

ADC Budgam Reviews Arrangements for Rashtriya Ekta Diwas Pad Yatra

FE NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: In connection with the celebration of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day) being observed across the nation on October 31, marking the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Budgam Mehraj-ud-din shah today convened a meeting to review preparedness for the Pad Yatra being organised in the district.



The Pad Yatra is scheduled to be held tomorrow and will commence from the parking space of Municipal Council Budgam and culminate at the DC Office Complex, Budgam.

The event is being organised to commemorate the unparalleled contributions of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, popularly known as the Iron Man of India, who played a pivotal role in strengthening the spirit of national integration.

During the meeting, the ADC took a detailed review of all arrangements including route management, security, traffic regulation, medical assistance, participation of students and officials, and overall logistics to ensure smooth conduct of the Pad Yatra.

The ADC directed all concerned departments including Police, Municipal Council Budgam, Education, Health, and Information to work in close coordination for successful organisation of the event.

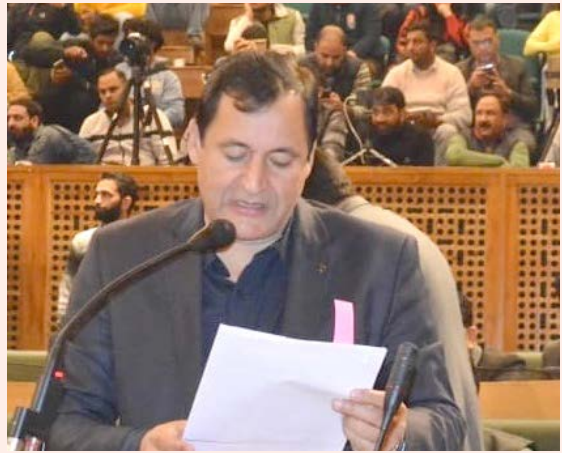
He emphasized that the day is an occasion to reaffirm the nation's collective commitment to unity, integrity, and security, and urged all participants to take part with enthusiasm and discipline.

The meeting was attended by CPO, CMO budgam, ACD, DIO and officers from Police, Municipal Council Budgam, Education, and other concerned departments.

RDD consults legislators for formulation, finalization of developmental plan: RDD Minister

Says Rs 3403.59 lac projected by MLAs incorporated in the current years Capex Budget

SRINAGAR: Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Javed Ahmad Dar said that the Rural Development Department ensures due consultation with elected representatives including legislators and other stakeholders at various levels during the



formulation and finalization of developmental plans.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by legislator G.A. Mir in the Legislative Assembly.

He said that during the current financial year, directions were issued for incorporation of Rs 20.00 lac under CD & Panchayat for each MLA. Moreover, Budget announcements based on the feedback from the MLAs are being accommodated as per resource availability.

The Minister said that an amount of Rs 3403.59 lac as projected by the MLAs have been incorporated in the current years Capex Budget (CD Panchayat).

He said that the proposals and recommendations of elected public representatives are duly accommodated while formulating the developmental plans.

The Minister said that the works under CD & Panchayat, UT Capex, Budget are being executed in consultation with the concerned public representatives.

"Instructions are being issued from time to time to consult the elected representatives while formulating developmental action plans under various programmes being implemented by the Department," the Minister said.

The Minister informed that the elected representatives in Jammu and Kashmir, including members of District Development Councils (DDCs) and Block Development Councils (BDCs), are involved in developmental plans through various roles, such as approving district-level plans, participating in participatory planning campaigns like the People's Plan Campaign, and providing oversight. The establishment of DDCs, which replaced old planning boards, has formally integrated elected members into the process of preparing and approving district plans and capital expenditure.

Govt. Commitment To Preserve Rich Artisanal Heritage, Boosting Economic Empowerment For Skilled Craftsmen: Dy CM

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Felicitates 11 Artisans during third edition of 'Know Your Artisan' campaign launch

SRINAGAR: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary launched the third edition of the 'Know Your Artisan' series under the acclaimed 'Soulful Kashmir' branding campaign at the historic Polo View Market.

Commissioner Secretary Industries and Commerce Vikramjit Singh, was also present in the event as Guest of Honour besides Director Handicrafts and Handloom Kashmir Mussarat Islam along with senior officials of the concerned department and artisans also attended the program.

The event, organized by the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, transformed the colonial-era landmark—renowned for its polo heritage and scenic backdrop—into a dynamic celebration of the Valley's artisanal prowess.

At the outset, the Deputy Chief Minister visited the stalls showcasing a spectrum of Kashmir's handcrafted marvels—from opulent pashmina shawls and kani brocades to intricate papier-mâché artifacts and eco-friendly namda rugs.

While speaking on the occasion, the DyCM underscored the initiative's broader significance and said that these events show the government's unwavering

commitment to showcase brand J&K at the global level, preserving our rich artisanal heritage while boosting economic



empowerment for our skilled craftsmen.

"By bringing these timeless traditions to the forefront, we not only honor our past but also weave a vibrant future for sustainable livelihoods," he added.

Praising the campaign, the DyCM acknowledged that the initiative addresses modern challenges like machine-made imitations, ensuring fair opportunities especially for women-led cooperatives and forging direct market linkages to empower maximum number of artisans across the region.

He also appreciated the department for launching the event as a flagship program under the 'Soulful Kashmir' campaign to revive and commercialize Kashmir's

world-renowned handicrafts and handlooms.

Choudhary urged all the stakeholders to get united in their support for preserving and promoting Kashmir's intangible cultural treasures.

Echoing this vision, Commissioner Secretary emphasized on intergenerational continuity and called for a future where innovation meets heritage, ensuring our youth inherit and innovate upon this legacy of excellence.

Director H&H Kashmir, highlighted the importance

of 'Know Your Artisan' campaign, saying the series not only combats counterfeit threats and promotes GI-tagged authenticity but also fosters co-existence and harmony through our composite cultural heritage, captivating audiences while driving 'Vocal for Local' growth.

The Director asserted that the event would provide direct sales at fair prices not only bridged the artisan-consumer divide but also promoted ethical consumption, with proceeds directly benefiting creators.

Later, the Dy CM felicitated 11 Master Artisans, whose work embodies Kashmir's living legacy and are custodian of age-old techniques.

DC Kishtwar Visits Cloudburst-Affected Chasoti -Paddar Reviews restoration works, listens to public grievances

KISHTWAR: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma visited the cloudburst-affected Chasoti area of Paddar to assess the ongoing developmental and

implemented to restore essential services and ensure relief to the affected families.

The DC also inspected partially damaged houses, for which Lieutenant Governor of



restoration works being executed after the devastating cloudburst that struck the village on August 14, 2025.

The Deputy Commissioner inspected the affected sites to review the progress of restoration and rehabilitation activities. He took detailed stock of measures being

Jammu and Kashmir is going to perform Shilanyas (foundation stone laying) in the coming days.

He interacted with local residents and listened to their grievances related to housing, water supply and electricity. The DC issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned departments

for immediate redressal of issues raised by the public.

The DC informed that the District Administration has ensured ration supplies to all affected households up to December and assured that additional stock would be provided soon.

Emphasizing the need for swift restoration, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Jal Shakti Department to immediately restore the damaged water channel and increase the number of water connections to meet the needs of the local population. Similarly, the Irrigation & Flood Control Department was instructed to start restoration work on the damaged canal from tomorrow.

Referring to the preparedness for the upcoming winter season, the DC stated that all necessary arrangements have been completed, and helpline numbers of the District Administration, Police and SDM offices have been made available for any assistance required by citizens.

Furthermore, the DC directed the Animal Husbandry Department to organize veterinary camps from tomorrow to provide vaccination, treatment and health care support for livestock in the affected areas.

The DC was accompanied by SSP Naresh Singh; SDM Paddar Dr. Amit Kumar; Tehsildar Paddar, Vijay Gupta; Ex-En PMGSY Kishtwar Rajesh Sharma along with other Senior Officers and Concerned Staff.

Mission YUVA...

Employment Department Hosts Entrepreneurship Mela-Cum-Awareness Programme At Gool

RAMBAN: The Employment Department Ramban, in collaboration with the office of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Gool, organized an awareness-cum-counselling programme under Mission Yuva here in the Conference Hall. The event aimed to sensitize the youth about different self-employment and livelihood generation schemes being implemented under Mission Yuva.

The programme was presided over by SDM Imtiaz Ahmed in the presence of Tehsildar Harjeet Singh; Block Development Officer (BDO) Sadam Hussain; Assistant Director Employment Amit Kumar; Career Counselling Officer (CCO) Employment and officers and officials from allied departments including Agriculture, ITI and J&K Bank.

The participants were apprised in detail about the schemes, initiatives and benefits available under Mission Yuva—a flagship initiative of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir aimed at empowering youth through skill development, entrepreneurship and employment facilitation.

Speaking on the occasion, the SDM appreciated the efforts of the Employment Department Ramban for conducting such informative sessions in far-flung areas

like Gool. He urged the youth to derive maximum benefit of Mission Yuva schemes and adopt self-reliance as a guiding prin-



ciple for their professional growth. He also highlighted the importance of youth participation in nation-building through innovation and entrepreneurship.

In his address, Assistant Director Employment Ramban briefed the participants about the objectives and components of Mission Yuva. He emphasized that such initiatives are designed to provide financial assistance, mentorship and skill-based opportunities to unemployed youth, enabling them to become job creators rather than job seekers.

Career Counselling Officer (CCO)

Employment, Aamir Hassan conducted a detailed counselling session on Mission Yuva schemes and gave a live demonstra-

tion of the Mission Yuva Mobile Application, highlighting its key features, registration process and online accessibility of various schemes and services. He encouraged youth to secure registration on the app and utilize the digital platform for availing benefits and guidance.

Later, SDM Gool handed over 10 Sanctioned letters to the applicants of Mission YUVA, which were recently sanctioned by the JK bank Gool and Sangaldan Branches. The event concluded with an interactive Q&A session, during which participants raised their queries related to employment schemes, which were ably responded by the concerned officers.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from local youth, students and representatives from various departments. The initiative was aimed at bridging the information gap and encouraging youth to explore avenues of self-employment through the holistic interventions of Mission Yuva.

District Development Commissioner Samba reviews progress under Mission YUVA

Approves 67 fresh loan assistance cases

SAMBA: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Samba Ayushi Sudan reviewed the progress and implementation of Mission YUVA programme in the district.



At the outset, the DDC approved 67 new cases for sponsorship to different bank branches. While reviewing the Mission YUVA initiative, she emphasized the need to identify at least three trainers from each Government Degree College and University to strengthen the training ecosystem.

The Assistant Director Employment, Samba was directed to organize training programmes for Cluster Coordinators and Data Entry Operators under NRLM and to establish a Model SBDU structure within one month as per the approved norms.

Further, Degree Colleges were instructed to create awareness among the youth and college students regarding YUVA App installation and registration for various employment opportunities under Mission YUVA.

She also directed the Cluster Head, J&K Bank, to minimize the gap between the sanctioned and disbursed cases and to ensure timely sanctioning of all pending cases.

The DDC emphasized enterprise registration and uploading of vacancies by employers on the YUVA portal.

Highlighting the important role of YUVA Doots in the implementation of the programme, she directed them to publicize advertisements for SBDU/Motivators/Trainers for hybrid training courses to ensure maximum application registrations. They were also instructed to accelerate registration of applications for loan cases under Mission YUVA.

DC Poonch reviews preparations for Vande Mataram and Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations

POONCH: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting in the conference hall of the DC Office to review preparations for the commemoration of 150 years of Vande Mataram and Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, marking the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.



The Deputy Commissioner discussed in detail various arrangements for the smooth conduct of the Vande Mataram celebrations. The programme will feature cultural performances, the Vande Mataram song, debate, drawing, painting, essay and singing competitions aimed at fostering patriotic spirit and public participation.

The Forest Department has been asked to undertake plantation drives and related activities, while the District Youth Services and Sports Department has been tasked with organizing sports events. The District Social Welfare Officer was also directed to engage actively and ensure the successful conduct of the celebrations.

Meanwhile, preparations for the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas were also reviewed in detail. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of the day in promoting unity, integrity and national integration as envisioned by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Key aspects discussed included route plans, security arrangements, traffic regulation, sanitation, medical aid, water supply and public participation. It was decided that the Run for Unity will commence at 7:30 AM from DAV Public School (near SK Bridge on Jhullas Road) and culminate at the Sports Stadium Poonch.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all departments to work in close coordination to ensure the successful organization of the event. He called for wide public participation and awareness activities to make the celebrations more impactful and memorable.

Govt. committed to strengthen Foundational Education System in J&K: Sakeena Itoo

Addresses orientation programme for capacity building of ECCE Aayas at Srinagar

SRINAGAR: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo addressed the Orientation Program for capacity building of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) AAYAS (helpers) at J&K State Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT) Bemaia here.

The programme was organised by J&K SCERT in collaboration with Jammu and Kashmir Association of Social Workers (JKASW) and UNICEF, under the Theme "Poshan, Pyaar Aur Parvarish - Nurturing Young Lives with Care".

Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education, Shantamanu; Director General School Education Kashmir, Dr. G.N Itoo; Secretary JKBOSE, Ghulam Hassan Sheikh; Joint Directors of School Education Kashmir, CEOs, ZEOs, representatives of UNICEF and J&K Association for Social Workers, Aayas from different parts of Kashmir and other stakeholders were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Sakeena emphasized the government's unwavering commitment to nurturing young minds through inclusive, child-centered, and play-based learning. She added that this orientation programme is a significant step towards strengthening the foundation of quality education in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister highlighted that early education serves as the cornerstone for cognitive, emotional and social growth, and lays the groundwork for

lifelong learning and success of a child. "Early childhood care is the most formative stage in child's life and Government's vision is to ensure that every child in Jammu and Kashmir receives



quality early education to instil curiosity, creativity and confidence among children", she stated.

The Minister underlined the Government's vision to strengthen early childhood care and foundational education system in J&K, highlighting the need for trained and empathetic helpers to ensure holistic development for all children, especially those from marginalized sections. She added that orientation programmes like these are vital in realizing this goal.

While speaking on the significance of orienta-

tion programme, Minister Sakeena called upon the participants and Aayas to make most of this orientation in order to acquaint themselves about the ideals of basic education and care for early

Additional Chief Secretary & Director, SCERT, Shantamanu in his address applauded the collaborative efforts of SCERT, JKASW and UNICEF, highlighting that this programme defines the commitment of department to strengthen ECCE practices across Jammu and Kashmir. He encouraged educators and caregivers to adopt innovative and inclusive teaching methodologies that align with local culture, language and community needs.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Joint Director Education, Syed Shabir highlighted broad contours of this orientation programme, adding that the focus of orientation is to improve the understanding of the participants on ECCE and roles and responsibility of ECCE AAYAs.

The orientation of Aayas was facilitated by Babra Shabir (SCERT) and Ambreen Bashir (JKASW), with a focus to improve the understanding of participants on ECCE and roles and responsibility of ECCE AAYAs.

Pertinently, this orientation of Aayas marks a significant milestone in advancing Early Childhood Care and Education across Jammu and Kashmir. The partnership among the Government, JKASW and UNICEF signals expanded opportunities for ECCE Aayas to receive specialized training and resources, ultimately benefitting thousands of young learners from vulnerable backgrounds.

The process of the cascading began with the training of 65 Master Trainers across the Kashmir division, who will train 3000 Aayas at DIET level across 10 districts commencing from 3rd November to 8th December 2025 in first Phase. JKASW with the support from UNICEF will provide the technical and logistic support to train the target Aayas during the course of training.

Two-Day District Level Youth Festival Begins in Srinagar

SRINAGAR: The District Youth Services and Sports Office Srinagar kick started a two-day Inter-Zonal District Level Youth Festival for the year 2025-26 under the Viksit Bharat Young Lead-



ers Dialogue (VBYLD) initiative at Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Zadibal.

Participants from all eight sports zones across Srinagar are taking part in the festival, with over 150 young individuals showcasing their talents across a wide range of activities, including declamation, story writing, painting, poetry writing, folk singing and dancing, and an innovative science mela.

An atmosphere filled with enthusiasm and creativity marked the beginning of the festival as participants took a pledge to contribute to a Nasha-Mukt (drug-free) India.

The event aims to nurture leadership qualities, cultural awareness, and scientific curiosity among the youth.

Javid Dar inaugurates Mission YUVA Model SBDU at Baramulla

BARAMULLA: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Departments, Javid Ahmed Dar inaugurated the Mission YUVA,

employment opportunities through innovative schemes and institutional support.

The Minister further said that the SBDU will serve as a one-stop support hub for entre-

schemes.

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, in his remarks, said that the district administration is fully committed to support aspiring entrepreneurs by providing timely assistance, mentoring, and convergence of departmental schemes to ensure better outcomes.

Director Employment cum Mission Director Mission YUVA highlighted that the program aims to create a robust ecosystem for entrepreneurship by offering end-to-end support from idea generation and project planning to financing and capacity building, enabling youth to build sustainable livelihoods.

Earlier, the Minister inspected various stalls installed by young entrepreneurs under Mission YUVA, showcasing their innovative products, business ideas, and services. He interacted with the beneficiaries, appreciated their entrepreneurial spirit, and assured full government support to strengthen local enterprise development.

The Minister also distributed cheques worth 23 lakh among selected entrepreneurs under Mission YUVA and handed over sanction letters to ten beneficiaries for establishing new enterprises. Certificates were also distributed among entrepreneurs who successfully completed the Hybrid Capacity Building Training Course under the Mission.



Model Small Business Development Unit (SBDU) here today, aimed at promoting entrepreneurship, self-employment, and youth empowerment across the district.

MLA Baramulla, Javid Hassan Beigh; Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Director Employment cum Mission Director Mission YUVA, besides officers, entrepreneurs, and a large gathering of locals were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Javid Dar said that the establishment of the Mission YUVA SBDU at Baramulla marks a major step towards empowering youth with access to guidance, training, and financial linkages for starting their own ventures. He said that the government is committed to nurture entrepreneurship and create

preneurship, offering services like business advisory, DPR preparation, credit facilitation, and capacity-building programs. He urged the youth to make full use of the Mission YUVA platform to convert their ideas into successful business enterprises and contribute to the region's economic growth.

MLA Baramulla, in his address, commended the government's efforts towards youth empowerment and lauded the district administration for implementing initiatives that encourage innovation and entrepreneurship at the grassroots level. He emphasized that the Employment department should organize more awareness programmes under Mission YUVA to reach out to unemployed youth and motivate them to avail the benefits of such

DC Pulwama reviews progress of RDSS ■ Stresses timely execution of projects

PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama Dr. Basharat Qayoom today chaired a meeting at Administrative Complex Pulwama to review the progress of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) in the district. During the meeting, the DC reviewed the progress achieved under various components of the RDSS including feeder segregation, augmentation of sub-stations, erection and metering.

A detailed presentation was presented highlighting the physical and financial progress, timelines of ongoing works, and the status of tendered and completed projects across different divisions.

The DC emphasized the importance of expediting all works under RDSS to ensure reliable and quality power supply to con-

sumers. He directed the concerned officers to adhere to stipulated timelines, maintain proper coor-



dination with the executing agencies, monitor daily progress and resolve bottlenecks, if any, on priority.

The DC Directed Project Implementation Agency (PIA)

and TKC to prepare an action plan for daily monitoring of execution and submit daily progress report.

The DC further instructed the field staff to ensure public convenience during implementation and to carry out site inspections for monitoring work quality and safety compliance.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Executive Engineer KPDC Division Pulwama and Awantipora; Executive Engineer, STD, Pulwama, and representatives from Project Implementing Agency, Project Monitoring Agency along with sub-let contractors.

WMDA, Ganderbal Police conduct sanitation drive around Manasbal Lake

MANASBAL (GANDERBAL): The Wular Manasbal Development Authority (WMDA), in collaboration with the District Police Ganderbal, today conducted a mega sanitation drive around the picturesque Manasbal Lake to promote cleanliness, environmental conservation, and community awareness among people.

The drive was aimed to preserve the lake's ecological balance and sensitize locals and visitors about the importance of maintaining a pollution-free environment so that tourist get a pollution free experience.

Officers and officials of the WMDA,



Police, residents and volunteers participated enthusiastically in the cleanliness campaign, which covered the lakefront, Manasbal Park and adjoining

pathways.

CEO, WMDA, Ahsanul Haq Chishti said that the sanitation drive is part of the ongoing conservation and rejuvena-

tion programme being implemented to protect Manasbal Lake. He appreciated the active participation of District Police Ganderbal and the local community for their valuable contribution towards maintaining the lake's pristine charm.

He also urged citizens to adopt sustainable waste management practices and to take collective responsibility for keeping Manasbal Lake clean, vibrant, and ecologically healthy for tourists to make their visits memorable.

DC Srinagar inspects progress on Sanat Nagar Flyover ■ Directs for expediting completion to improve traffic flow on bypass corridor



SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, conducted an onsite inspection to review the ongoing construction works on Rs 30 crore (882 meter span) Sanat Nagar Flyover, a key infrastructure project aimed at decongesting traffic on the City's busy bypass

corridor.

During the visit, the DC was accompanied by Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar; Executive Engineer PC-Ist, Nasir Amin; Executive Engineer PDD, Syed Wani; Tehsildar Chanpora,

Kifayat Ali and other concerned.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the pace and quality of work and took stock of the remaining ongoing works being executed on the project.

The DC was informed that over 90 percent of the work on the flyover project has been completed. The approach road from the Chanapora side has been macadamized and made motorable, while work on the Hyderpora side is in its final phase.

Executive Engineer KPDC apprised the DC that the process of utility shifting has been already completed facilitating the timely completion of the project.

The DC instructed the concerned executing agency to complete the remaining works with accelerated pace to ensure that the flyover is fully made motorable soon.

The DC emphasized that the completion of the project will significantly improve traffic flow, ease congestion, and enhance connectivity along the Chanpora-Sanat Nagar-Hyderpora-bypass corridor and benefit the commuters and local residents alike.

DC Kulgam Chairs Monthly District-Level NCORD meeting ■ Instructs for Vigorous 2nd Phase of IEC Campaign across district

KULGAM: A meeting of the District-Level Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) Committee was convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan at the Mini Secretariat Kulgam to review measures for curbing substance abuse and narcotic trade in the district.

SSP Kulgam, Anayat Ali Choudhary; ADC Kulgam, Vigar Ahmed Gir; SDM DH Pora, Bashir-ul-Hassan; ACR, Riyaz Ahmad Shah; ACD, Bilal Ahmad Kamgar; Tehsildars and other members of the NCORD Committee attended the meeting.

During the meeting, a detailed review was held on the implementation of decisions taken in previous sessions and the actions initiated by enforcement agencies to combat the drug menace.

It was informed that 76 drug peddlers were arrested and 65 FIRs registered in last few months.

The DC was also informed that the district has achieved 100% target in the installation of CCTV cameras in medical shops under the NCORD initiative.

Further, 150 inspections were carried out across

pharmacies, resulting in 24 medical shops being disallowed/suspended for violations in maintaining



sale and purchase records in this month.

DC Kulgam directed all stakeholders to launch a vigorous second phase of the IEC (Information, Education and Communication) campaign to raise awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse and to strengthen community involvement in its prevention. He urged all departments and stakeholders to work in close coordination to ensure effective eradication of the drug menace from the district.

Editorial

Governance or Graft?

The allegations levelled by Leader of the Opposition against Jammu and Kashmir's government are serious and cannot be dismissed as simply political posturing. Outside the assembly, Sharma has called for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) investigation into what he calls a "multi-crore scam" in the Public Works (R&B) Department, referring to a news article claiming to have uncovered significant financial discrepancies. The seriousness of the accusation represents more than a defensive response; we need to know the facts.

Central to the opposition's attack are some direct questions that go to the core of governance. The allegation of financial impropriety occurring in a division that is apart of the constituency of a current minister, and the suggestion of "late-night meetings" between this minister and the Chief Minister create an aura of impropriety that erodes public trust. When Sharma asks whether the late-night meetings were in reference to "contractors and deals or party politics," he is channeling a suspicion that many citizens may feel. The burden of dispelling the cloud of suspicion now lies with the government. Silence in this case will be interpreted as an admission of guilt.

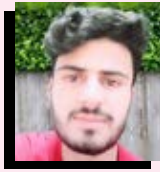
If true, the specific allegation that contracts were awarded to a single contractor indicates the potential breakdown of the tender process established to ensure fairness and competitive pricing. Such actions lead not only to an enormous loss to the public exchequer, but also deny the opportunity for legitimate contractors, and even more significantly, compromises public works quality. The LoP's suggestion that misused funds might have regularised casual labourers points to the human cost of corruption, the ultimate price being paid by society's most vulnerable application.

How the government responds to these allegations will be a test of its integrity. A government may appropriately order its own internal inquiry. However, the political sensitivity of such allegations indicate that an agency believed to be impartial and free from the influence of administration is warranted, thus a CBI inquiry demand is not unreasonable. If the government truly believes nothing was wrong, it should feel comfortable recommending an inquiry to dispel any doubts.

At the same time, the LoP's critique of the government inaction on the flood damage assessment is yet another separate but serious governance failure. Months after Union ministers assessed the situation on-ground, the delay in getting ready and reporting to the Centre for compensation represents an injustice for poor families who have lost their homes, land, and livelihoods. The government's unwillingness to even entertain a discussion on this urgent issue in the Assembly is yet another indication of the abdication of responsibility.

In closing, the allegations brought to light are too serious to be overlooked. Whether fully true or not is what a fair inquiry should establish. A shadow is cast on the government, and it is in the government's self-interest to ensure that shadow is expunged. The appropriate agencies must step in and investigate. For the sake of justice, for the sake of trust, and for the sake of the people waiting, the government must move from a posture of willful avoidance to one of accountability. Only a fair transparent probing can restore public confidence in their government.

Bhalessa: A Journey Through Its Culture And History



■ MOHAMMAD ARFAT WANI

BOOK REVIEW

There have been very few occasions throughout the ages when the written word has moved beyond the role of recalling events and actually turned into a sacred vessel of remembrance, revolution, and continuity of culture. Such literature has not only reflected the past; it has shaped the collective psyche of civilizations. While Abul Fazl compiled the Ain-i-Akbari, he was not merely collating facts on the Mughal Empire. He created a vibrant edifice of rule and culture, demonstrating the intellectual strength of his era. When Al-Beruni traveled along the Indian subcontinent, his book Kitabi'l-Tahqiq ma l'il-Hind came to be a lasting record of cultural dialogue, presenting an unprecedented window into Indian philosophy and science with modesty and accuracy. And when Kalhana wrote Rajatarangini, he added to historical recounting poetry, spiritual depth, and human feeling, weaving a tapestry of Kashmiri past that lives through centuries. They were not professional chroniclers but visionaries by vocation. Their writings were acts of obligation issuing from the conviction that civilizations are lost not by conquest but by forgetting.

In our era, in the neglected creases of the Himalayas, amidst whispering jungles and concealed ridges of Jammu and Kashmir, another such voice has been heard. Sadaket Ali Malik, a boy of the land from the distant hills of Doda, has written not only a book but a cultural declaration. His book Bhalessa Cultural Heritage and History, brought out in 2021 by HSRA Publications (ISBN: 9789390415809), is a candle of remembrance and reclamation. In 164 pages, he has done what decades of neglect by the state and absence from academia could not. He has imparted identity, clarity, and dignity to Bhalessa. The book does not aim at fame through polemic. It does not scream. It breathes with sagacity, recalls with fidelity, and summons attention with the soothing authority of truth.

Bhalessa is not merely a place within the Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir. It is a cultural landscape made invisible in official discourses, overlooked by schoolbooks, and ignored by developmental imaginations. But in its silence there is a civilization. This land finds voice through the words of Sadaket. Not as relic or museum artifact, but as living, throbbing, changing part of India's soul. Malik is no detached observer. He is Bhalessa's

witness, its chronicler, its champion. He brings not just scholarship but belonging. As a writer, teacher, social reformer, activist, he has the experience to combine narrative with the passion of justice and the elegance of perception.

The early chapters of the book describe Bhalessa's geography, but this is not dry reportage. Each riverbed, hill, forest, and valley is given the status of a character in a sacred narrative. One does not learn about

Azad, Malik brings to life their memories. Most touching is his obituary to Alhaj Ghulam Qadir Gani Puri (RA), that towering figure of spirituality whose life of learning and serving others becomes, in Malik's words, a lighthouse in the fog of forgetfulness. The tone is earthy. Never holier-than-thou, always genuine.

Two chapters give a glimpse of Malik's vision more than any other. The ones on tourism and education. Here, he dreams not

for the region. It opens a new chapter in local historiography.

The book's organization is natural but controlled. It has the rhythm of a mountain stream. Flowing, consistent, life-giving, but never stagnant. The style is neither abstruse nor naive. It spans the ordinary reader and the intellectual. Its strength is in clarity, not abstractions. The vocabulary is refined, the tone sympathetic, the message clear.

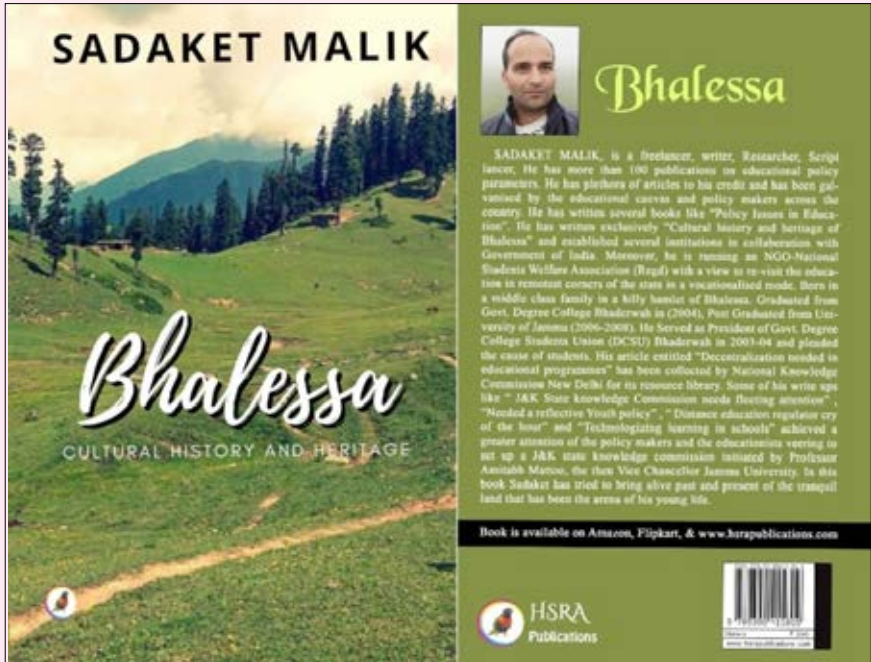
What remains longest in the reader's mind, however, is the emotional undertone. Under each statistic, each footnote, each respectful profile is a grief. The sorrow of exclusion. But Malik never lets pain turn into resentment. He converts tears into determination and invisibility into vision. His affection for Bhalessa is not wistful. It is imperative. He knows that history, when forgotten, does not lie dormant — it perishes. And thus he writes not to conserve the past but to challenge the future.

By Malik's hand, Bhalessa ceases to be a distant place and becomes an incandescent presence in the great tapestry of India. Its character is not merely defined by ritual but by the gentleness of its people, the interfaith tolerance that characterizes its roads, and the dignity with which its citizens live, labor, and aspire. Malik demonstrates that cultural pride, when based on respect and memory, is the corrective for marginalization.

This book is a necessity. It is in the hands of every historian student, every policymaker with a belief in inclusive politics, every teacher with a belief in silent revolutions, and every reader who has a belief that no corner of the world, however small, lacks greatness. It is not a regional book. It is a national imperative. It cries out not in loudness but in reason, telling us to remember, to rethink, and to rebuild.

Bhalessa Cultural Heritage and History is not a book. It is a radiant gift. It is the spark of an extinguished lamp relit by the hands of one who did not forget. Sadaket Ali Malik has given the region of Bhalessa not only a voice but a visionary. He has shown the world that one pen, inspired by duty and love, can stir the world awake. For this gift, he is not just worthy of recognition. He is worthy of reverence. Along with Al-Beruni, Abul Fazl, and Kalhana, his position is among those who remembered so that we would never forget.

(Mohammad Arfat Wani, a writer, social activist, and medical student from Kuchmulla Tral. He can be mailed at wania6817@gmail.com)



Bhalessa. One starts sensing it. Its tough landscape, previously considered peripheral, is presented as being at the heart of the resilience and rhythm of its people. Nature in Malik's prose is alive. Not landscape, but lifeblood.

What ensues is a smooth and well-thought-out voyage through layers of time, society, and spirituality. The book moves with grace from historical roots to modern-day socio-political issues. It ventures into administrative frameworks, communal dynamics, and the evolving nature of education. It ventures into the forgotten and existing cultural heritage of the people — their music, language, customs, and conflicts. Malik does not simply chronicle. He crafts an experience. Every chapter succeeds the previous one with the narrative structure of a symphony where data intersects devotion and facts are contained in feeling.

Central to this work is Malik's respect for the intellectuals and souls that were born in Bhalessa. The book is a literary shrine to the intellectuals, teachers, and religious leaders who defined the identity of the land in spite of its marginalization. From Prof Umar Din to Ghulam Rasool Azad, from Munshi Muhammad Anwar to Ghulam Nabi

with naivety but with rational reasoning. He asks the country to look at what has been overlooked for so long. The untouched beauty of Bhalessa's peaks, meadows, and streams, which if nurtured, could improve its economy as well as self-esteem. But tourism in this context is not suggested as exploitation but invitation. A means of entering into conversation with an unrecollected beauty. Education, however, is presented not merely as upliftment but as defiance. In an area ravaged by state indifference, Malik demonstrates how schools have become bastions of hope and teachers — foot soldiers of dignity. His account in these pages is both a critique and a blueprint.

Malik's methodology of digital preservation is an indicator of his deep consciousness of the shifting tides of memory. By creating a Wikipedia page and a separate website for Bhalessa, he has provided assurance that the legacy of his native land will not get lost in the ocean of unrecorded history. In this, he follows the line of thinkers who knew that in the 21st century, to be searchable is to be noticed and to be archived is to be remembered. His effort is momentous. The first such digital move by a native scholar

Can Textile Giants Survive the Global Recession?



FEROZ NABI

The global economy is trembling once again. As countries around the world struggle with a slowdown, the impact has reached every corner — from big cities to small business towns. Among the many victims of this economic storm is one of Jammu and Kashmir's most respected business houses — the North Indian Textile Company. What started as a small luxury boutique in 1998 in Srinagar's Jhawarnagar area grew over two decades into a powerful name in textile manufacturing and exports. But today, that same company finds itself trapped in the wave of a global recession — with falling orders, delayed payments, and uncertain futures.

A Global Crisis That Spared No One

Economists describe the current situation as one of the toughest recessions of the decade. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank have warned that global trade has dropped sharply in 2025. Political conflicts, trade disruptions, and inflation have made international business unpredictable. Export companies in Asia, especially in India, Bangladesh, and Vietnam, are facing major setbacks. Retail buyers in Europe and the United States — once the largest markets for textile goods — are cutting back on imports as consumers spend less. Factories that once ran day and night are now operating at half their capacity. Containers full of goods lie stuck at ports because buyers can't clear payments.

The Fall of a Local Giant

In Jammu and Kashmir, the story is painfully similar. For decades, the region has been known for its pashmina, carpets, and fine textiles. But the charm of those exports is fading in the face

of global slowdown. The North Indian Textile Company, owned by the Pandith family, was once the pride of Srinagar's textile industry. From its humble beginning as a boutique, the company soon began manufacturing school uniforms for schools across the state, before moving into large-scale textile production and

Company, admitted that the business is facing one of its hardest phases. "We are facing huge losses in exports. Many of our international clients are unable to pay dues because of the global recession," he wrote. The company had invested heavily in scaling up production and expanding its export base. But as the global

company to hold back new orders. Despite the challenges, the management has continued to pay its local employees, hoping that things might improve. But the financial strain is increasing every month. The Pandith family, which has led the company since its founding, is now looking at the situation with a mixture



exports. By 2022, NITC had achieved a milestone — becoming one of the largest textile manufacturing and export companies in North India. Its products were reaching clients in the Middle East, Europe, and Southeast Asia. It was a symbol of Kashmiri craftsmanship meeting global demand. But by the end of 2024, things began to change. The world economy slowed down, and so did the company's export orders.

Clients Can't Pay Us Anymore

In a heartfelt social media post, Mr. Ajhlaan Pandith, the current CEO of North Indian Textile

demand collapsed, payments from foreign buyers were delayed indefinitely. Shipments that were already sent out are now stuck in warehouses overseas, with buyers unable to release funds.

Caught Between Hope and Hard Reality

For a company that had built its reputation over 25 years, the sudden drop has been devastating. According to company insiders, NITC had to scale down export operations by more than 40% in the past six months. Many long-term clients from the European Union have postponed their payment schedules, and some have even requested

of pain and determination. "We have been through tough times before, but this one feels different," said CEO Ajhlaan Pandith in a recent interview. "The export market is uncertain, and we need to rethink how we do business." He hinted that the company may now shift its focus away from pure textiles and explore new industries such as building materials, infrastructure development, and the health care sector — areas that are less dependent on global trade and more focused on domestic growth. "It's time to expand our horizon. We might have to explore new industries to survive," he said.

When Recession Becomes a Trap

For many export-based businesses like NITC, the global recession feels like a trap — one that they never saw coming. They were doing everything right: producing high-quality goods, maintaining relationships with international buyers, and contributing to local employment. But when global demand crashed, the entire system collapsed. As experts explain, recessions create a chain reaction. When demand falls in one part of the world, it affects the entire supply chain. For exporters, it means orders shrink, payments stop, and working capital disappears.

A Story Shared by Many

North Indian Textile Company's story mirrors that of hundreds of exporters across India who are struggling to stay afloat. In Surat, Ludhiana, Tiruppur, and even Delhi NCR, many businesses are facing similar struggles — mounting losses, shrinking orders, and delayed payments. But in Jammu and Kashmir, where industries are already limited due to geography and political conditions, the blow feels even harder.

The Road Ahead

The global recession has once again reminded the business world how fragile international trade can be. But for companies like NITC, it's also a test of resilience. The Pandith family says they are not giving up. They are determined to protect their workers, maintain their legacy, and find new ways to survive. "Every business faces storms," says CEO Ajhlaan Pandith, "but it's how we steer through them that defines who we are." The North Indian Textile Company may be down — but not out. The family believes that with diversification, careful planning, and faith in the future, they can rebuild what was lost. For now, the company stands as both a victim and a symbol of the times — caught in the web of a global recession, yet holding on to hope that better days will come again.

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CS Directs For Accelerated Implementation Of Key Rural Development Schemes

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (RD&PR) Department to assess the progress of key flagship schemes like Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G), and the placement-linked skill training programme Himayat (DDU-GKY).

The meeting was attended by Secretary, Rural Development Department, Aijaz Asad; Director General, Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra; and Managing Director, Himayat, Rajneesh Gupta, among other senior officers of the department.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary directed the department to adopt a mission-mode approach to ensure timely completion of all pending PMAY-G houses and to expedite the sanctioning and rollout of new placement plans under Himayat. He emphasized continuous monitoring, data-based progress tracking, and adherence to set timelines to maximize the impact of rural development interventions.

The Secretary, RDD, Aijaz Asad informed the meeting that Jammu and Kashmir has achieved 95% completion under PMAY-G. Out of a total sanctioned target of 3,34,718 houses, 3,18,542 have

been completed, while 16,176 are under various stages of construction.



Of these pending houses, 6,933 are currently in progress, 1,240 at plinth level and 5,693 at lintel/roof cast level and are targeted for completion by December 31, 2025. An expenditure of Rs35.08 Cr has been earmarked for their completion.

Under the upcoming PMAY-G 2.0 phase, it was added that 5,02,101 household surveys have been conducted to identify new beneficiaries. Additionally, the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, has approved 5,061 houses under a special project for families affected by natural calamities. Registration for this special project is scheduled to conclude by October 31, 2025. The Chief Secretary commended the department's significant progress in rural sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin, noting that the Union Territory is on track to achieve 100% ODF+ Model status across all villages.

DC, Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra, apprised that out of 6,216 villages, 6,115 have already been declared as ODF+ Model – achieving 98.38% saturation. The remaining 69 villages are expected to attain ODF+ Model status by mid-November 2025.

Verification is also advancing steadily, with 5,409 villages having successfully completed the first round of verification. Verification of all ODF+ Model villages is planned to be completed by December 2025. The meeting also reviewed progress on the formulation of key policies, including the Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Policy for Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) and the Fecal Sludge Management (FSM) Policy, which will regulate and license private desludging operators across rural areas.

Under the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) 2025–26, the department reported the completion of 738 Community Sanitary Complexes (CSCs) and 1,905 Community Soak Pits, strengthening the rural sanitation infrastructure.

Reviewing progress under the Himayat programme, Managing Director, Himayat, Rajneesh Gupta, informed that 35,682 candidates have been trained so far, with 14,734 placed in various sectors against a sanctioned target of 81,797 trainees.

The cumulative expenditure under the scheme stands at Rs318.80 Cr.

Under the revamped DDU-GKY 2.0, the scheme has an approved outlay of Rs37.64 Cr. The Himayat Mission Management Unit (HMMU) has received 68 project proposals from prospective Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) and will conduct a Pre-PAC meeting in the first week of November 2025 to finalize project sanctions.

Highlighting the department's outreach initiatives, the Chief Secretary was informed that during the Seva Parv placement drive, over 125 offer letters were issued to trained candidates. A Counselling-cum-Call Centre has also been established in collaboration with IIT Jammu to enhance post-placement support and guidance. Concluding the review, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo directed all departmental heads to maintain strict timelines, ensure real-time monitoring, and adopt accountability-driven implementation mechanisms to accelerate progress across all flagship programmes.

He underscored that the primary goal of these initiatives is to deliver tangible benefits to rural citizens and strengthen grassroots governance through efficient, transparent, and people-centric development interventions.

Mega Fruit Mandi on 300 Kanals being established in Kulgam: Agriculture Minister

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Javid Ahmad Dar said that

Anantnag, at Batengo and at Jablipora, which are functional and adequately cater to the marketing needs of the growers and traders of the entire district.



a mega fruit mandi at Aar Mohala, Kulgam on 300 kanals is being established and the transfer of land in favour of the department is under process.

The Minister said this while replying to a question raised by Legislator, Abdul Majid Bhat Larmi regarding compensation for crop losses to farmers in Legislative Assembly today.

He said that the department has already established two Fruit and Vegetable Markets in the district

He also added that in Kulgam district one mandi namely Apni Mandi has been established at Nunmai, which is at developmental stage. The Minister further informed that damages to Horticulture crops in J&K has been assessed over an area of 531.06 ha, however, as per SDRF/NDRF norms compensation is admissible only for crop losses exceeding 33% which accounts for an area of 431.091 ha.

He also added that in South Kashmir districts of Anantnag, Kulgam and Pulwama, a total compensation

Rs 4.088 lakh has been paid.

The Minister further informed the house that there is one CA Storage Unit with capacity of 5000 MT in Anantnag district.

He said that CA stores are established by private entrepreneurs and Government provides subsidy for the same. He added that the assistance is open to any entrepreneur who is willing to apply as per the norms and procedures. The Minister also informed that most CA stores are located in the Industrial Growth Centre at Lassipora, Pulwama, and the Industrial Estate at Aglar, Shopian, while as efforts are underway with the Industries and Commerce Department to establish sector-specific industrial estates for horticulture and post-harvest management in other districts.

He added that continuous awareness programs and seminars are organized in all districts including Anantnag and Kulgam, to create awareness among the fruit growers about available incentives for cold storage and other post-harvest related activities.

Legislators Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi and Showkat Ahmad Ganie raised supplementary questions on the subject.

DC Kulgam flags-off farmers on exposure visit to Palampur Agriculture University

FE NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, flagged off a group of 47 progressive



farmer-entrepreneurs on a six-day exposure-cum-training programme under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) 2025–26.

During the tour, the farmers will visit Palampur Agriculture University (HP) to upgrade their skills and technical know-how regarding the commercial

promotion of medicinal plants like lavender, as well as cluster-based floriculture entrepreneurship aimed at generating employment opportunities for unemployed youth.

While interacting with the farmers, the DC said that the objective of the tour is to make them aware of the latest technical advancements and progressive farming practices being adopted in the medicinal plants and floriculture sectors.

On the occasion, the Chief Agriculture Officer advised the participants to share and disseminate the knowledge gained during the tour among fellow farmers back home, enabling them to adopt modern agricultural techniques to improve their yields and income in these sectors.

The District Agriculture Officer, Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer, SMS (SDL), Agriculture Extension Officers, and other concerned officials were present on the occasion.

DC Srinagar finalizes arrangements for celebration of upcoming Prakash Diwas of Guru Nanak Dev Ji

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In connection with celebrations of Prakash Diwas of Guru Nanak Dev Ji being celebrated on 5th November, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Thursday chaired a meeting here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex to review the arrangements being made by all line Departments aimed to ensure smooth and seamless conduct of the celebrations marking the 556th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat Aftab Qureshi; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz; SDM West, Irfan Bahadur; SDM East, Zubair Ahmad; ACR, Umar Gulzar; Superintendent of Police, Umar Shah; SE Hydraulics, Exen KPCL, Dy SP Traffic, Assistant Commissioner Food Safety, and other senior Officers.

Members of the District Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee were also present

supply, medical facilities, and other necessary logistics to ensure the seamless celebration



in the meeting who briefed the Deputy Commissioner about the requirements for the occasion.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed review of arrangements related to cleanliness & sanitation, parking & traffic management, water and power

of the Prakash Diwas.

The DC emphasized the need for inter-departmental coordination to ensure that all arrangements are completed well in advance. He directed the Officers of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) to carry out special sanitation drives at

Gurdwara Chatti Padshahi, Rainawari and other prominent Gurdwaras in the City. He further asked for taking elaborate measures to curb dog menace around the Gurdwaras.

The Traffic Police Department was asked to chalk out a comprehensive traffic management and parking plan to avoid congestion near prominent Gurdwaras, including Gurdwara Chatti Padshahi, Rainawari.

Similarly, the KPDCI and Jal Shakti Department were instructed to ensure uninterrupted electricity and water supply during the celebration days, while the Health Department was told to deploy medical teams with ambulances at the venue.

During the meeting, the DC issued directions to the concerned Officers to ensure that all kinds of facilities are made available on the auspicious occasion.

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District Level Training on IHIP under IDSP held at Shopian

FE NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: A day-long training programme on Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) un-



der the Integrated Disease Surveillance programme (IDSP) was organized by the Department of Health at Shopian, aiming to strengthen disease surveillance and reporting mechanism across the district.

During the training, health officials and field functionaries were sensitised about the effective use of the IHIP portal for timely reporting, data management and analysis of communicable diseases.

Chief Medical Officer, Shopian, Dr. Arshid Hus-sain Tak emphasized the need for regular updation of surveillance data and coordination between field staff and health Institutions for prompt disease control measures.

State Surveillance Officer, Dr. Hashmat Sultan, while appreciating the health functionaries of district Shopian for its best performance, stated that the IHIP initiative is a major step towards strengthening the district's public health surveillance system, enabling early detection of disease outbreaks, prompt response and evidence-based decision-making.

Resource persons highlighted the importance of early detection, rapid response and accurate data entry in preventing outbreaks and ensuring better public health outcomes, with modules on data entry, validation, dashboard use, outbreak alerts and inter-departmental coordination mechanisms.

The programme is part of ongoing efforts to modernize the health information system and ensure efficient data reporting at all levels. The trainers stressed on timely and accurate reporting of health events through IHIP which will play a crucial role in disease prevention and control.

Officials from the District Surveillance Team, Block-level Surveillance Teams and other concerned attended the training.

JKTPO organizes Export Awareness cum E-Commerce On-boarding drive at Srinagar

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization organized Export Awareness cum E-Commerce On-boarding drive as per the scheduled activities for the year 2025-26.

The workshop, organized in collaboration with the District Administration Srinagar, One District One Product (ODOP) Team, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) and GeM, aims to empower local MSMEs, artisans and SHGs, entrepreneurs by providing them with vital knowledge about export schemes and benefits of digital commerce.

Speaking on the occasion, General Manager JKTPO, Shahid Ali Beigh emphasized on the pivotal role of JKTPO in organizing the district-level workshop aimed at promoting ODOP sellers and their facilitation on e-commerce platform.

Senior Consultant GeM, Maqbool Shah, in his address briefly explained working of GeM Portal, documents required for registration and benefits which could be leveraged by the Sellers after getting themselves on-boarded on the said portal.

Business Development Consultant, APEDA, Dr. Azra Mufti, gave insights about role of APEDA for export promotion of agri-products to other countries and documents required for registration with APEDA.

More than 120 Artisans, Exporters and FPOs of Srinagar district attended the workshop. They actively engaged in discussions and showed a keen interest for on-boarding their products on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) platform.

This initiative is part of JKTPO's ongoing efforts to promote exports from all districts of Jammu & Kashmir under the District as Export Hub Scheme and the ODOP initiative. The event aimed to connect local producers and artisans with national and international markets through digital platforms and to get well acquainted with different schemes of the Centre and State Governments.

Similar workshops are planned across the Union

Territory to further strengthen the export ecosystem and empower local entrepreneurs to explore global trade opportunities. Expert-led sessions covered a wide range of topics including benefits of exports, branding local products for international markets, export financing options and credit risk insurance



More than 120 Artisans, Exporters and FPOs of Srinagar district attended the workshop. They actively engaged in discussions and showed a keen interest for on-boarding their products on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) platform.

schemes to safeguard exporters.

Pertinently, Srinagar district is renowned world-wide for its high-quality Kashmiri silk Carpet, Papier Machie, Walnut Wood Carvings and Silk Carpets have been identified under ODOP by district Administration Srinagar and Handicrafts Department.

Besides Assistant Director Handicrafts Srinagar, other officers of district administration and other concerned departments were present on the occasion.

Teacher

activities. As an Over Ground Worker (OGW), he was tasked to strengthen the terror network in Reasi and surrounding areas.

“The evidence collected by the investigators from law enforcement and intelligence agencies have revealed that Ghulam Hussain was in touch with LeT terrorists Mohd Qasim and Ghulam Mustafa through encrypted messaging applications.

“Both were his handlers and Ghulam Hussain was carrying out the terror activities as per their directions. He received terror funds via local conduit which he subsequently delivered to families of known terrorists as a means to support terrorism and also distributed money for recruitment of terrorists and paid for logistics,” the Investigators said.

It has also been revealed that he was receiving regular parcels and financial assistance through various conduits. He was arrested in 2023. According to sources it also came to fore during investigation of the case that Ghulam Hussain did not commit terrorist act solely for the greed of money but also due to his sympathies towards terrorism, both as an ideology and a violent campaign. He came to be exposed as an OGW planted within the system in District Reasi to radicalise youth and recruit them in terror fold.

“Ghulam Hussain displayed disloyalty, both towards the nation and towards the education department by turning into an accomplice and an OGW of LeT terror outfit. He was engaged in terror activities against the very nation that provided him with employment and fed his families. During investigations carried in the instant case, it was established that his links to the terrorist ecosystem has been through a network of other OGWs who have been operating at the behest of terrorist outfit LeT,” the investigators observed further adding that having a dangerous terror collaborator working as a teacher in the school is a huge threat to the young and impressionable minds and it also puts at risk the lives of hundreds of children.

Masterminded

in Rajouri and surrounding region. Investigation has also revealed that Majid Iqbal Dar was also involved in NarcoTerror and maintained a close link with LeT terrorist Mod Jabar. It has been learnt that Majid Iqbal Dar as a reliable asset of LeT was using the drug money to finance terror activities and radicalisation of gullible youth.

“His terror link was exposed in January 2023 when police recovered an IED planted near J&K Bank in Rajouri. During the course of investigation police arrested three persons including the government teacher, Majid Iqbal Dar. It was later revealed that Majid, LeT terrorists Jabar and Zohaib Shazad had planted the IED on the instruction of their LeT handler based in Pakistan and they had also received money via a conduit,” the investigators revealed.

Sources said subsequent to his detention under, Majid Iqbal Dar has continued to display radical tendencies inside the prison. As per credible sources close to Majid, he remained deeply committed to the terrorist ideology.

“That Majid has been doing this since long and that too at the cost of Government exchequer and has managed to evade the law for many years is a double jeopardy against public interest. Majid’s damage value is humongous because he was working within the sensitive education department,” Sources within the law enforcement agencies said.

Recently, the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha had observed that the people from all sections of society must realise that those who provide ideological and financial support for terrorism, create false narratives are dangerous to peace and development. His zero-tolerance policy based on key pillars of anti-terror crackdown, swift against OGWs in administration & society, crackdown on Narco-terrorism and inclusive development has ensured peace and economic revival. Lieutenant Governor Sinha had observed that the peace can only be achieved by completely dismantling the terror ecosystem.

“War against terrorism is not over yet. Kinetic and non-Kinetic operations must continue. We must maintain the momentum and take stringent action against terrorism and its entire ecosystem,” the Lieutenant Governor had told the security and intelligence officials.

MEA slams

“infuriated” with Afghanistan for exercising sovereignty over its own territories.

“I reiterate what I had said in my last briefing,” Jaiswal told reporters, “Pakistan is infuriated with Afghanistan exercising sovereignty over its own territories. Pakistan seems to think that it has the right to practice cross-border terrorism with impunity. Its neighbours find it unacceptable. India remains fully committed to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of Afghanistan.”

The MEA’s remarks come amid worsening relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan following the failure of peace talks held in Turkey this week. The two countries have seen an escalation in border tensions, with both sides trading accusations and engaging in skirmishes.

According to Dawn, hostilities began on the night of October 11, after the Taliban government in Kabul accused Pakistan of carrying out airstrikes inside Afghanistan an alleged Islamabad has neither confirmed nor denied.

On Wednesday, the tensions deepened after Pakistan’s Defence Minister Khawaja Asif issued a severe warning to the Taliban regime, threatening possible military strikes inside Afghan territory.

Speaking to reporters at Pakistan’s Parliament House, Asif said that if another militant attack occurred on Pakistani soil, the country would not hesitate to respond militarily.

“We will conduct strikes, we definitely will,” Asif said, as quoted by *Dawn*. “If their territory is used and they violate our territory, then, if we need to go deep into Afghanistan to retaliate, we surely will.”

He added that Pakistan had engaged in peace talks “to give peace a chance” at the request of friendly nations, but described the Taliban’s statements as “venomous” and reflective of a “devious and splintered mindset.”

The failed peace talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan were mediated by Turkey and Qatar, with the aim of curbing cross-border terrorism and reducing military confrontations. The negotiations, held in Istanbul, lasted four days but ended without any agreement or roadmap for de-escalation.

Pakistan’s Information Minister Attaullah Tarar confirmed that the discussions “failed to bring about any workable solution.” The talks were part of ongoing international efforts to de-escalate border violence after several deadly clashes earlier this month.

Pakistan accuses the Taliban of sheltering militants, who have carried out several attacks on Pakistani forces and civilians. The Taliban, however, denies these claims and accuses Pakistan of violating Afghan sovereignty through cross-border strikes.

India has maintained its support for an independent and sovereign Afghanistan and has repeatedly criticised cross-border terrorism in the region. (ANI)

Will Fulfill

candidates to represent the people. Their voices will be heard again in Delhi, where ours had been missing since 2022,” he said.

Abdullah said there must be a strong voice in Parliament to remind the Centre of its promises. “Someone should be there to remind the Centre of its commitments, including the restoration of statehood and the constitutional guarantees withdrawn from Jammu and Kashmir,” he said.

He said a resolution was passed during the November session by MLAs seeking the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir’s special status and constitutional guarantees. The resolution, he said, represented the collective will of the people and reaffirmed their demand for political and constitutional rights.

The Chief Minister accused the Centre of failing to deliver on its assurance of restoring statehood. “The promises made to us remain unfulfilled. Our demand for restoration of statehood and constitutional rights continues,” he said, adding that the National Conference will persist in raising these issues at every platform.

Omar criticised the previous MPs, saying their voices faded in Delhi. “We sent big names earlier, but they got affected by Delhi’s pollution and their voices were never heard,” he said. “This time, we are confident our representatives will speak for the people.”

He said north Kashmir has long lacked meaningful representation. “After 2014, Handwara’s voice did not reach either the Assembly or Parliament,” he said, adding that the current Baramulla MP attends sessions only after court permission and remains disconnected from his constituency.

Reaffirming his commitment, CM Omar said Handwara deserves to be a district and will get that status once Jammu and Kashmir regains statehood. “You don’t need to seek it; it will be given. Once we regain statehood, I will make Handwara a district,” he promised, drawing applause from the gathering.

Abdullah welcomed former People’s Conference (PC) leader Ashiq Neelum into the National Conference, calling him an influential figure in Kupwara and north Kashmir. “His joining will strengthen the party and benefit the people. We look forward to working together,” he added.

Omar claimed that despite attempts by opponents to provoke and distract, the party remains focused on its promises and the people’s trust.

Seeks judicial process in employee terminations Responding to questions from reporters, CM Omar said the termination of government employees should follow legal procedure. “I have always said that termination should be done through the court. Everyone should get a chance to defend themselves. The current practice of ending services on suspicion is harmful,” he said.

He said many employees dismissed under suspicion later returned to service after legal review. “It would be better to use the method of the court to punish the real culprits,” he added.

Rejects MCC violation allegations

When asked about claims by the Leader of Opposition (LoP) that he was violating the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), the Chief Minister dismissed the charge, saying, “No problem.”—(KNO)

LoP Sharma

a particular constituency. The government should tell us who the MLA of that constituency is, and whether that MLA also serves as a minister. If he is a minister, how close is he to Omar Abdullah? Does he not meet Omar Abdullah privately and late at night? If such late-night meetings are taking place with the minister from the same constituency where this scam has been exposed by a leading newspaper, Omar Abdullah must clarify what discussions are held behind closed doors. Are those meetings about corruption and financial deals?” he said.

Sharma said it is shocking that, in less than a year, such “large-scale scams” have come to light. “We are deeply concerned. We expected the government to take action. Aaj jo ek akhbaar ne release kiya, us par humein bahut altraaz hai, narazgi hai. Humein umeed thi ki sarkar ko action legi. Hum isme CBI inquiry ki demand karte hain, kyunki main keh raha hoon ki ye sirf ek division ka nahi, aise kitne hi divisions honge jahan aise scandals hue hain,” he told reporters.

Referring to the media reports, the LoP said that

tenders were allotted to a single contractor. “Strange things are happening under this government, and we fail to understand where it is heading. Why has there been no CBI inquiry despite such a big loss to the public exchequer? Omar Abdullah’s government has made tall claims, but this exposes the reality. He must clarify what happens in his meetings with the minister from the concerned constituency. Do they discuss contractors and deals or party politics?”

The BJP leader said corruption is the biggest disease in society, which hurts everyone, including casual labourers, who should have been regularised through fair use of public funds. “Instead, this money is being misused. If corruption is curbed, many other issues will automatically be resolved,” he said.

When asked about the dismissal of two more government employees from service, Sharma said, “The government must act against anyone who threatens the integrity and sovereignty of the nation. This is the clarity of the Modi government. Any individual involved in anti-national activities must be dismissed from service.”

The LoP also criticised the government’s “failure” to assess damages caused by recent heavy rains and floods in Jammu and Kashmir. “In August, heavy rainfall caused massive destruction. Poor people lost homes, land, crops, and livestock. Three senior cabinet ministers from the Union government visited for a loss assessment and directed the state government to prepare and send a report to the Centre for compensation. But till now, no such report has been prepared. This is an insult to those poor families who are waiting for relief,” he said.

He added, “For the last three days, the Bharatiya Janata Party has been raising the issue of flood-hit people in the Assembly, demanding an adjournment motion to discuss their condition. The Speaker assured us that a discussion would be allowed, but the government is avoiding it.”—(KNO)

Domestic

seamless coordination and service to women, the minister said.

The government said these centres are mandated to provide safety to women affected by incidents of domestic violence, cyber harassment, eve teasing, sexual harassment, rape, etc. (PTI)

CS

Secretary Education, Ram Niwas Sharma informed that 15 districts of the UT have achieved over 95% literacy rate under the ULLAS Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram (NBSK). These districts include Jammu, Doda, Kathua, Poonch, Rajouri, Samba, Ramban, and Udhampur in Jammu Division, and Anantnag, Baramulla, Pulwama, Kulgam, Ganderbal, Shopian, and Srinagar in Kashmir Division.

He further apprised that the department has prepared a five-year perspective plan for seeking special assistance from the Centre to address critical infrastructure and technology gaps.

The plan envisions interventions such as establishment of ICT/CAL labs, Smart Classrooms, Vocational and STEM Labs, Virtual Reality setups, AI and Coding kits, Astrophysics labs, and promotion of Open Schooling, besides ensuring child-friendly furniture, assessment reforms, mainstreaming skill education, and setting up residential schools and hostels.

It was also informed that private schools are being encouraged to participate in the VSK initiative, which includes digital marking of teacher and student attendance and access to curated e-learning materials available through the platform.

The department further revealed plans to review matriculation and higher secondary results from this academic year to instil greater accountability among teaching staff. Enhanced focus will also be laid on vocational education to improve students’ employability prospects.

Highlighting capacity-building initiatives, the meeting was informed that 78,975 elementary and 21,926 secondary school teachers have been trained under the NISHTHA programme, in addition to 21,000 teachers trained through DIETs across the UT.

Moreover, 1.41 lakh students have received vocational training in 1,350 schools through 2,187 vocational trainers. A total of 619 Anganwadi Centres have also been co-located with primary schools for effective implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020.

The meeting reviewed progress under PM SHRI and other centrally sponsored schemes, including the Capex Budget. It was informed that significant strides have been made in implementing the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) mission, and the department is preparing to roll out the Personalized Adaptive Learning (PAL) system to strengthen student welfare and enhance enrolment in government schools. (DIPR)

MHA appoints

18 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.

It authorises the SPP to represent the NIA in case number RC-02/2025/NIA/JMU. Officials said the appointment is intended to ensure that the trial progresses efficiently and that the prosecution’s case is presented effectively before the court.

Pertinently, three terrorists affiliated with the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) targeted a group of tourists, resulting in 26 deaths and injuries to 16 others.

The attackers identified as Pakistani nationals Suleiman Shah alias Asif, Hamza Afghani alias Afghan, and Jibrán were later killed in an encounter with the security forces during ‘Operation Mahadev’ in the Harwan forest area on July 28.

Following the attack, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) held a review meeting and approved several measures to strengthen counter-terror operations, including the launch of ‘Operation Sindoor,’

aimed at dismantling terrorist infrastructure and cross-border networks.

The NIA took over the investigation from Jammu and Kashmir Police on April 27, 2025, under orders from the MHA, citing the case’s national security implications. Since then, the agency has focused on identifying the broader network behind the assault, including foreign funding links and local support.

By June 2025, the NIA arrested two residents of Pahalgam Parvaiz Ahmad Jothar of Batkote and Bashir Ahmad Jothar of Hill Park for allegedly harbouring the attackers at a seasonal hut in Hill Park before the incident.

The two men were charged under Section 19 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967. The agency continues to investigate to uncover the complete network involved in the planning and execution of the attack—(KNO)

Chaos

rainfall. People have expectations that there will be discussions on the impact of the floods, but no such discussion is being allowed,” Sharma said.

He demanded that the Question Hour be suspended to allow a discussion on the plight of flood-affected people.

Meanwhile, Sharma and other BJP legislators waved copies of newspaper reports alleging irregularities in allotment of tenders by Roads & Buildings department. Nowshera is the native constituency of Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary.

Shouting slogans such as “Corrupt Sarkar Hai Hai” (Down with the corrupt government), “NC Sarkar Hai Hai” (Down with the NC government), and “Tender Chor Hai Hai” (Down with tender thieves), the MLAs staged protests.

NC legislators also stood up and retaliated with slogans such as “Chor Machaye Shor” (The thief makes noise).

Despite repeated directions from the Speaker to return to their seats, the protesting legislators continued their demonstration.

Amid the commotion, three BJP legislators-RS Pathani, Sunil Bhardwaj, and Surinder Kumar stormed into the well of the House, leading to their removal by the marshals.

The disruption continued throughout the Question Hour, with BJP and NC legislators trading slogans and accusations.

Later, all BJP legislators staged a walkout but returned to the House shortly afterwards—(KNO)

No recruitment of teachers in last two years: Govt

SRINAGAR: The government Thursday informed the Legislative Assembly that there has been no recruitment of teachers in last two years.

The house was also informed that in Kashmir Division, last recruitment process of teachers was completed in the year 2019 for General Line/ Science-Math-



Urdu. “No recruitment of teachers has been made during the last two years, the reply read.”

The School Education Department in response to a question by Sham Lal Sharma also said, “The last recruitment of General Teachers for Science, Maths and Urdu in Jammu division was carried out in 2016 in districts Samba, Reasi, Udhampur and Rajouri.” The house was further informed that 740 Course Resource Coordinators and 227 Subject Specific Coordinators have been engaged on a contractual basis over the last two years.

“Kashmir division has a sanctioned strength of 6,411 Master posts of which 5,436 are in position and 975 remain vacant. For the Teacher cadre, 28,406 posts are sanctioned, with 28,254 in position and 152 vacant,” it reads. The government also informed the house that in Jammu Division, there were 12,322 schools during 2022-23, of which 1,204 have been clubbed with nearby institutions due to low enrolment or accommodation issues.

“In Kashmir Division, 14 schools are currently non-functional due to zero enrolment, while others were merged to optimize resources,” it reads.

The house was informed that the vacancies are being filled under the promotion quota and rationalization policy, and steps are being taken to address staffing and infrastructure gaps. (KNO)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir						
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER						
Machinery Division Kashmir						
Mechanical & Hospital Engineering Department, Kashmir						
GIST of e-Tender						
e-NIT No:		MDSK/TS /2025-26/54				
Date		29.10.2025				
For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited on item rate basis from registered contractors / reputed/experienced firms for the below mentioned work:-						
Name of the Work	Cost of Tender Doc. (In lakhs)	Estimated Cost (In Rs)	Bid security (EMD) in Rs	Position of AA	Position of TS	Position of Funds
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Restoring functionality through repairs / maintenance of 8 No. Bore Wells (17,19,54,58,60,61,91 and 96 (under priority-11 Culuster-2) of department of Agriculture in District Pulwama under implementation of National Mission of Saffron	107.73	2000 .00	2,16,000.00	Accorded by the Director of Agriculture Kashmir vide order no.374 of P&S of 2025 Dt:11.08.2025	Accorded by the Chief Engineer M&HED Kashmir vide No.MHED/K/TS /113 Dated:19.09.2025	Under NMS
The bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-						
01	Publish date			29 .10.2025(14:50hrs)		
02	Period of downloading of bidding document			29 .10.2025 (15:00hrs)		
03	Bid submission start date			29 .10.2025 (18:55hrs)		
04	Bid submission end date			14 .11.2025 (18:55hrs)		
05	Date and time of opening of bids (online)			15 .11.2025 (14:00hrs)		
Sd/ Executive Engineer, Machinery Division, Kashmir						
No: MDSK/ TS/3425-29 Date: 29.10.2025 DIPK-7619/25 Dt: 30-10-2025						

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR	
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION SRINAGAR	
NEAR J&K BANK(ZALDAGAR)	
Sub: - Extension in bidding time for e-NIT No. 20 OF 2025-26, Dated:29-08-2025 for below mentioned works: -	
Installation of 7.5 Cusec Vertical Turbine Pumping Unit with allied Mechanical and Electrical works for Augmentation of LIS Kreshibal.	
Ref: - JK Government official e-Procurement portal Tender ID No.: - 2025_IFC_285987_1	
EXTENSION NOTICE 6	
Due to No response to above mentioned e-NIT for the subject works, the critical dates are extended as under: -	
Bid submission/ Document download / sale end Date	08/11/2025 at 1400 hrs
Date and time of Bid opening	10/11/2025 at 1230 hrs
Rest of the terms and conditions shall remain un-altered as laid down in the original e-NIT.	
No. MIDS/Ts/3524-29 Dated: -29-10-2025	
DIPK-7631/25 Dt: 30-10-2025	
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division Srinagar	

Northeast's bio-potential holds promise for India's economic ascent, says Jitendra Singh

NEWDELHI: Northeast's bio-potential holds promise for India's economic ascent. This was stated by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy, and Department of Space, and Vice President, CSIR, while addressing the "Stakeholder-cum-Awareness Meet" and Distribution of Quality Planting Materials under the CSIR-Aroma Mission and CSIR-Floriculture Mission here, organised by CSIR-NEIST.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted that science-led interventions are playing a transformative role in uplifting rural livelihoods and driving sustainable economic growth across the Northeastern region. He commended CSIR-NEIST's efforts in empowering farmers, entrepreneurs, and youth through the cultivation of medicinal, aromatic, and floricultural crops.

Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized that the Northeast, blessed with rich biodiversity and unique agro-climatic conditions, holds immense potential to emerge as a

hub for high-value plant-based industries. He said the Government is committed to transforming the region into an "Agro-Entrepreneurial Hub" by integrating



modern scientific tools with traditional farming practices.

Referring to the success of the 'Purple Revolution' in Jammu & Kashmir, Dr. Jitendra Singh urged farmers and entrepreneurs in Mizoram and other Northeastern states to emulate this model for cultivating aromatic crops like lavender, citronella, lemongrass, and patchouli, which have demonstrated high market demand and income potential.

He said, "The Purple Revolution has shown how science, when blended with

local potential, can create new avenues of employment and entrepreneurship. The same success can be replicated in the Northeast to make it a centre of India's



aroma and floriculture economy."

Dr. Jitendra Singh added that initiatives under CSIR-Aroma Mission and CSIR-Floriculture Mission not only enhance farm income but also promote women empowerment, youth engagement, and rural industrialization, thereby aligning with the Government's vision of 'Viksit Bharat @2047'.

The programme was presided over by Dr. Virendra M. Tiwari, Director, CSIR-NEIST, Jorhat, who elaborated on the institute's interventions and achievements

in Mizoram and other Northeastern states. Quality planting materials of aromatic and floricultural crops such as lemongrass, citronella, chamomile, patchouli, anthurium, marigold, and chrysanthemum, along with bee boxes, were distributed among participating farmers.

Senior state officials, including Mrs. Ramdiniani, IAS, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Government of Mizoram, representatives of the State Medicinal Plant Board, and KVK Mamit, Lengpui, participated in the programme.

CSIR-NEIST has been working extensively across the Northeast to promote the cultivation and processing of aromatic crops and high-value floriculture varieties. The institute has created livelihood opportunities through integrated models combining aroma cultivation, floriculture, and apiculture, thereby improving income and productivity at the grassroots level.

As part of the continuing outreach, CSIR-NEIST will organize a Training-cum-Awareness Programme on Aromatic and Floriculture Crop Cultivation tomorrow, 30th October 2025, at KVK Mamit, Lengpui, where experts will provide hands-on training to farmers and entrepreneurs. (PIB)

Military-Civil Fusion Capsule in Jammu Strengthens "Whole-of-Region" Approach

JAMMU: In a remarkable demonstration of collaboration and strategic vision, the Military-Civil Fusion Capsule (MFCF) — an initiative of the Indian Army under the aegis of the Tiger Division of Rising Star Corps — concluded in Jammu on October 29 after ten days of intensive dialogue, exchange, and field engagement.



The initiative, inaugurated on October 15, sought to institutionalize coordination between a wide range of stakeholders — the Armed Forces, Civil Administration, J&K Police, BSF, CRPF, CISF, NDRF, Intelligence agencies, Academia, Media, Ex-servicemen, and NGOs — with the broader aim of achieving seamless operational and developmental synergy in the Jammu region.

Over the course of the ten-day capsule, participants took part in a series of structured sessions, cross-establishment visits, and brainstorming discussions aimed at understanding each other's operational mechanisms, challenges, and strengths. Visits were organized to Army units, IIM Jammu, IIT Jammu, the Divisional Commissioner's Office, Jammu Zone Police Headquarters, and Border Outposts, providing participants with firsthand exposure to institutional frameworks and encouraging collaboration in fields ranging from security to social outreach.

Specialized sessions during the capsule included deliberations on Perception Management and Information Operations, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Synthesis of Intelligence Inputs, and Joint Police-Army Coordination Mechanisms — all key aspects of a modern integrated security and governance ecosystem.

The concluding session, held at the Tiger Division, featured insightful addresses by leading dignitaries including the Directors of IIM and IIT Jammu, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Inspector General of Police Jammu, Inspector General BSF Jammu, Director Planning Jammu, and senior veterans of the Indian Army. The speakers highlighted the growing relevance of multi-agency synergy and the need to translate inter-institutional collaboration into tangible regional outcomes.

GOC Tiger Division summarized the key takeaways of the capsule, underscoring the importance of proposals for dual-use infrastructure, community bunkers, river training and border area development, and the promotion of adventure and border tourism in the Jammu region. He stressed that such initiatives reflect a vision for a resilient and self-reliant border region driven by security, preparedness, and socio-economic growth. Commending the successful conduct of the event, GOC Rising Star Corps lauded all stakeholders for achieving a new benchmark in jointness and integration, calling for sustained cooperation under the principle of a "Whole-of-Region Approach." (PIB)

Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurates National FPO Conclave 2025 in Delhi

NEWDELHI: Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan Thursday inaugurated the National FPO Conclave 2025 in Delhi.



The event saw the participation of over 500 progressive farmers, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), Implementing Agencies (IAs), and Cluster-Based Business Organizations (CBBOs) from 24 states and 140 districts across India.

Addressing the gathering, the Union Minister lauded the efforts of farmers, FPO members, and participating institutions, calling upon them to transform farmers from producers to entrepreneurs and traders so that the full benefit reaches them directly.

Chouhan conveyed gratitude on behalf of farmers to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his unwavering commitment to protecting their interests and emphasised that agriculture is vital for both livelihood and national food security.

He said, "Our focus is on integrated farming for the benefit of farmers. Relying solely on grains will not suffice; allied activities must be promoted to enhance farmers' income."

Expressing concern over price disparity, Chouhan stated that farmers often do not get fair prices for their produce, while consumers pay more. "This gap must be reduced," he said.

The Union Minister announced that the government will soon introduce a Seed Act

to ensure farmers receive high-quality seeds. He added that the government is taking strict action against counterfeit seeds and pesticides and will introduce stringent legislation to protect farmers.

Calling on farmers to move towards value addition, the Union Minister said, "Farmers should not remain only producers but become entrepreneurs through agriculture. Processing and value addition will increase their income."

Chouhan urged FPOs to work seriously for the welfare of small farmers and share practical suggestions with the ministry, assuring that suitable actions will be taken. He appealed to FPOs to increase turnover within a year, expand membership, and enhance credibility and quality to ensure maximum benefit to member farmers.

At the inauguration held at NCDC and NCUI premises in Hauz Khas, Delhi, the Union Minister also felicitated outstanding FPOs, CBBOs, and implementing agencies for excellence in organization, business, and digital innovation.

A total of 267 FPOs showcased cereals, pulses, oilseeds, fruits, vegetables, organic, processed, and traditional products at the exhibition held at NCDC premises. The Union Agriculture Minister visited 57 stalls, interacted directly with farmers, appreciated their innovations, and encouraged them to embrace technology, markets, and new ideas.

The event featured multiple technical sessions and panel discussions on topics including oilseed production, water use efficiency, natural farming, Agricultural Infrastructure Fund, honey production, digital marketing, AGMARK certification, and seed production. These sessions saw participation from agricultural experts, industry representatives, and farmers.

A dedicated platform was created for interaction among FPOs, farmers, buyers, and sellers, paving the way for new market opportunities for rural entrepreneurs.

The conclave aims to empower farmers as producers, providers, and partners, marking a historic step towards inclusive and innovative agricultural growth. (PIB)

Trump, China's Xi are meeting in South Korea to try to roll back months of trade tensions

BUSAN (SOUTH KOREA): President Donald Trump met face-to-face with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Thursday, a chance for the leaders of the world's two largest economies to stabilise relations after months of turmoil over trade issues.

Trump's aggressive use of tariffs since returning



to the White House for a second term combined with China's retaliatory limits on exports of rare earth elements have given the meeting newfound urgency. There is a mutual recognition that neither side wants to risk blowing up the world economy in ways that could jeopardize their own country's fortunes.

"We're going to have a very successful meeting, I have no doubt," Trump said as they shook hands. The US president added Xi is a "very tough negotiator." Trump said they "could" possibly sign a deal coming out of the meeting but they have a "great understanding" of each other.

When the two were seated, Xi read prepared remarks that stressed a willingness to work together despite differences.

"Given our different national conditions, we do not always see eye to eye with each other," he said through a translator. "It is normal for the two leading economies of the world to have frictions now and then."

There was a slight difference in translation as China's Xinhua News Agency reported Xi as telling Trump that having some differences is inevitable.

Finding ways to reduce tensions
In the days leading up to the meeting, US officials

have signalled that Trump does not intend to make good on a recent threat to impose an additional 100 per cent import tax on Chinese goods — and China has shown signs it is willing to relax its export controls on rare earths and also buy soybeans from America.

The meeting began at 11:13 am (10 p.m. ET) in Busan, South Korea, a port city about 76 kilometres south from Gyeongju, the main venue for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit. Trump's helicopter landed at 10:17 am local time, with an Air China plane rolling on the tarmac about 10 minutes later.

The meeting lasted a little over 100 minutes, with the two leaders emerging out the front door and talking briefly. They shook hands and Trump appeared to say something into Xi's ear, just before the Chinese leader entered his own limousine. Trump was shortly back aboard Air Force One to return to the US.

Officials from both countries met earlier this week in Kuala Lumpur to lay the groundwork for their leaders. Afterward, China's top trade negotiator Li Chenggang said they had reached a "preliminary consensus," a statement affirmed by US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent who said there was "a very successful framework."

Trump told reporters while flying to South Korea aboard Air Force One that he may reduce tariffs that he placed on China earlier this year related to its role in makingentanyl.

"I expect to be lowering that because I believe that they're going to help us with theentanyl situation," Trump said, later adding, "The relationship with China is very good."

Shortly before the meeting on Thursday, Trump posted on Truth Social that the meeting would be the "G2," a recognition of America and China's status as the world's biggest economies. The Group of Seven and Group of 20 are other forums of industrialized nations.

But while those summits often happen at luxury spaces, this meeting is taking place in humbler settings. Trump and Xi will be talking in a small grey building with a blue roof on a military base adjacent to Busan's international airport.

The anticipated detente has given investors and businesses caught between the two nations a sense of relief. The US stock market has climbed on the hopes of a trade framework coming out of the meeting. (PTI)

GeM and MP Govt Discuss Steps to Enhance State's Adoption Of GeM platform

NEWDELHI: Chief Executive Officer, Government e Marketplace (GeM), Mihir Kumar, met Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Anurag Jain, in Bhopal to discuss measures for strengthening the State's adoption and utilization of the GeM platform.

The meeting reaffirmed GeM's core objective of providing a unified, transparent, and efficient online procurement system for all government buyers, including Central and State Ministries, Departments, PSUs, Autonomous Bodies, Local Institutions, and Panchayati Raj entities.

Both sides underscored the need to develop a more robust and streamlined procurement framework to further enhance transparency, inclusivity, and accountability in public procurement within the State.

As part of its national strategy to accelerate adoption across States and Union Territories, GeM has initiated a series of focused engagements, including CEO-level interactions with high-GMV States. The Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, has also written to Chief Ministers encouraging alignment of State procurement rules with the General Financial Rules (GFR) and GeM General Terms and Conditions (GeM-GTC), and to the Ministry of Home Affairs to ensure that procurement in Union Territories is routed through GeM.

In Madhya Pradesh, GeM's footprint continues

to expand, with more than 86,000 sellers from the State having completed their profiles on the platform. Since inception, Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) from Madhya Pradesh have received orders worth 5,523 crore from State



buyers, 2,030 crore from buyers in other States, and 20,298 crore from Central buyers. This strong participation reflects the State's growing integration into the national public procurement ecosystem and highlights GeM's role in empowering local enterprises to access a wider government marketplace.

With GeM's cumulative Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) reaching new milestones, the engagement in Madhya Pradesh marks another step towards strengthening the State's procurement ecosystem and ensuring a level playing field for all vendors.

GeM remains committed to fostering a culture of fairness, digital integrity, and inclusivity, enabling every seller — particularly small and emerging enterprises — to participate meaningfully in India's transparent, technology-driven public procurement framework. (PIB)

Congress-RJD leaders insulting 'Chhathi Maiyya', Bihar will never forgive them: Modi

CHHAPRA/MUZAFFARPUR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday charged the opposition Congress-RJD combine in Bihar with insulting 'Chhathi Maiyya', having "problems with Ram temple at Ayodhya" and "protecting infiltrators" for the politics of vote bank and appeasement.

He made the remarks at back-to-back rallies in Muzaffarpur and Chhapra towns, a day after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that Modi had tried to enact a "drama" by planning to take a dip in the Yamuna on the occasion of Chhathi Puja, but it was shelved after it was exposed that a puddle had been created with clean water since the river was filthy.

The PM urged the people of the state to repose their trust in the "Narendra-Nitish" combine, an obvious reference to the JD(U) president, who has been the longest serving chief minister of Bihar. "It is my first tour of Bihar after Chhathi Puja, which is now famous world over.

The festival stands not just for devotion but also for equality, a reason why my government is trying to get a UNESCO heritage tag for this festival," he said.



"I listen to Chhath songs while travelling. I was once moved to listen to one of these songs rendered by a girl from Nagaland. But while this son of yours is busy ensuring that Chhath gets the honour that is its due, the Congress-RJD people are heaping scorn on the festival, calling it a drama, a nautanki," he added, without mentioning any leader by

name.

Gandhi had alleged that the PM would do "anything for votes, even dance".

Modi said, "Look at the depths to which these people can stoop while seeking votes. This is an insult to the festival of Chhath that Bihar will not forget for centuries."

"Just look at the contempt these people have for the people of Bihar. One of their leaders, while holding the post of Punjab CM, had declared at a public rally that Biharis should be driven away. And the daughter of a big family in the Congress, who is now sitting in the Parliament, giggled and clapped," he said.

The allusion was to an incident involving former Punjab CM Charanjit Singh Channi and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

"The INDI Alliance, the RJD-Congress, are capable of nothing except politics of appeasement and vote bank, for which

they are protecting infiltrators," said the PM, in an apparent reference to the opposition coalition's strident stance against Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

"They always have a problem with our cultural heritage. Their leaders can take time off to go abroad on tours. But you may have never seen them visiting the Ram temple at Ayodhya, which was constructed after a struggle that lasted for 500 years," he said.

Terming his opponents as "naamdar" (people with a pedigree), Modi said they cannot stomach the fact that a backward class leader, who used to sell tea, has attained such heights.

"They need to know I do not owe my achievements to their benediction but to the blessings of the people and the Constitution framed by Babasaheb Ambedkar," he said.

He alleged that Ambedkar was insulted by the Congress and RJD leaders. He claimed that all surveys were show-

ing that the RJD-led coalition would face a humiliating defeat in the assembly polls, so it was making "unrealistic promises".

"RJD-Congress manifesto is in fact a rate chart, their promises are for 'rang-daart', ransom, corruption, loot," he alleged.

"All surveys are indicating that the NDA is heading for a big victory. And the RJD-Congress combine will face the worst drubbing in their history," he claimed.

Modi also alleged that the Congress-RJD combine stood for five 'Ks' — 'katta' (country-made weapons lawlessness), 'kroorta' (cruelty), 'katuta' (social resentment), 'kushasan' (misgovernance) and corruption.

He remarked, with a hint of alarm, "What type of songs are being played at the rallies of RJD. These speak of 'katta', 'chhura' (dagger), 'dumaali' (double-barrelled guns), and kidnapping sisters and daughters." (PTI)

WAZWAN DELIGHTS

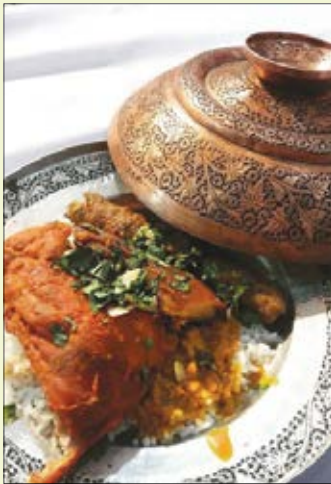
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