeting was attended by ADC Bandipora, Zaffar



Husson Shawl (District Nodal Officer for Mission YUVA); SDM Sumbal, Assistant Director Employment, Nodal Officer JKEDI, District Development Manager NABARD, District Social Welfare Officer, Lead Bank representative, and other concerned officials.

DC Srinagar, Commissioner SMC review progress of PMAY-Urban 2.0

FE NEWS NETWORK

Instruct SMC & Revenue Officers to expedite verification process & ensure no eligible beneficiary is left out

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo and Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Fazul Haseeb Monday held a joint meeting of Revenue and SMC Officers here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office to review the progress achieved in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY-U 2.0) in the district.

The meeting was among others attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat Aftab Qureshi; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid;



Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, all Tehsildars, SMC Ward Officers,

and Officers from J&K Housing Board. At the outset, Deputy Commissioner &

Emphasize the need for transparency, accuracy in beneficiary selection under the scheme for benefit of the target population

Commissioner SMC emphasized the need for maintaining transparency and accuracy in beneficiary selection under the scheme to ensure benefit reaches the deserving population. They instructed the Revenue and SMC Officers to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is left out and no ineligible case is included in the final beneficiary list.

The Revenue and SMC Officers were instructed to expedite the verification process at their respective levels swiftly in line with scheme guidelines to meet the scheme objectives of providing 'Housing for All.'

While reviewing the status of registrations on Unified Web Portal of PMAY-U 2.0, Deputy Commissioner & SMC Commissioner were apprised that several applications in thousands under the scheme have been so far received in the district.

Pulwama Shines Nationally

DC Dr. Basharat Qayoom Receives Prestigious ODOP 2024 Award for Saffron Excellence

Mushtaq ul Islam

PULWAMA: In a moment of pride for the people of Pulwama, Deputy Commis-



sioner Dr. Basharat Qayoom, along with Chief Planning Officer Pulwama, received the prestigious One District One Product (ODOP) 2024 Award in the Agriculture category for Saffron at a grand ceremony held in New Delhi.

The award, presented under the Government of India's flagship ODOP initiative, recognizes Pulwama's significant contribution to preserving and promoting the

commitment to sustainable agricultural practices, innovation, and economic empowerment of local farmers.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Basharat Qayoom dedicated the award to the hard-working saffron cultivators of Pulwama, stating, "This recognition belongs to every farmer whose dedication has kept the legacy of Kashmir saffron alive. It is a proud moment for the district and a testament to our collective efforts."

Chief Planning Officer Pulwama also expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for acknowledging the district's efforts under the ODOP framework.

Noted journalist Mushtaq ul Islam extended heartfelt congratulations to the district administration, calling it "a proud moment celebrating the excellence of Pulwama's heritage and a remarkable milestone for Kashmir's agricultural identity."

The ODOP initiative aims to promote balanced regional development by identifying and supporting products with high growth potential in every district across India. Pulwama's saffron, known globally for its purity, aroma, and medicinal properties, continues to be a jewel in India's agricultural crown.

unique agricultural heritage of Kashmir—particularly the world-renowned saffron grown in the region.

This recognition not only celebrates the excellence of Pulwama's saffron industry but also highlights the district's

teur Kabaddi Association & S. Tajinder Singh, met Ms. Anuradha Gupta, newly appointed Director General, Youth Services & Sports Department, Jammu & Kashmir. The delegation extended warm congratulations on her new assignment.

During the meeting, Dr. Gupta informed the Director General about the upcoming J&K UT Kabaddi Referee Course (Level-I) scheduled to be held in Srinagar from 28th to 31st July 2025. He requested official direc-



tions be issued to all district officers to nominate interested PETs, PEMs & Lecturers involved in Kabaddi for registration by 25th July 2025.

Inter-zonal Football & Volleyball fest commences at Baramulla

FE NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: Youth Services and Sports, Baramulla, kick-started the inter-zonal district level Football Tournament for Under-14 & Under-17 Boys and Volleyball Tournament for Under-17 Boys at the scenic Showkat Ali Stadium, Khawaja Bagh Baramulla with vibrant enthusiasm and competitive spirit.

The mega sports event was officially declared open by Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Altaf Hussain Musavi, who graced the occasion as the chief guest, and was joined by the Principal of Government Degree College (Boys), Baramulla.

In his motivational address, Principal lauded the department's efforts in nurturing grassroots talent and also conducted a live demonstration of breathing exercises, offering participants a unique blend of sports and wellness motivation.

A total of 45 teams representing 18 zones from across the district are competing in this celebration of youth talent, unity, and sportsmanship. The young athletes will have the opportunity to showcase their skills, promote healthy competition, and represent their zones with pride.

The event is being held under the active supervision of District Youth Services & Sports Officer (DYSSO) Baramulla, whose team has ensured seamless coordination, fair play, and an energetic sports atmosphere.

The course aims to enhance the knowledge & skills of officials through training by qualified national & international instructors. It will also prepare them to officiate at departmental camps & tournaments across age groups. Dr. Gupta also highlighted achievements in the sport, including the establishment of North India's first international-standard Kabaddi Stadium at MA Stadium, Jammu. He expressed hope for greater Kabaddi development under Ms. Gupta's leadership.

DC Anantnag convenes preparatory meeting for Independence Day celebrations-2025

FE NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. S. F. Hamid, convened the preparatory meeting to

review the arrangements for the celebration of upcoming Independence Day-2025 with the concerned officers.



review the arrangements for the celebration of upcoming Independence Day-2025 with the concerned officers.

Emphasising the historical importance of Independence Day, DC described it as a momentous occasion that should be celebrated with zeal and patriotic fervor. He underscored the need for seamless coordination among the concerned departments and exhorted them to make collective efforts for the successful conduct of the National event in its true spirit.

During the meeting, key aspects and arrangements including the schedule and timing of the event, preparation and consolidation of venue, stage/dice preparation and management, security arrangements, sanitation and cleanliness, seating arrangements, medical facilities, uninterrupted power and water supply, venue illumination and decoration, deployment of fire tenders, transportation, printing and distribution of invitation cards, installation of the public address system, prize distribution, etc were reviewed thread-

bare.

Dr. Hamid issued directions to all concerned officers to discharge their assigned tasks diligently and put in place the necessary arrangements well in time so that a smooth and memorable celebration befitting the

national event is held.

It was informed that the main function will be held at the Shaheed Himayun Muzamil, Government Degree College (Boys), Khanabal, where the National Flag will be hoisted by the chief guest, followed by a parade featuring contingents of the J&K Police, other security forces, School Education and NCC.

In addition, colourful cultural programmes reflecting themes of patriotism, nationalism, and local folk traditions will be presented. Besides, it was decided that Jhankis from various departments showcasing their achievements and disseminating public awareness about the respective schemes will take part in the main event. Independence Day celebrations will also be held at the Sub-divisional, Tehsil and Block levels across the district.

The meeting was attended by ADC, Principal GMC and SHM, GDC (B) Anantnag, DPO ICDS, GM, DIC, ACR, ACD, CPO, CMO, CEO, officers from engineering departments and other concerned officers of the district.

Dr. Kuldeep Kumar Gupta Calls on Director General, Youth Services & Sports Department

SRINAGAR: Dr. Kuldeep Kumar Gupta, General Secretary of the J&K Amateur Kabaddi Association, Technical Director of the Asian Kabaddi Federation, & Secretary of the Vansh Sabre Sports Foundation, along with S.S. Gill, Technical Director J&K Ama-

LG Sinha

incident of local recruitment this year compared to 6-7 last year. There was a time when this figure used to be 150-200. But it is also a fact that Pakistan has facilitated the infiltration of a large number of terrorists in both Jammu region and Kashmir region,” Sinha noted.

The Pahalgam attack dealt a temporary blow to tourism, with arrivals plunging in the immediate aftermath. “Tourist arrivals had almost stopped after the incident. We believed that the Amarnath Yatra would be the turning point,” Sinha said.

The LG confirmed that tourist destinations closed after the attack have gradually reopened. “Many have already opened. Others will be opened too in a phased manner, after finalising a robust security plan for each,” he said.

Reflecting on the broader security environment, Sinha said the success of Operation Sindoor had drawn clear red lines for Pakistan.

“India has made it clear that any terror attack will be considered an act of war. The manner in which our forces carried out precise hits against terror facilities in Pakistan conveyed a stern message. But a country that has made terrorism its declared state policy is not to be trusted,” he cautioned.

Despite the challenges, Sinha expressed confidence that the Union Home Ministry, Defence Ministry and intelligence agencies are fully prepared to counter any future threats.

Eam Jaishankar

people-to-people exchanges.

Jaishankar met Wang hours after he landed in China on a two-day visit to attend a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). It is his first visit to the neighbouring country since bilateral ties witnessed severe downturn following the Galwan Valley clashes in June 2020.

The MEA said the external affairs minister underlined the need for cooperation on trans-border rivers, including the resumption of the provision of hydrological data by the Chinese side.

Jaishankar also held talks with Chinese Vice President Han Zheng and conveyed to him that continued normalisation of bilateral ties can lead to mutually beneficial outcomes.

In the last nine months, India and China have been engaged in normalising their relations after ending the military face-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in October last year.

Though the two sides disengaged troops from the friction points, they are yet to de-escalate the situation by pulling back the frontline forces from the border. Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the LAC in the eastern Ladakh region.

In his remarks at the meeting with Wang, Jaishankar underlined the need for avoiding “restrictive” trade measures and “roadblocks”, in an apparent reference to Beijing’s approach on the export of critical minerals as well as issues relating to the supply of fertilisers.

“We have made good progress in the past nine months for the normalisation of our bilateral relations. It is a result of the resolution of friction along the border and our ability to maintain peace and tranquility there,” he said.

“This is the fundamental basis for mutual strategic trust and for smooth development of bilateral relations. It is now incumbent on us to address other aspects related to the border, including de-escalation,” the external affairs minister said.

Jaishankar also repeated New Delhi’s consistent position that India-China ties should be based on “mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity”.

“As neighbouring nations and major economies in the world today, there are various facets and dimensions of our ties. Measures towards normalizing our people-to-people exchanges can certainly foster mutually beneficial cooperation,” he said.

“It is also essential in this context that restrictive trade measures and roadblocks are avoided. I hope to discuss these issues in further detail.”

The external affairs minister noted that “stable and constructive” ties between India and China are not only to each other’s benefit, but that of the world as well.

“This is best done by handling relations on the basis of mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity.” “We have also earlier agreed that differences should not become disputes, nor should competition ever become conflict. On this foundation, we can now continue to develop our ties along a positive trajectory,” he said.

Jaishankar said the bilateral relationship requires both sides taking a “far-seeing approach” even as he referred to a meeting between Prime Minister

Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Kazan in October last year.

Since our leaders’ meeting, the India-China relationship has been gradually moving in a positive direction, he said, adding, “Our responsibility is to maintain that momentum.”

“In recent times, the two of us have had several opportunities to meet at international events and carry out strategic communication. It is our expectation that this will now be regular and take place in each other’s countries,” Jaishankar added.

The external affairs minister noted that the two sides have marked the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations and appreciated the resumption of the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra after a gap of five years.

The MEA said Jaishankar also highlighted the “positive impact” of peace and tranquility along the frontier for the smooth development of bilateral relations and supported continued efforts towards de-escalation and border management.

Jaishankar and Wang also discussed regional and global issues of common interest and agreed to remain in touch, including through bilateral visits and meetings.

The external affairs minister also wished the Chinese side a successful SCO presidency and that India is committed to ensuring “good outcomes and decisions”.

Wang said the current international landscape has undergone profound changes, and unilateral protectionism and bullying by powerful countries have brought severe challenges to the world, according to an official readout in Beijing.

As two major eastern civilisations and major emerging economies living side by side, China and India should live in harmony and achieve mutual success, he said.

Last year, President Xi and Prime Minister Modi reached an important consensus at their meeting in Kazan, which pointed out the direction for the improvement and development of China-India relations, he said.

Wang said India and China should find a way for mutual respect and trust, peaceful coexistence, common development and win-win cooperation. The two sides should stand on high ground, seek long-term strategies, adhere to the direction of good-neighbourliness and friendship, and realize the “Dragon-Elephant Dance”, he said.

China is willing to strengthen communication and coordination with India to jointly safeguard the multilateral trading system, the stability of the global production and supply chains, Wang added.

In his meeting with Han, Jaishankar said an open exchange of views between the two sides is “very important” considering the “complex” global scenario.

Besides Wang and Han, Jaishankar also met Liu Jianchao, the minister of International Department of the Communist Party of China.

Jaishankar travelled to China less than three weeks after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited the Chinese port city of Qingdao to participate in the SCO defence ministers’ conference.

The military standoff in eastern Ladakh began in May 2020 and a deadly clash at the Galwan Valley in June that year resulted in a severe strain in ties between the two neighbours.

The face-off effectively ended following the completion of the disengagement process from the last two friction points of Demchok and Depsang under an agreement finalised on October 21 last year.

The decision to revive various dialogue mechanisms was taken at the meeting between Prime Minister Modi and Chinese President Xi in Kazan.

The Modi-Xi meeting came two days after India and China firmied up a disengagement pact for Depsang and Demchok. (PTI)

BJP MLAs

J&K Assembly and J&K BJP General Secretary, Sunil Sharma, BJP MLAs arrived at the Civil Secretariat in the morning and staged a dharna, calling the order discriminatory and detrimental to the interests of Jammu’s youth.

Carrying placards highlighting injustice against Jammu’s youth, Dogras and other official languages of the union territory, the BJP leaders raised slogans against the government and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, accusing the part of trying to create unrest in the region.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the party has been opposing the move across Jammu for over three weeks, holding protests and rallies at the district level.

The BJP MLAs condemned the move

as discriminatory and unjust, calling it a deliberate attempt by the Omar Abdullah-led National Conference government to ignore the aspirations of the youth of Jammu and other non-Urdu-speaking regions.

Speaking to the media, Sharma said that this policy amounts to grave injustice against deserving candidates who are otherwise qualified but are being excluded based on language preference.

“This is not just about language. This is about rights, opportunities, and equal treatment. Urdu is one of the official languages of Jammu & Kashmir, but it is not the only one. Why should proficiency in Urdu be made mandatory when there are several other official languages recognized by the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir?” asked Sharma.

The BJP MLAs asserted that they had already exhausted all peaceful and democratic means to oppose the decision. “We submitted memorandums, led delegations, and even met with the Lieutenant Governor. Though the LG acknowledged our concern, he stated that the recruitment matter falls under the purview of the state government,” said BJP MLAs.

MLAs highlighted that the Chief Minister had previously assured BJP representatives that the issue would be looked into, but no action followed. “This betrayal of public trust has left us with no option but to protest,” they said.

MLAs also criticized the Chief Minister for allegedly playing the victim card while failing to perform his basic duties.

“Instead of solving the problems of the people, he is more concerned about enjoying the privileges of office. The youth of Jammu and Kashmir deserve a fair and transparent recruitment process, not political manipulation,” they said.

The BJP MLAs warned that if the government continues to turn a deaf ear to the people’s demands, the protest will escalate.

“Today’s protest is a symbolic message. We are prepared to take the agitation to the next level if the NC government does not immediately revoke the Urdu language requirement in the Naib Tehsildar recruitment,” Sharma added—(KNO)

No healthy

it was also discussed that TCC and NRPC had recently accorded approval from forum for installation of capacitors by Rajasthan, Uttarakhand DISCOMs.

“The proposals were then submitted by respective states to PSDF and PSDF also had positive views of providing funds for installation of capacitor banks. PSDF funds were frozen for some time but now PSDF has started according approval for some of the schemes,” it reads.

In the meeting it was further revealed that as around 700-800MVAR is being drawn by 400/220kV ICTs from Amar-garh, Wagoor and New Wanpoh and 300MVAR support is being provided by New Wanpoh SVC, there seems to be requirement of nearly 1000MVAR reactive power compensation (capacitive) in Kashmir valley at transmission and distribution level in next 1-2 years.

“If proposal is prepared for a futuristic scenario, further additional capacity as per requirement may be planned,” it reads.

It also states that J&K SLDC is also sharing (transfer capability limit) ATC/ TTC base case on a regular basis as per CERC approved procedure. “However, due to low voltages during the daytime, the ATC, TTC figures for day time were recently reviewed and revised figures were communicated to J&K SLDC.”

“Due to low voltages in Kashmir valley area, the transfer capability limits (ATC/TTC) are 2700/2800MW during 09-14hrs and 3400/3500MW for other than 09-14hrs duration,” it reads—(KNO)

Kavinder Gupta

Minister, and the BJP leadership for deeming me worthy of this responsibility. I accept this challenge with humility and will strive to work with everyone to ensure development, peace, and welfare in the region. Having seen Ladakh’s challenges firsthand, I am committed to addressing them with dedication. We will work together with everyone (for the development of the region).”

Celebrations across Jammu, Ladakh The announcement of Gupta’s appointment sparked widespread celebrations across his home region of Jammu and Ladakh. Supporters, local leaders, and BJP workers gathered in Jammu and Leh to celebrate the milestone, with many hailing it as a moment of pride for the region.

In Leh, locals organised small rallies, waving flags and distributing sweets, expressing optimism about Gupta’s regional understanding and administrative experience.

In Jammu, BJP workers gathered

outside Gupta’s residence, chanting slogans of support and celebrating his rise to one of the Union Territory’s highest offices.

Social media platforms, including X, were abuzz with congratulatory messages, with posts highlighting Gupta’s grassroots connect and his potential to address Ladakh’s developmental challenges.

Brief Profile of Kavinder Gupta

Born on December 2, 1959, in Jammu city’s Janipur area, Kavinder Gupta is a seasoned politician and a lifelong member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). 66-year-old Gupta began his political journey at a young age, joining the RSS at 13 and later serving as the secretary of the Punjab unit of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) from 1978 to 1979. His political career gained momentum in Jammu’s municipal politics, where he made history by serving three consecutive terms as Mayor of Jammu from 2005 to 2010, a record in the region.

Gupta’s resilience and commitment to public service were evident early on, as he was imprisoned for over a year during the Emergency (1975–1977), a defining period for many BJP leaders.

He later served as the chief of the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) from 1993 to 1998.

In 2014, Gupta won his first Assembly election from the Gandhi Nagar constituency, defeating senior Congress leader Raman Bhalla. He served as Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and later as Deputy Chief Minister in the PDP-BJP coalition government till 2018.

As a prominent BJP leader, Gupta is known for his grassroots connect and deep understanding of regional issues, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir. His appointment as Lieutenant Governor is seen as a strategic move to leverage his administrative acumen and political experience to address Ladakh’s unique challenges, including demands for statehood and constitutional safeguards raised by groups like the Ladakh Apex Body.

Gupta’s appointment comes at a critical juncture for Ladakh, as the region navigates developmental aspirations and socio-political demands. His extensive experience in governance, coupled with his regional roots, positions him to foster collaboration between the central government and local stakeholders—(KNO)

India witnessed

transformative initiative is further bolstered by recent reforms that empower vice-chancellors to approve global tenders up to Rs 200 crore, simplifying and expediting the procurement of advanced research equipment and infrastructure.

Singh emphasised that such measures will accelerate scientific progress and help position India as a global leader in research and innovation.

“Over 1,600 obsolete rules have been scrapped to streamline governance and reduce bureaucratic hurdles. The General Financial Rules (GFRs) have been relaxed, enabling faster procurement and greater flexibility for researchers,” he said.

Highlighting that 56 per cent of India’s patent filings now come from Indian residents, he said that India’s rank in the Global Innovation Index has improved to 39 from 81.

“India now ranks fourth globally in scientific publication output, highlighting the increasing academic and research contributions from Indian institutions,” Singh said.

“Our space missions like Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan have made India a global science and technology leader,” he added, citing the success of experiments aboard these missions, including Shubhanshu’s, which are setting benchmarks in life sciences and biotechnology.

The Minister inaugurated a new hostel on the campus, comprising four blocks, together providing 688 single-occupancy rooms. He also noted that only last week, the Union Cabinet had authorised the director to approve tenders up to Rs 200 crore. PTI

2.20 lakh

Ganderbal district, carrying 2,215 pilgrims. The second convoy of 135 vehicles departed for the Nunwan base camp in South Kashmir’s Pahalgam, with 3,928 pilgrims on board.

The Baltal-bound pilgrims included 1,646 men, 507 women, 5 children, 44 sadhus and 13 sadhvis.

“The Pahalgam-bound group consisted of 3,045 men, 741 women, 12 children, 123 sadhus and 7 sadhvis. In terms of transportation, 235 vehicles were used for Monday’s convoy, including 100 for

Baltal and 135 for Pahalgam,” official said.

The annual yatra started on July 3 and will culminate on August 9, the officials added—(KNO)

CS pushes

Dulloo stressed that continuous updating of patient health records must be ensured so that individuals need not carry paper records when visiting any hospital or doctor. He called for universal implementation of the Scan and Share facility across all health institutions. He directed the department to rationalize manpower, especially for data entry tasks critical to success of the HMIS module.

In a significant push towards improving accountability and data integrity, the Chief Secretary instructed the department to expedite the Health Professional Registry (HPR) and take strict measures against professionals delaying compliance. He also advised for seeking technical support from BISAG-N to professionally and swiftly conclude digitization targets under the ABDM framework.

During the meeting, Secretary H&ME, Dr. Shah, briefed about the steps already taken to accelerate digital transformation. He highlighted the Department’s success in initiating the HPR, digitizing patient health records, integrating radio diagnostic reports with ABHA IDs and rolling out the Scan and Share facility in numerous health institutions.

He reaffirmed the Department’s commitment towards ensuring full saturation of these initiatives within a defined timeline. He delineated the strategies that are going to accomplish the mission satisfactorily across all the healthcare facilities in J&K.

Adding to the deliberations, MD ABDM, Anant Dwivedi, outlined the mission’s three core pillars including ABHA ID, Health Professional Registry (HPR) and the Health Facility Registry (HFR). He informed that J&K has made notable strides in all these domains.

As per the latest figures, it was informed that 94.49 lakh ABHA IDs have been created, covering 69.7% of the target population. It was further revealed that 100% registration of all 3,607 public health facilities (HFR) has been completed besides 87% registration of public doctors (6,713 out of 7,730) and 100% registration of public nurses (5,149) has been achieved.

Moreover, 20.58 lakh digital health records have been linked with ABHA IDs, with 1.44 lakh new records added since May. Additionally, 104 out of 105 health facilities are now actively using the HMIS (JK-e Sahaj) portal. Notably, 71.16 lakh Scan and Share tokens have been generated so far, as was informed in this meeting.

These milestones reflect the UT’s firm commitment towards harnessing technology for better healthcare delivery.

The Chief Secretary lauded the department for the progress and stressed on sustaining momentum to ensure full digital inclusion of all citizens in the futuristic health ecosystem in the days to come. (DIPR)

Rains

locations in Jammu division from July 14 to 17.

It added that flash floods are expected at vulnerable sites, along with landslides, mudslides,

and shooting stones.

Meanwhile, the Srinagar district administration has issued a weather advisory in view of the forecast of heavy rain, thunderstorms, and strong winds from 14 July (today) to 17 July across parts of Kashmir, including Srinagar.

Officials have advised residents, especially those living near the Jhelum River, its tributaries, and nearby streams, to stay away from water bodies during this period.

The advisory issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Office of the District Magistrate Srinagar, states that in light of the forecast of heavy rain and thunderstorms with strong winds, tourists, Shikara riders, sand extractors, and boat operators are advised to avoid travel on Dal Lake, the Jhelum River, and other water bodies until weather conditions improve.

It has urged people to remain alert and follow safety instructions. In case of emergencies or queries, the public can contact the District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOC), the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), or the Police Control Room.

The important helpline numbers are: 0194-2457543 / 0194-2483651 / 0194-2457552; 9103998355 / 9103998356 / 9103998357; 112; and 0194-2477567—(KNO)

CM Omar

to markets where advisories act as obstacles. There are many countries with no such restrictions, whose tourists would be eager to explore our terrain,” he said, calling for joint efforts with Ladakh to keep traditional routes alive and accessible.

Referring to the current situation, Omar Abdullah said it was unfortunate that the book is being released at a time when many of the trekking routes described in it remain inaccessible due to recent developments.

“Reading this book evokes both admiration and sadness. Admiration for the unmatched natural wealth we possess, and sadness because we are not able to experience or share it at present. It is my heartfelt hope, and indeed my effort, that these routes will soon be reopened for our youth, trekkers and visitors,” he said.

Reflecting on his personal regret at not having trekked these trails, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah praised the author’s dedication and passion. “Mr. Shah is truly fortunate to have explored these routes over the last 20–25 years. His experiences, beautifully documented in this volume, reflect deep commitment and love for the land.”

The Chief Minister emphasized the need for digitizing the book to ensure wider accessibility. “If we want this work to benefit those who are truly interested in trekking, we must digitize it—perhaps through an app. Let the coordinates, photographs, anecdotes, and waypoints become a digital guide for adventure lovers,” he suggested.

He added that while the book will adorn coffee tables, its real value lies in becoming a functional resource that inspires exploration and fosters sustainable tourism.

On the occasion, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, and the author Mehmood A. Shah also spoke. The event was moderated by noted endocrinologist Dr. Shariq Masoodi and was attended by prominent figures from the travel, trade, tourism and media. (DIPR)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir UT									
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER									
FLOOD SPILL CHANNEL DIVISION NARBAL									
Notice inviting e-Tender									
e- NIT No. 05 of 2025-26 Dated:12/07/2025									
For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders (In Single Cover System) on percentile basis are invited from approved and eligible contractors for the following works to be received by the Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal.									
S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Earnest Money	Cost of T/D/oc (Rs.)	Time of completion	Class of Contractor	M.H Account		
01	Restoration & repairs to the Gumbh Bridge on Doodganga	₹.1.77 Lacs	3540/-	200/-	20days	DEE	M&R		
02	Providing and fixing of CGI sheeting to Mochwa gate including electrification at RD 32581 m	₹.0.91 Lacs	1820/-	100/-	20days	DEE	M&R		
03	Repair/ Renovation of escape gate at Barzulla	₹.0.85 Lacs	1700/-	100/-	20days	DEE	M&R		
Position of AAA =Accorded, Position of TS = Sanctioned ,Position of funds: (100% Budgetary provision 2025-26)									
The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-									
1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	12-07-2025							
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	12-07-2025 from 1800 Hrs							
3.	Bid submission Start Date	12-07-2025 from 1800 Hrs							
4.	Bid Submission End Date	01-08-2025 upto 1600 Hrs							
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids	02-08-2025 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal.							
6	Submission of Performance Security (PS)	The bidder has to provide 5% of Adv. Cost as Performance Security within 7 days after opening of Financial Bid.							
Note:-									
1):- The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploaded softcopy any short fall if any found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected									
2)As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Sectt. Finance department vide No.OM No.A/24(2017)-651 dtd. 07-06-2018 which reads as under :-									
o) Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of E-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared 1st Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.									
b) The Cost of tenders should be collected by uploading a copy of necessary Treasury Challan/Receipt.									
1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/Receipt (Debited to M.H.0701 -Rev. Misc) and Earnest Money in the shape of CDR/FDR in favour of Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal failing which the tender will be rejected outright. The issuing date of CDR/FDR uploaded must be between issuing date to Bid Submission end date of NIT. CDR/FDR (Earnest money/Bid security) and relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of contract.									
2. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal.									
25. All other terms and conditions same as laid down in the PWD Form 25Double shall also remain in force.									
No. FSCDN/CS/1995-2017 Dated: 12/07/2025									
Sd/-Er. javaid Ahmad Kurpal Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal.									
DIPK-3637/25 Dt: 14-07-2025									

Lieutenant Governor Hands Over Appointment Letters To NOKs Of Terror Victims

The Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha, today handed over appointment letters to the next of kin (NOKs) of victims of terrorism in a symbolic gesture of support and recognition.

The ceremony took place at the Lieutenant Governor's Office, Srinagar, where Sinha met with the NOKs and presented them with the appointment letters.

Sinha expressed his condolences to the families of the victims and assured them that the Government of India is committed to providing them with all necessary support and assistance.

The NOKs expressed their gratitude to the Lieutenant Governor for his gesture and assured him that they will continue to support the Government of India in its efforts to maintain law and order in the state.

The ceremony was attended by several officials of the Government of India, including the Joint Secretary to the Government, and representatives of the NOKs.

The Lieutenant Governor also presented the NOKs with a certificate of appreciation for their cooperation and support during the investigation and trial process.

The ceremony was a significant step in the Government of India's efforts to provide support and recognition to the families of victims of terrorism.

The Lieutenant Governor also assured the NOKs that the Government of India will continue to provide them with all necessary support and assistance in the future.

The ceremony was a symbolic gesture of support and recognition from the Government of India to the families of victims of terrorism.

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Renowned Filmmaker Yuvraj Kumar Pledges to Revive Kashmir's Film Industry Praises LG Manoj Sinha for Reviving Kashmir's Film Tourism Boom

Srinagar

Renowned filmmaker Yuvraj Kumar today pledged to revive Kashmir's film industry and praised Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for his efforts in reviving the state's film tourism boom.

Kumar, who has been working in the film industry for over 20 years, said that he was inspired by Sinha's vision and leadership in promoting tourism and the film industry in Kashmir.

Kumar said that he was planning to shoot a film in Kashmir and was looking forward to the support and facilities provided by the Government of India.

Kumar also praised Sinha for his efforts in reviving the state's film tourism boom and said that he was looking forward to working with the Government of India.

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Filmmaker Yuvraj Kumar speaking at a press conference in Srinagar.

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2500	60 X 40 X 2.0	18.1%	8%
3000	60 X 40 X 2.6	36.3%	0%
3000	80 X 40 X 2.0	31.7%	0%

Max Spanning For TS6010: 3000mm

Overall Cost Saving using SMARTSPAN™ 90 vs RHS			
Max Span Limit	RHS Section	% saving in Purlin Cost	Additional Saving in Truss
2500	60 X 40 X 2.0	-18.0%	19%
3000	60 X 40 X 2.6	8.3%	9%
3000	80 X 40 X 2.0	1.6%	0%
4000	96 X 48 X 2.0	19.3%	0%

Max Spanning For TS9010: 4300 mm

*Subject to the following parameters:
Standard Load Consideration:
1. SPAN: 1.2 m; 2. DEAD Load: 0.12 kN/m²; 3. WIND SPEED: 44m/s;
4. Live: 0.75 kN/m²; 5. Laps: 0.151.6, Design Code: IS: 800: 2001 METHOD-450

SMARTSPAN™
Lightweight and Strong

Benefits of SMARTSPAN™ over Ordinary Rectangular Hollow Section (RHS)

Details	SMARTSPAN™	RHS
Durability	Long Life	Limited Life
Corrosion Resistance AZ Coating	AZ150 (ZINCALUME® steel)	No
Strength to Weight Ratio	High	Low
Post Painting	Not Required	Yes (Additional Cost)
Welding	Not Required	Yes (Additional Cost)
Screw Fixing	Yes	No
Overlapping	Yes	No
Maintenance	Not Required	Yes

durashine®
TATA BLUESCOPE STEEL

Above claims are subject to building dimensions and installation process.
The above product is subject to the guidelines available on www.durashinesteel.com and this shall not be construed as warranty or guarantee of the product of any kind whatsoever.

Dealer Name and Address

durashine®
TATA BLUESCOPE STEEL

Download DURASHINE® APP
1800 2708333
Email: durashine@tatabluescopesteel.com
Website: www.tatabluescopesteel.com

Tata BlueScope Steel Pvt. Ltd. CIN: U02203GJ2007PTC020273 Regd. Office: Floor no. 8 & 10, Kalyanachakra, Plot No. 21, Sub Plot No. 3 at CTS No. 151, Wadakhedi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411001. INDIA. DURASHINE® is registered trademark of Tata BlueScope Steel Pvt. Ltd. ©2023 Tata BlueScope Steel Pvt. Ltd. All rights reserved.

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TATA BLUESCOPE STEEL

SMARTSPAN™
Lightweight and Strong

Great strength for big savings!

SMARTSPAN™ for Roof and Wall Cladding Support

More Spanning, More Savings!

ZINCALUME® STEEL

Ideal solution for Residential, Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural purposes

- Strong and Light-Weight
- Greater Spanning Capability
- Excellent Corrosion Resistance
- No Painting and Welding required
- Easy to Overlap & Quick to Install
- Easy to store and transport
- Cost Effective

Auth Dealer: Saleem Trading Co. Bandipora +917006263383

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