



Public funds a trust: CM Omar tells officials

» Urges new JEs to build durable infra » Says statehood demand unchanged » NC leaders, supporters to visit Delhi during Monsoon Session



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 15: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday called upon newly-appointed Junior Engineers (Civil) of the Public Works Department to treat public funds as a "sacred trust" and ensure the creation of durable, high-quality infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking at SKICC during a

function where appointment orders were distributed among 132 Junior Engineers, the Chief Minister as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the recruitment letters carry the hopes and expectations of the people of the Union Territory.

He stressed that every rupee of public money must be used with honesty, accountability and responsibility, adding that

infrastructure projects must be designed with a long-term vision and should stand the test of time.

CM Omar said roads, bridges, hospitals and public buildings must not only meet present needs but remain functional for decades, adding that citizens do not expect freshly laid roads to deteriorate after a single spell of rain.

He described engineers as the backbone | [More on P6](#)

'Response to Centre's reservation queries ready'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said the cabinet will soon approve the response to the clarifications sought by the Central Government on the reservation proposal.

Talking to reporters, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the CM said the J&K Government has fulfilled its responsibility regarding reservation.

"We have done what we were required to do. The cabinet sub-committee sat and prepared the report. The cabinet approved the report. Like other cabinet decisions, the proposal | [More on P6](#)

LG Manoj Sinha releases Shri Amarnathji Yatra Guide Book 2026



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 15: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday released the 15th edition of Shri Amarnathji Yatra Guide Book, at Lok Bhavan. He commended the Tourism Federation of Jammu for its continuous endeavors to enhance the pilgrimage tourism experience.

The LG appreciated the collaborative efforts of the Federation and all associated organizations in ensuring that Shri Amarnathji Yatra remains a safe, seamless, and spiritually fulfilling journey for devotees.

This year's edition of the Guide Book serves as an essential informative manual for pilgrims. It provides vital

information regarding facilities, safety protocols, Yatra disciplines, registration procedures to medical facilities, accommodation options, and emergency contact details along both routes from Lakhampur to the Holy Cave.

Rajesh Gupta, Chairman, Tourism Federation of Jammu, and President Vishwa Hindu Parishad J&K and Ladakh; informed that, inspired by the resounding success of Jammu Tawi Aarti initiative, regular Aarti ceremonies have now been expanded to other sacred locations across the region, including Surinsar Nag Mandir, Baba Kailash Dev Sthan, Purmandal, Ghagwal, Jatwal, and Raghunath Mandir.

The Tourism Federation has

geared up comprehensively for the Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2026. Arrangements have been put in place in coordination with Jammu Smart City Limited for the continuation of regular Aarti from 29th June (Jyeshtha Purnima). On the first day of Aarti at Jammu, Poojan will be performed on the morning of 29th June at the venue, continuing the practice from last year. Additionally, Langar will continue to be served at the Current Registration Counter in Jammu from the same date.

The Tourism Federation has also planned to produce a video documentary showcasing upgraded facilities for Shri Amarnathji Yatries, covering the entire area from Lakhampur to the Holy Cave, | [More on P6](#)

'Refined' oil doesn't mean healthier: GMC Srinagar

Recommends mustard oil; says smart usage imp than processing

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jun 15: Dispelling a common misconception among consumers, the Department of Community Medicine at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar has said that refined oil should not automatically be considered healthier than other cooking oils, stressing that the overall impact on health depends largely on the type of oil chosen, how it is used, and the quantity consumed.

In a public health awareness campaign, the department said many people associate the term "refined" with purity and superior health benefits. However, experts said that refining is merely an industrial process designed to improve appearance, taste, and shelf life, and does not necessarily make oils better for heart health. The refining process may also reduce naturally occurring antioxidants and beneficial compounds such as Vitamin E and polyphenols.

According to the advisory, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the label "refined" can often mislead | [More on P6](#)

KPs seek township in Rainawari, policy support for rehabilitation

Call for dignified return, preservation of identity, greater investment in Valley

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 15: Reiterating their collective desire to return to their ancestral homeland, members of the Kashmiri Pandit community on Monday called for concrete measures to facilitate their rehabilitation, including the establishment of a dedicated township in Rainawari and enhanced opportunities for community-led investment in the Valley.

Addressing a press conference here after the conclusion of the week-long 'Global Kashmiri Pandit Heritage Tour' and the two-day international conclave 'Praagaash' at SKICC, community representative, Dr Surinder Kaul, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the initiative marked a significant step towards reconnecting displaced Kashmiri Pandits, particularly the younger generation, with their civilisational roots and cultural heritage.

Dr Kaul said the Heritage Tour, conducted from June 6 to 12, covered several temples, shrines, ashrams and historical sites across Kashmir.

"For the first time in 36 years, members of our community came together to undertake a structured heritage tour across Kashmir. The objective was to reconnect our people, especially the youth, with their roots, traditions and civilisational heritage," he said.

He said the displacement of Kashmiri Pandits in 1989-90 had scattered the community across different parts of India and the world, creating concerns about preserving its identity and cultural continuity.

"Our biggest challenge over the past three decades has been safeguarding our heritage and ensuring that future generations remain connected with their roots," Dr Kaul said, adding that they received an encouraging response | [More on P6](#)

Peace deal between Iran, US reached

To be signed Jun 19

PTI

Islamabad/Washington, Jun 15: President Donald Trump has announced that the US and Iran have finalised a deal to end their 107-day war, which triggered a global energy crisis.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that his country would host the signing ceremony of the deal between the US and Iran in Switzerland on June 19.

However, the details of the peace deal were not immediately available.

"The Deal with the Islamic Republic of Iran is now complete. Congratulations to all," Trump said in a post on Truth Social on Sunday evening, easing pressure on the global energy markets.

He said the deal would reopen the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow waterway used to ferry one-fifth of the global oil supplies, and end the US naval blockade on Iranian ports.

"I hereby fully authorise the toll-free opening of the Strait of Hormuz and, simultaneously, authorise the immediate removal of the US Naval blockade. Ships of the



World, start your engines. Let the oil flow!" Trump said.

However, in a subsequent post, Trump said the Strait of Hormuz will open on Friday after the official signing of the agreement.

The finalisation of the deal, on a day when Trump turned 80, capped a tumultuous week of war and diplomacy when the US carried out strikes on Iran and the US president, at the last minute, backed off a threat to take control of the Kharg Island, the oil export hub of the Islamic Republic.

"This Great Deal will bring Peace and Security to the whole Region. Many presidents have tried to make

Peace with Iran, and all have failed before me," he said.

"The Leaders of the Region have, for the first time, found a President who can help them achieve real Peace. With the opening of the Strait upon the signing of the Deal on Friday, for purposes of mine removal, oil will flow on both ends again for the Region, and the World," he said.

Meanwhile, Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz said that the Israeli military will remain in southern Lebanon. He also threatened that if Iran strikes, Israel will hit Iran with "great force," local media reported.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi | [More on P6](#)

Decade of Decline

'J&K records 20% fall in students transition from secondary to hr sec'

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Jun 15: Jammu and Kashmir has recorded its sharpest decline in student progression from secondary to higher secondary in a decade, with the transition rate falling more than 20% between 2014 and 2024.

The official figures available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveal that J&K has recorded the second highest decline in the transition rate across the country during this period.

"The steepest declines in transition from secondary to higher secondary between the years 2014 and 2024 were recorded in Arunachal Pradesh with 81.8 percent to 60.7 percent and Jammu & Kashmir with 93.38 percent to 72.9 percent."

The documents said that despite notable improvements, persistent challenges remain in ensuring retention through the higher secondary stage.

"As participation beyond Grade 10 lies outside the mandate of the RTE Act, financial constraints, early entry into the workforce, and social pressures continue to impede progression, underscoring the need | [More on P6](#)

Philanthropist establishes slum library-cum-community centre in Anantnag

Aasif Noor says project aims to address educational, social challenges of underprivileged children

Umair Gull Ganie

Anantnag, Jun 15: A philanthropist has established a slum library-cum-community centre at Anchidora village in south Kashmir's Anantnag district to promote education and provide learning opportunities to underprivileged children.

The facility, which started functioning on Monday, has been set up as part of a first-of-its-kind initiative in Kashmir aimed at encouraging reading habits and improving access to education among children and youth from economically weaker sections of society.

The library-cum-community centre would serve as a platform for learning, skill development and constructive activities for locals, particularly children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Malik Aasif Noor, a philanthropist who established the library, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO)



that he has been working in the fields of education and health for the past 16 years and has focused extensively on the welfare of slum children over the last two years. "There are around 2.5 crore registered slum children in India, but the actual number is estimated to be around 4.5 crore," he said.

He said that while charitable activities such as distributing books and food are important, they alone cannot address the challenges faced by children living in slums. "Unless these children receive proper counselling and there is a dedicated centre to address their health, hygiene and educational needs,

it is difficult to make them realise the importance of education," he said.

Noor said the centre will focus on personal and menstrual hygiene awareness, distribution of stationery and notebooks, counselling sessions and other educational support activities.

He said the facility can also be utilised by organisations working in the health sector to conduct health check-ups, awareness programmes and other welfare initiatives for children.

Noor said similar interventions are being planned in other parts of the country. "This is a pilot project, and we have started it here first. We will take it across India," he said, adding that groundwork has already been conducted in slum areas of Ghazipur, where over 35,000 children reside.

The philanthropist said support such as uniforms and free sanitary | [More on P6](#)

Ensure smooth observance of Muharram: CM Omar Abdullah

Chairs high-level review meeting; calls for coordinated arrangements; CM Secretariat to oversee arrangements

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 15: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday chaired a high-level meeting to review the arrangements being put in place for the smooth observance of Muharram-2026 across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary; Ministers Sakina Itoo, Javed Rana, Javid



Ahmad Dar and Satish Sharma; Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani; Members of Legislative Assembly Tanvir Sadiq (Zadibal), Ali Mohammad Dar (Chadoora), Aga Muntazir Mehdi (Budgam), Dr Shafi Ahmad Wani (Beerwah), Javed Reyaz Bedar (Pattan), Hilal Akbar Lone (Sonawari), Shamima Firdous (Habba Kadal)

and Salman Sagar (Hazratbal). President of All J&K Shia Association Imran Raza Ansari, representatives of various Shia organizations, clerics, civil society members and community leaders also participated in the meeting.

Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, | [More on P6](#)

Omar inaugurates Free Breast Cancer Screening Seva in Sgr Prog to cover ten villages, benefit 10,000 women



KT News Desk

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday inaugurated the Free Breast Cancer Screening Seva programme here at Civil Secretariat, a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative aimed at | [More on P6](#)

Muharram-ul-Haram

Our priority to ensure access to quality healthcare facilities, emergency medical support: Sakeena Itoo

Inaugurates Medical Camp at Zadibal Srinagar ahead of holy month

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 15: In view of the forthcoming holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, Monday inaugurated a comprehensive medical camp at Zadibal here aimed at ensuring accessible healthcare services and emergency medical preparedness for devotees and the general public during the sacred month.

The medical camp has been established by Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences Soura as part of Government's extensive preparations for Muharram-ul-Haram. The camp will provide a range of healthcare services including general medical consultations, health screening, first-aid assistance, emergency care support, distribution of essential medicines and public health awareness.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister, as per an official statement, emphasized that the Government is committed to ensuring adequate healthcare facilities and seamless medical services during Muharram. She stated that special arrangements are



being put in place across key congregation points and procession routes to cater to the healthcare needs of mourners and visitors.

"The holy month of Muharram holds immense religious and spiritual significance. Our priority is to ensure that devotees observe the occasion with

complete access to quality healthcare facilities and emergency medical support. The Health Department has been directed to remain fully prepared and responsive throughout the period," the Minister said.

Sakeena Itoo highlighted that dedicated medical teams,

ambulances, emergency response units and essential medicines are being deployed at strategic locations across Srinagar and other districts witnessing Muharram gatherings. She also stressed the importance of coordination among various departments to ensure smooth conduct of the religious events. Recent government reviews have focused on deployment of adequate medical teams, emergency response units and essential medicines at key Muharram locations.

The Minister interacted with healthcare professionals and local representatives at the camp and appreciated their efforts in strengthening public health outreach. She directed the concerned officers to ensure uninterrupted medical services, availability of medicines and round-the-clock readiness of emergency healthcare infrastructure during the holy month.

MLA Zadibal Tanvir Ali Sadiq; Director SKIMS, Dr. Ashraf Ganie; Director Health Services Kashmir, CMO Srinagar, other senior officers of district administration and health department were also present on the occasion.

District Admin Budgam sets up round-the-clock control room



AI-Generated Representative Image

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, JUNE 15: In order to ensure the smooth observance of Muharram-ul-Haram across the district, District Administration Budgam has established a 24x7 Control Room/Helpline Centre at the Office of the Deputy Commissioner Budgam.

The Control Room, as per an official statement has been set up to facilitate effective coordination among all concerned departments, address public grievances, monitor arrangements during the observance of Muharram-ul-Haram in the

District.

The general public can contact helpline numbers (Landline: 01951-295223, Mobile/WhatsApp: 9469481342, 9320647794, 9186008200) for assistance, or to report any issue related to Muharram arrangements.

The District Administration has urged the public to make use of these helpline facilities whenever required and assured that all necessary measures are being taken to ensure the smooth conduct of Muharram observances throughout the district.

DC Shopian reviews progress under PM Surya Ghar-Muft Bijli Yojana, RDSS

KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, JUNE 15: Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, Monday chaired a review meeting at the Mini Secretariat, Shopian to assess the progress achieved under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) in the district.

During the meeting, the DC undertook a comprehensive review of the physical and financial progress of various components being implemented under the schemes and sought updates from officers of KPDC, Power Grid Corporation, executing agencies, vendors, and other stakeholders.

Reviewing the status of PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, the DC emphasized the need for accelerating registrations and installations across the district. He directed the concerned officers and field functionaries to intensify awareness campaigns and ensure that eligible households are informed about the benefits of the scheme.

The DC also directed the concerned agencies to expedite the process of rooftop solar installations and ensure that all pending inspections and technical formalities are completed within the prescribed



timelines to avoid delays in execution.

The progress of works being executed under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), including smart metering and power infrastructure augmentation, was reviewed in detail. The DC stressed the importance of ensuring timely installation of smart meters and directed the concerned agencies to address all technical and operational issues on priority. He underscored the need for maintaining quality standards and ensuring seamless functioning of installed meters for improved consumer services and transparency.

Emphasizing the

importance of strengthening the power distribution network in the district, the DC directed the executing agencies to adhere strictly to project timelines and ensure close coordination among all stakeholders for smooth implementation of RDSS components.

During the meeting, issues and concerns raised by vendors and executing agencies were also discussed. The DC assured all possible support from the district administration and directed the concerned departments to facilitate prompt resolution of bottlenecks hindering the progress of works.

The DC further stressed the importance

of regular monitoring, effective coordination, and submission of progress reports to ensure the successful implementation of all power sector initiatives in the district.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone; ADC Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; Superintending Engineer KPDC O&M Circle Shopian/Pulwama; ACR Shopian; Sub-Divisional Magistrate Zainapora; Executive Engineer KPDC Division Shopian along with AEEs and AEs; Lead District Manager Shopian; representatives of executing agencies and vendors associated with PM Surya Ghar Scheme, besides other concerned officers.

Prosthetic Aid Distribution camp organised in Anantnag

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, JUNE 15: Social Welfare Department, Anantnag, in collaboration with the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) and J&K Bank, Monday organised a one-day Prosthetic Aid distribution camp at Bondialgam.

The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, presided over the function as the Chief Guest. The event was also attended by DSWO, TSWO, Zonal Head of J&K Bank, representatives from ALIMCO, and field officials from Social Welfare Department, among others.

Speaking on the occasion, the DDC reiterated that the district administration is committed to the holistic empowerment of Specially Aabled Persons (SAPs). He noted that while significant progress has been made regarding SAPs affected by physical or mobility-related disorders, there must be an equal focus on rehabilitating those

suffering from neurological or developmental conditions. Dr. Bilal asked the Social Welfare Department to explore sustainable initiatives dedicated to the overall betterment of SAPs especially individuals affected by CNS or developmental disorders such as Autism and Cerebral Palsy, assuring full administrative and financial support.

The DDC also laid strong emphasis on the education and self-employment of SAPs as enshrined under the PwD Act, underlining that they are an integral part of society. He stressed that the administration's ultimate goal is to ensure inclusive development and empowerment of the needy sections of the community. During the camp, quality prosthetic aids and assistive devices provided by ALIMCO were distributed among pre-identified beneficiaries to help enhance their daily mobility and independence. Notably, a total of 649 Divyangjans (PwDs) were pre-identified with 1124 number of Aids and Assistive Devices through an extensive assessment and registration exercise conducted in the month of July 2025.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR. OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIVISION KULGAM

Official Address :- Near District Hospital Kulgam PIN Code 192231
Email ID: irrigationkulgam123@gmail.com

Subject:- Blacklisting and Forfeiture of CDR of bidder namely Mr. Mohd Zahid Bhat who participated in this office e-NIT No. 01 of 2026-27 (Hiring of Vehicle for the Financial year 2026-27)
Whereas , during scrutiny of bids received against NIT NO. 01 of 2026-27 Mr. Mohd Zahid Bhat S/O Mohd Azad Bhat RIO Bugam Kulgam, was found to have uploaded a fabricated/fake experience certificate as a part of documents to get qualified.
Whereas, verification of the uploaded experience certificate revealed that the document is not genuine and amounts to furnishing false information as per the communication received from the Ex. Engineer, KPDC Kulgam vide No. EDK/768 dated:-04.05.2026.
Whereas, this office subsequently served a letter to Bidder Mr. Mohd Zahid Bhat vide No. KID/1066-68 dated:- 11.05.2026 .
Whereas, the bidder submitted his reply vide his communication received on 15.06.2026, accepting the mistake.
In view of the above and as per the standard procurement norms & tender conditions , the Call Deposit (CDR) bearing No. 4015708 dated:- 27.04.2026 for Rs. 25000/- of the defaulting Bidder is hereby Forfeited . Further the Bidder Mr. Mohd Zahid Bhat 5/0 Mohd Azad Bhat RIO Bugam Kulgam is officially blacklisted from participating in future tenders for one year.

No: KID / 1568-73
DATED: 15-06-2026

DIPK-2183/26
DATED: 15-06-2026

Er. Faisal Farooq
Executive Engineer
Irrigation Division Kulgam

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER KANGAN

TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, sealed Tender Notice affixed with Rs 5 revenue stamp are invited for:

1. Repairment of Pre fab Huts at Brarimarg, Lower Cave, Holy cave and Sangam top for SHRI AMARNATH JI YATRA 2026 Via Baltal on emergency basis.
2. Repairment and renovation of Dining Hall for local staff at Base Camp Hospital Baltal.
3. Repairment and renovation of Doctors accommodation at Base Camp Hospital Baltal.

Interested registered firms may collect the detailed tender Document from (Medical Director Yatra Base Camp Hospital Baltal) during office hours from the date of publication of this notice i.e 20-06-2026 to 26-06-2026

The Tender documents in complete form should reach to the office of Medical Director Yatra Base Camp Hospital Baltal by 27-06-2026 up to 2 PM and shall be opened by the constituted committee on 27-06-2026 at 3 PM in presence of the bidders who wish to be present or on any other day which will be convenient to the constituted committee.

Terms and conditions:

1. Tender must be submitted in properly sealed double envelopes in complete on the pre-formatted tender document addressed to Block Medical Officer Kangan (Medical Director Yatra Base Camp Hospital Baltal) duly marked with: "TENDER FOR Repairment of 1. Repairment of Pre fab Huts at Brarimarg, Lower Cave, Holy cave and sangam top 2. Repairment and renovation of dining Hall for local staff at BCH Baltal 3. Repairment and renovation of doctors accommodation at BCH Baltal."
2. Tenders received after the due date and time shall not be entertained.
3. Rates quoted should be inclusive of all taxes and charges etc.
4. The Tenderer has to give an undertaking that he will repair per-fabricated huts "in all conditions".
5. Rates quoted should not be higher than that of rates charged to any other department, Hospitals
6. The tenderer has to abide by all the government rules and regulations.
7. The undersigned and committee reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason thereof.
8. Overwriting/correction if found in rates quoted by the tenderer shall be rejected without assigning any reason thereof.
9. The tenderer should have their GST Number and PAN Number and should be mentioned in the tender and copy of same should be attached with tender document.

No: 571-46
Dated: 14/06/2026

DIPK-2170/26
DATED: 15-06-2026

Block Medical Officer Kangan

Dr Jitendra to inaugurate pre-retirement counselling workshop today

KNO

Srinagar, Jun 15: The Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, is all set to organize the 59th Pre-Retirement Counselling (PRC) Workshop and the 13th Bankers' Awareness Programme for retiring Central Government employees of the J&K UT on Tuesday at SKICC here.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh, will inaugurate the programme.

The workshop is a step towards the vision of the Government to enhance the "Ease of Living" for pensioners and family pensioners. The department has also introduced several progressive initiatives in pension policy and the digitisation of pension-related processes. The event is being organised by the Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare in collaboration with various Central Government Ministries and Departments.

Around 300 Central Government



employees from Jammu & Kashmir who are due to retire within the next 12 months are expected to participate.

The programme will include sessions on Retirement Benefits, CGHS, Cyber Security, Investment modes, BHAVISHYA portal, Integrated Pensioners Portal, Family Pension, CPENGRAMS, ANUBHAV and Digital Life Certificate.

The Department will also organise a Bankers' Awareness Programme in collaboration with Jammu & Kashmir

Bank. The programme is aimed at creating awareness among Pension Disbursing Banks regarding pension related rules and procedures applicable to Central Government pensioners.

An exhibition of Pension Disbursing Banks will also be organised on the sidelines of the workshop. Twelve banks are expected to participate and provide information on pension related banking services, pension accounts and related financial products—(KNO)

Build memorable infra: CM's Advisor to JEs

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 15: Chief Minister's Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani on Monday urged newly-appointed Junior Engineers in the Public Works Department (PWD) to focus on creating durable infrastructure that future generations of Jammu and Kashmir would remember and benefit from.

Speaking at the appointment order distribution ceremony held at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) here, Wani said engineers play a central role in shaping development as roads, bridges and public buildings reflect their vision and capability.

"Whatever governments build or develop, engineers are at the centre of it. Roads, bridges, buildings and public infrastructure are all reflections of an engineer's vision and capability," Wani said.

Highlighting the need for long-term thinking in infrastructure development, Wani said engineers should



not limit their work to present-day requirements alone.

"The biggest thing is to expand your thinking. Work in a manner that your contribution is remembered in the future. The projects you execute should serve not only today's generation but future generations as well," he said.

Referring to SKICC, where the event was held, Wani described the convention centre as an example of visionary planning and engineering excellence, noting that it continues to serve

Jammu and Kashmir decades after its construction.

"Today we are sitting in SKICC. When this facility was built, its planners thought far ahead of their time. Even today, it continues to serve Jammu and Kashmir and remains one of the most important public assets. Its design, utility and relevance have endured," he said.

He said such infrastructure becomes the identity of a place and reflects the legacy of those who build it.

"This is the kind of work

that gets remembered. Such projects become the identity of a place and the legacy of those who built them," he added.

Wani also expressed hope that Jammu and Kashmir, under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, would witness the creation of similar landmark infrastructure projects in the coming years.

"I want that during our time we create such infrastructure and public assets that people decades later will acknowledge and appreciate. Jammu and Kashmir should receive projects that become examples for the future," he said.

Congratulating the newly-appointed engineers, Wani said their selection reflected their merit and hard work and urged them to uphold professionalism in public service. "Make your name through your work. The appointment order is only the beginning. Your real identity will be created by the quality of work you deliver in the field," he said—(KNO)

Delegations call on LG Sinha



KT News Desk

Srinagar, June 15: Mohd Iqbal Ahanger, Chairman, Coordination Committee J&K and former President Municipal Committee Dooru-Verinag, called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday. Meanwhile, a delegation of J&K Iran Medical Students Parents Association (JKIMSPA) led

by its President Suhail Qadri, called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The delegation discussed issues concerning students pursuing MBBS in various universities in Iran.

Another delegation led by Rajesh Raja, Writer and Film-Maker called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. He presented a brief synopsis of his upcoming feature film, titled "Tulsi" based on Narco-Terrorism.

Police arrest 2 drug peddlers

KNO

Srinagar, Jun 15: Continuing its relentless drive against drug trafficking and substance abuse, Police in Anantnag achieved significant success by apprehending two drug peddlers in separate operations and recovering contraband substances from their possession.

According to a statement, in the first action, a police party from Police Post Sherbagh, while conducting routine naka checking at Sarnal near Pehru Crossing, intercepted a suspicious individual. During search, approximately 1.198 kilograms of charas powder was recovered from his possession. The accused was identified as Shahid Rafiq Nanda son of Rafiq Ahmad Nanda resident of Nandpora, Anantnag. Accordingly, FIR No. 179/2026 has been registered at Police Station Anantnag and investigation has been taken up.

In another operation, Police Station Bijbehara apprehended a drug peddler during naka checking at Kerikadal. The accused was identified as Mohd Shafi Lone son of Ghulam Mohi Din Lone resident of K. Kalan, Bijbehara. During his search, 56 grams of charas-like substance along with 6,000 cash believed to be proceeds of drug trafficking were

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Muharram-ul-Haram to begin from Wednesday: Grand Mufti

Rehaan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jun 15: The month of Muharram-ul-Haram, marking the beginning of the Islamic New Year, is will commence in Jammu and Kashmir from Wednesday, June 17, 2026, announced the Grand Mufti of Jammu and Kashmir, Nasir-ul-Islam Farooqi, here on Monday.

Grand Mufti said that no authentic or credible reports of crescent moon sighting were received from any part of the Union Territory on Monday evening. "In view of this the first day of Muharram-ul-Haram will be observed on June 17, Wednesday," he said.

He further extended greetings to the Muslim Ummah on the advent of the Islamic New Year, praying for peace, prosperity and communal harmony across Jammu and Kashmir and beyond.

The Grand Mufti also highlighted the spiritual significance of Muharram, urging people to draw inspiration from its core values of sacrifice, patience and righteousness. He further appealed for



unity, mutual respect and collective well-being in society.

It is important to mention, Muharram-ul-Haram is the first month of the Islamic lunar calendar and holds deep religious significance for Muslims worldwide. The month is observed with solemnity and reflection, particularly commemorating the values of faith, patience and sacrifice associated with Islamic history—(KNO)

ACB chargesheets Engineer, wife in DA case

KNO

Srinagar, Jun 15: The Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Monday said it has filed a chargesheet against a Junior Engineer of the J&K Housing Board and his wife for allegedly possessing assets disproportionate to their known sources of income.

In a statement, a spokesperson said that the ACB produced a chargesheet in FIR No. 18/2020 for offences under Section 5(1) (e) read with Section 5(2) of the J&K Prevention of Corruption Act, Svt. 2006, and Section 109 RPC at Police Station ACB Srinagar before the Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption, Srinagar.

The chargesheet has been filed against two accused persons, Tariq Ahmad Ganie, Junior Engineer, J&K Housing Board, son of Ghulam Qadir Ganie and his wife, Mst. Rukhsana Jan, an Anganwadi worker in the ICDS Department. Both are residents of Aalai Gund, Chandergam, Tral, and are accused of acquiring disproportionate assets.

The spokesperson said the case was registered following a verification conducted by the Bureau against Tariq Ahmad Ganie over allegations of acquiring assets beyond his known sources of income, including huge

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Div Com reviews SANJY-2026 preparedness at Baltal



KT News Desk

Ganderbal, June 15: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Monday visited Baltal and conducted an extensive inspection of the arrangements being put in place for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2026.

During the visit, he reviewed the progress of various developmental and preparatory works aimed at ensuring a safe, smooth and comfortable pilgrimage experience for devotees.

Accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore; Senior Superintendent of Police Ganderbal, Sudhanshu Dhama and officers of various departments, Garg inspected the Yatri Niwas, RFID registration counters, dormitory facilities, facilities in Baltal base camp as well as the pony stand. He took stock of the facilities being put in place for pilgrims and interacted with officers and field functionaries regarding the status of ongoing works.

During the inspection, the Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned departments to

ensure timely installation of signages, information boards and public awareness banners at all key locations to facilitate better guidance and accessibility for pilgrims.

He also emphasized proper sanitation management, queue regulation, traffic arrangements and availability of essential services across the Yatra route.

Later, he chaired a high-level review meeting at Baltal to assess the preparedness of all stakeholder departments for the annual pilgrimage.

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, gave a detailed presentation on the overall preparedness for the Yatra and briefed the meeting about infrastructure development, accommodation facilities, registration arrangements, disaster management preparedness and departmental works across various departments.

Reviewing the arrangements department-wise, the Divisional Commissioner directed all concerned agencies to complete the remaining works by June 20th and ensure full operational readiness before

commencement of the Yatra. He stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among departments and directed that officers remain available round the clock for prompt response and coordination.

The Health Department informed that medical aid centres along the track would be made fully functional by June 28, while oxygen booths would be established by June 25. The department also apprised that advance medical teams have already been deployed and adequate emergency response arrangements have been put in place.

The Divisional Commissioner reviewed the status of sanitation, water supply, power supply, telecommunication facilities, disaster management, transportation and fire safety arrangements. He directed the Rural Development Department to maintain sanitation in toilet facilities, while Jal Shakti and KPDCI were instructed to ensure uninterrupted water and power supply with adequate backup arrangements.

The meeting was informed that registration of service providers is underway and identity cards shall be issued within the stipulated timeline. Telecom agencies reported that communication infrastructure has been established and is operational.

The meeting was attended by officers from Sonamarg Development Authority, Rural Development, Health, Jal Shakti, KPDCI, Forest, Tourism, Fire & Emergency Services, Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Disaster Management, Police, BRO, BSNL, Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board and other concerned departments.

Amarnath Yatra an opportunity to defeat hate: Mehbooba Mufti

Jahangeer Ganaie

Pahalgam, Jun 15: Former Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Monday said the annual Amarnath Yatra should be seen as an opportunity for the people of Kashmir to counter hate, strengthen bonds with the rest of India and showcase the Valley's centuries-old traditions of hospitality and communal harmony.

Speaking to reporters here, Mufti said every pilgrim visiting Kashmir for the Amarnath Yatra is not only a guest but also an ambassador who carries back stories about the people, culture and traditions of the Valley to different parts of the country.

She stressed that ensuring the smooth and peaceful conduct of the pilgrimage is not solely the responsibility of security agencies and the administration but a collective duty of the people of Kashmir as well.

"Every yatri who comes here should return with memories of warmth, compassion and coexistence.



The people of Kashmir have always welcomed guests with open hearts, and it is important that this tradition continues," she said.

Mufti said that genuine human interaction and hospitality remain the most effective response to misinformation, prejudice and negative narratives about Kashmir and its people. "Personal experiences

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

EDITORIAL

A Breath Of Peace For A War-Weary World

The understanding reached between the United States and Iran to end the conflict in West Asia is a diplomatic breakthrough and a long-overdue sigh of relief for a world that has been holding its breath for months. This war, which erupted on February 28, 2026, has caused serious economic disruption across the globe. It has driven up energy prices, made food more expensive, disrupted supply chains, and claimed innocent lives in multiple countries.

The reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway through which a significant portion of the world's oil passes, will bring immediate relief to economies everywhere. Ships can now sail. Oil can now flow. And ordinary people, far from the battlefields, will finally see some respite from rising prices. But the significance of this deal goes beyond economics. The conflict has been a source of immense human suffering. It has displaced families, destroyed infrastructure, and

deepened sectarian tensions. War solves nothing. It only creates more wounds, more hatred, and more instability. What makes this deal particularly welcome is that the region itself has welcomed it. Gulf and Arab states, which have their own legitimate security concerns, have expressed hope that this agreement will pave the way for lasting regional stability. They have called for dialogue, diplomacy, and adherence to international law. This is a mature and responsible

response. It acknowledges that the only path to enduring peace is through negotiation, not through perpetual hostility. The 60-day negotiation period that follows is crucial. The parties must now demonstrate that they are serious about addressing the root causes of the conflict. The freedom of navigation and commerce must be guaranteed. The remaining issues must be resolved through sustainable solutions based on good neighbourliness and mutual respect.

The world cannot afford another escalation. It cannot afford another blockade. It cannot afford another round of missile strikes and retaliation. The understanding reached between the United States and Iran is a welcome first step. But it is only a step. The journey toward lasting peace in West Asia remains long and difficult. However, for the first time in many months, there is a path. And that, in itself, is reason enough to be hopeful.

India's Era Of Cultural Renaissance: Reclaiming Our Civilizational Glory

Today, India is confidently walking a dual path: keeping pace with the cutting-edge modern world while remaining deeply anchored in its ancient civilizational roots

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

As India scales new heights across diverse sectors—from economic robustness and national security to cutting-edge science and infrastructure—the path to becoming a truly Viksit Bharat (Developed India) demands more than just material milestones. True national progression requires an unyielding anchor in our ancient culture, history, and heritage.

India stands as one of the world's oldest living civilizations. For centuries, our resilience was tested by brutal onslaughts from foreign invaders. Regimes changed and political power shifted, yet the core ethos of Bharat successfully endured, passed down seamlessly from one generation to the next. Though our sacred places of worship, ancient texts, libraries, and universities were systematically demolished during these turbulent eras, our cultural soul remained indomitable.

However, the most insidious blow to cultural India came later, through a systematically altered education system. This framework was deliberately engineered to instill a deep-seated inferiority complex within us toward our own heritage, intentionally severing us from our civilizational roots.

2014: The Dawn of a Cultural Reawakening
The year 2014 marked a historic paradigm shift. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India began shedding its colonial cloak and initiated a massive cultural resurrection. Today, a confident Bharat is not merely recalling its glorious past; it is actively restoring its grandeur, majesty, and spiritual values into the very fabric of our mainstream social life.

Our timeless festivals, historical monuments, traditional cuisine, attire, fine arts,



music, and profound craftsmanship are no longer viewed as mere relics of history—they have emerged as dynamic pillars of global fascination and respect.

Activating India's Cultural Soft Power
Over the past 12 years, the global acceptance and appreciation of Indian heritage have scaled unprecedented heights. The universal adoption of June 21st as International Yoga Day is a spectacular example. Yoga is not merely a physical regimen; it is a profound ancient Indian philosophy that the world has embraced for holistic human well-being.

Our commitment to our heritage is equally reflected in the aggressive repatriation of stolen antiquities—marking a sharp departure from past decades of institutional apathy:

Prior to 2013: A mere 13 stolen artifacts were brought back to India over several decades.

Past 12 Years: More than 640 sacred

heritage artifacts have been successfully retrieved from foreign soils.

This overwhelming shift proves that preserving culture is no longer just a rhetorical exercise; we are fiercely determined to reclaim the physical and spiritual symbols of our civilization. These artifacts are the living imprints of our ancestors' mastery over art, craft, and sciences, serving as eternal beacons of inspiration.

Furthermore, UNESCO's recognition of Durga Puja and Diwali as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity validates the timeless, universal messages embedded in our traditions—the eternal triumph of truth over falsehood and light over darkness. With 44 World Heritage Sites, India now ranks 6th globally and 2nd in Asia, offering a proud testament to our tangible historical legacy.

Reclaiming Forgotten and Suppressed Knowledge

For centuries, foreign forces who lacked respect for intellectual and spiritual traditions tried to obliterate India's knowledge repositories by burning our universities, dismantling gurukuls, and scattering our manuscripts. While dedicated sages and households quietly preserved these priceless scrolls in remote monasteries and temples, they unfortunately slipped out of public memory. Regrettably, even after gaining independence, past regimes made no structured, national-level effort to compile these texts and reclaim our civilizational wisdom.

To rectify this historic oversight, the 'Gyan Bharatam' National Manuscript Survey has been launched as a massive nationwide initiative. Today, over 1 Crore manuscripts have been successfully catalogued from across the country.

We are not just collecting these texts; we are pairing ancient wisdom with modern technological might. By leveraging cutting-edge tools like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced digitization, we are securing this intellectual wealth for eternity. This monumental archive will introduce future generations to India's historic excellence in spirituality, science, art, and craft, inspiring an unshakable pride in their roots.

Virasat Bhi, Vikas Bhi: Rejuvenating Our Sacred Spaces

Our grand temples, imposing forts, and historical fairs are the physical anchors of our civilizational narrative. Yet, for nearly seven decades post-independence, these cultural landmarks faced systemic neglect and administrative apathy, while only a select few monuments were curated for global visibility. Temples in India have historically been the unifying threads of our diverse societal fabric. Over the past 12 years, we have completely reversed this culture of neglect.

Through iconic transformations like the Kashi Vishwanath Dham, Mahakal Lok Corridor, Kedarnath, and Somnath, we are executing a comprehensive overhaul of our spiritual landscape. By creating world-class infrastructure and seamless facilities for pilgrims, we have successfully championed the philosophy of 'Virasat Bhi, Vikas Bhi' (Heritage alongside Development).

This revitalization has sparked a massive boom in spiritual tourism, directly fortifying local economies and transforming these holy towns into vibrant economic hubs.

Most heartening is the massive influx of youth to these sacred centers. Their growing presence is the ultimate symbol of India's cultural revival, proving that our younger generation is eagerly re-establishing its bond with our spiritual heritage during their journeys.

Bharat Reconnecting with its Eternal Roots

Today, India is confidently walking a dual path: keeping pace with the cutting-edge modern world while remaining deeply anchored in its ancient civilizational roots. We are writing a glorious new chapter of cultural decolonization. After centuries of existential struggle, Bharat is firmly asserting its timeless spiritual and cultural identity on the global stage.

We are demonstrating to the world how ancient traditions and state-of-the-art modernity can seamlessly coexist. The future belongs to this vibrant, self-reliant New India. In this Amrit Kaal, the thought, philosophy, and cultural values of Bharat are poised to give a fresh, holistic direction to the entire global community.

The writer is the Union Minister for Culture & Tourism, Government of India

=== From Data To Delivery ===

How ICMR Is Rewiring India's Health Research For A Healthier Tomorrow

Impact is not created by individuals in isolation—it is built by systems working in synchrony. Together, we move from data... to decision... to impact.

Dr. Rajiv Bahl

As the nation advances toward the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, the question before us is not only how we treat disease, but how we build a health system that is anticipatory, equitable, and innovation-driven. At the heart of this transformation lies a reimagined approach to health research, one that connects data to decisions and decisions to impact.

Building on the hard-earned lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India's apex body for biomedical research, has undertaken a series of forward-looking reforms. The reforms range from reimagining its institutional architecture to strengthening the way research is funded and translated into impact. What was once a system rooted in fragmented, investigator-led inquiry is now evolving into a technology-driven, mission-oriented ecosystem. This shift is not merely administrative, it is philosophical. It reflects a deliberate move toward integrated, institute-led research aligned with national priorities, where science is designed not just to generate knowledge, but to solve pressing public health challenges.

A cornerstone of this transformation is the restructuring of ICMR's institutional architecture. Recent reforms have expanded the mandates of several institutes, repositioning them as interdisciplinary hubs rather than narrowly defined entities. The evolution of

institutes toward domains such as digital health and data science, child health, women health, blood and immune disorders, reflects the changing contours of India's disease burden and technological capabilities. Another important step is the creation of a network of regional National Institutes of Health Research across the country, from Dibrugarh in the Northeast to Jodhpur in the West. These institutes will conduct operational research closely with state and district health systems to ensure that relevant research is conducted and the output is used on the ground. These are not nominal changes, they signal a strategic reorientation toward future-ready science, where artificial intelligence, genomics, and real-time data systems are integral to public health decision-making.

Equally important is the shift from siloed functioning to a connected national research ecosystem. Institutes are now envisioned as resource centres that contribute to a shared national mission, ensuring that evidence generated in one setting informs action across the country. This systems-level thinking is critical in an era where health challenges, be it antimicrobial resistance, pandemics, or non-communicable diseases, are complex and interconnected. Parallel to institutional reforms is a fundamental redesign of the research funding ecosystem. The divide between intramural and extramural research is more transparent in terms of funding mechanism. But at the same time, they

are bridged through a more cohesive and outcome-oriented framework. Intramural research is now largely institute-initiated, aligned with clearly defined mandates and structured within predictable timelines to accelerate translation. Extramural research, on the other hand, has been reorganized into a four-stage innovation cycle: Description, Discovery, Development, and Delivery, ensuring that promising ideas are systematically nurtured into scalable solutions.

This integrated continuum, from laboratory discovery to population-level delivery, marks a decisive shift from funding projects to enabling solutions. It is further reinforced by the National Health Research Programme (NHRP), which has identified thirteen priority areas ranging from antimicrobial resistance and tuberculosis to mental health, nutrition, and emergency care. These mission-mode programs are designed to foster multi-institutional collaboration, supported by substantial investments and a clear focus on measurable outcomes.

Technology, too, is playing a transformative role. The integration of artificial intelligence into diagnostics, surveillance, and program implementation is helping bridge longstanding gaps between urban and rural healthcare. AI-enabled tools for tuberculosis and diabetic retinopathy screening are already supporting frontline health workers, while innovations such as AI-driven nutritional monitoring are improving program delivery at scale. The i-Drone initiative, which began with vaccine

delivery and has expanded to transport critical medical supplies such as corneas, exemplifies how cutting-edge technology can overcome geographic barriers and bring care closer to communities. At the frontier of science, advances across the medtech gamut, from medical devices and diagnostics to next-generation vaccines and therapeutics, are enabling more targeted, patient-centric interventions. In parallel, the integration of traditional knowledge systems through innovative, evidence-based models is gaining global recognition. These efforts are reinforced by a strong push toward indigenous innovation. Schemes like First in the World Challenge complemented with platforms such as MedTechMitra and the Medical Innovations—Patent Mitra initiative are accelerating the journey from research to commercialization, ensuring that publicly funded science translates into affordable, accessible technologies for the people.

The true measure of these reforms, however, lies in their impact on public health. Initiatives such as the India Hypertension Control Initiative have demonstrated how evidence-based strategies can transform chronic disease management at scale. Mission-mode programs in emergency care, including mobile stroke units and rapid cardiac response systems, are redefining outcomes in life-threatening conditions. Expanded diagnostic networks and indigenous technologies are strengthening early detection and treatment across diseases ranging from cancer to

infectious outbreaks. These efforts are closely aligned with the National Health Policy 2017, which emphasizes preventive and promotive healthcare, universal access, and quality of care. They also reflect a broader commitment to equity ensuring that the benefits of scientific progress reach every citizen regardless of geography or socioeconomic status. As we look to the future, the vision is clear. ICMR will continue to serve as a catalyst, bringing together researchers, clinicians, policymakers, and industry to build a resilient and responsive health ecosystem. The roadmap to 2047 will be shaped by advances in digital health, bio-manufacturing, and sustainable development, with a strong emphasis on capacity building and global collaboration.

It is important to recognize that health research is not an isolated endeavor, it is a collective national enterprise. The transformation underway within ICMR is an invitation to all stakeholders to participate in this journey, to co-create solutions, and to ensure that science serves society in the most meaningful way. A reformed health research system is not an end in itself. It is the foundation upon which a healthier, more equitable, and more resilient India will be built, an India where every discovery leads to delivery, and every innovation translates into impact.

The author is the Secretary, Department of Health Research, MoHFW and DG, Indian Council of Medical Research

The views expressed by contributors on this page are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the newspaper

CS administers oath of Office to Chairperson, J&K Water Resources Regulatory Authority

J&K Water Resources Regulatory Authority is a statutory body mandated to regulate, oversee development, management, conservation of water resources in UT

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 15: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Monday administered the Oath of Office to Suresh Kumar Gupta, who has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority (JKWRA).

The oath ceremony was held at the Civil Secretariat and was attended by senior officers of the Government and officials associated with the water resources sector.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary, as per an official statement, extended his congratulations to Gupta and expressed confidence that his rich administrative experience and deep understanding of natural resource management would further strengthen the Authority's efforts towards ensuring sustainable, equitable and efficient management of water resources across the Union Territory.

The Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority is a statutory body mandated to regulate and oversee the development,



management and conservation of water resources in the Union Territory. The Authority plays a crucial role in promoting integrated water resource management, safeguarding water security and advising the Government on policies and strategies for sustainable utilization of this vital resource.

Gupta was appointed as Chairperson of the JKWRA by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir vide Notification S.O. 164 dated June 9, 2026, issued under Section 139 of the Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources

(Regulation and Management) Act, 2010. His appointment came into effect upon assumption of charge.

A distinguished officer of the 1991 batch of the Indian Forest Service (IFS), Suresh Kumar Gupta brings with him more than three decades of experience in public administration, environmental governance, forest management and natural resource conservation. During his illustrious career, he served in several key positions in Jammu and Kashmir, including Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) and Head of

Forest Force (HoFF), the highest professional position in the Forest Department.

He has also held important assignments as Principal Secretary, Culture, Tribal Affairs and School Education Departments besides serving as Chairman J&K Biodiversity Council, Chief Wildlife Warden; Director, Social Forestry, Director Forest Protection Force, Director J&K Forest Research Institute and Managing Director, Jammu and Kashmir Forest Development Corporation (JKFDC). His extensive experience in environmental stewardship, watershed conservation and sustainable resource management is expected to greatly benefit the functioning of the Water Resources Regulatory Authority.

On assuming office, Gupta expressed his gratitude to the Government for reposing confidence in him and reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening water governance mechanisms, promoting sustainable water use and ensuring effective regulation of the Union Territory's precious water resources in the larger public interest.

MP Ghulam Ali Khatana reviews developmental issues, public grievances

Holds public darbar at Rakhi Brah Shangus

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, JUNE 15: Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Nominated, Ghulam Ali Khatana Monday presided over a Public Darbar/Grievance Redressal Camp at Rakhi Brah Shangus to hear and address the grievances, demands and developmental concerns of the residents of the area.

A large number of residents, public representatives and stakeholders participated in the programme and projected various issues related to infrastructure, education, healthcare, employment, agriculture, horticulture, tourism, social welfare and other essential services.

The participants highlighted various demands and concerns pertaining to road connectivity, power supply, drinking water facilities, healthcare services, education infrastructure, employment opportunities and effective implementation of government schemes.

Addressing the gathering, the MP assured the public that all genuine demands and grievances would be



taken up with the concerned authorities for timely redressal. He emphasised the need for coordinated efforts by all departments to ensure inclusive and people-centric development.

The MP reviewed the developmental works being carried out in the area and sought feedback from the concerned officers on the issues raised by the public. He directed the officers to ensure prompt action and effective delivery of public services at the grassroots level.

He further stressed the

importance of engaging local youth in ongoing developmental activities to generate employment opportunities and improve livelihoods.

Several grievances were addressed during the Public Darbar, while necessary directions were issued for timely action on the remaining issues.

Among those present were Additional Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Vikas Ahlawat, Tehsildar, Shangus, Block Development Officer, Shangus and officials of various line departments.

Yoga sessions begin in Kathua ahead of International Yoga Day

KT News Desk

KATHUA, JUNE 15: As part of the lead-up to the 12th International Day of Yoga, the district administration Kathua, in collaboration with District AYUSH Office Kathua Monday organised a yoga session at Government High School Lakhampur under the "Yoga 365" campaign with the theme "Yoga for Healthy Ageing".

The AYUSH team, as per an official statement, comprising Nodal Officer IDY-2026 Dr Bodh Paul and Yoga Instructor Ankush Modeel demonstrated various yoga asanas and pranayama techniques to the participants to promote physical fitness and stress management. Additionally, a pledge was administered under the "Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan" to promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

The session, as per an official statement, was conducted

under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma, directions of Director AYUSH J&K Dr Ajay Kumar Tikoo and supervision of District AYUSH Office Kathua Dr Rakesh Kumar Sharma.

The DC appealed to the citizens to actively participate in upcoming sessions and make yoga a daily habit for a healthier lifestyle.

As part of the ongoing campaign, upcoming yoga sessions will be held daily at 7:00 am at Dream Land Park Kathua on June 16, Birla Park Kathua on June 17, Government High School Kadyala Hiranagar on June 18, Zananna Park Kathua on June 19 and Purthu Ground Basohli on June 20.

Among those present were Executive Officer Lakhampur Prithvi Sangra and Headmaster Government High School Lakhampur Tarsem Lal, alongside local staff and prominent citizens.

Anti-drug awareness campaign held at GHS Nagar Baderwah

KT News Desk

BHADERWAH, JUNE 15: As part of the ongoing awareness initiatives under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), an Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign was organised at Government High School Nagar, Baderwah.

During the sessions, resource persons detailed the physical, psychological, social and economic consequences of substance addiction. They stressed the importance of a healthy, drug-free lifestyle, encouraging students to act as ambassadors of positive change within their communities. The speakers also underscored the need for a coordinated approach involving

educational institutions, parents and government agencies to ensure early identification, prevention and effective access to rehabilitation services.

The programme, as per an official statement, concluded with the administration of a pledge by Tehsil Social Welfare Officer Baderwah, wherein all participants reaffirmed their commitment towards building a drug-free society and supporting the vision of a "Nasha Mukh Bharat."

Among those present were Tehsil Social Welfare Officer Baderwah, alongside school faculty, students and representatives from the Health, Education, Sports and Social Welfare departments.

Census-2027: Amit Sharma reviews operations in Anantnag

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, JUNE 15: In continuation of ongoing Districts' Review streak, Chief Principal Census Officer (CPCO) and Director Census Operations (DCO), Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Amit Sharma along with Biswajit Das, Deputy Director General, MHA, Office of Registrar General of India, Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Conference Hall, Anantnag to assess the progress of the ongoing House Listing Operations (HLO) being conducted under Census 2027 in the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was also attended by Principal Census Officer (Deputy Commissioner), Anantnag, Dr Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Joint Director, DCO J&K, Arun Kumar, Assistant Director DCO J&K, Vijay Kumar; Additional Deputy Commissioner (District Census Officer), Vikas Ahlawat; ACR, Sub-Divisional Magistrates, DSEO (Additional District Census Officer), Charge Officers and other concerned officials associated with the Census exercise.

In his remarks, the CPCO termed Census Data as the founding pillars of future development and prosperity, not only in Kashmir valley but the entire nation.

Reviewing the progress, Amit Sharma appreciated the preparedness of the Anantnag district and emphasized that Census is the country's largest administrative and statistical exercise, forming the basis for planning, resource allocation and socio-economic development for years to come. He termed Anantnag as one of the oldest districts of J&K with pristine glory and famous tourist spots. Amit Sharma stressed the



importance of maintaining the highest standards of accuracy during data collection and directed enumerators and supervisors to ensure that every entry is recorded correctly and verified thoroughly. He cautioned that even minor errors or conceptual misunderstandings can adversely impact the quality of Census data and affect future policy planning.

The CPCO directed Charge Officers to ensure that Supervisors undertake regular field inspections and conduct random quality checks instructed to intensify monitoring and ensure strict adherence to Census guidelines. He also emphasized verification of household information, coverage of migratory populations, forest areas and other special categories to ensure that no household or individual is left out of the enumeration process.

The district being a peculiar destination for migratory and seasonal populations, special emphasis was laid on ensuring their comprehensive coverage during the ongoing Census exercise.

Deputy Director General, Census, MHA, ORGI, Government of India held a direct interaction session with the present Enumerators and Supervisors, Charge Officers, etc to take first hand feedback

which shall help in improving the upcoming technology based second most important phase of Census, which is Population Enumeration (PE), in the coming months of September 2026 and February 2027.

The Principal Census Officer assured full administrative support for the smooth conduct of Census operations and directed all concerned officers to closely monitor field activities to ensure timely completion of Census work, strictly in line with defined timelines and as per guidelines and Circular instructions issued from time to time.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner (District Census Officer) briefed the CPCO on the district profile and the status of preparations for Census-2027. He informed that all House Listing Blocks (HLBs) have been successfully created and demarcated on the CMMS portal, while field operations are progressing smoothly across the district. He also apprised Chair in the meeting about the training imparted to enumerators and supervisors, self-enumeration progress, awareness campaigns undertaken through various IEC activities, and the monitoring mechanisms put in place to ensure quality data collection and comprehensive coverage of all households, including migratory populations.

Director Agriculture Kashmir reviews functioning of departmental farms

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUNE 15: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Directorate Hall, Lal Mandi, Srinagar, to review the preparedness and implementation strategy for the Annual Action Plan (AAP) 2026-27 across the Kashmir Division.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Joint Director Agriculture Inputs and other senior officers of the Agriculture Department. Detailed deliberations were held on district-wise targets, priorities, and implementation modalities under various developmental schemes and programmes envisaged in the Annual Action Plan for the financial year 2026-27.

During the meeting, the Director emphasized the importance of timely and effective execution of all interventions to ensure optimum benefits reach the farming community. He directed the officers to strengthen field-level monitoring, maintain close coordination with stakeholders, and ensure the achievement of both physical and financial

targets within the prescribed timelines.

Highlighting the need for sustainable and inclusive agricultural growth, the Director stressed the promotion of modern farming practices, crop diversification, farm mechanization, efficient resource utilization, and capacity building of farmers. He also reviewed the preparedness of the districts for the implementation of key agricultural initiatives and programmes during the ensuing cropping seasons.

The Director called upon all officers to work with commitment, accountability, and a result-oriented approach to successfully achieve the objectives of the Annual Action Plan 2026-27 and contribute towards enhancing agricultural productivity, profitability, and farmers' welfare across all the departmental farms in Kashmir Division.

The meeting concluded with a detailed review of ongoing departmental activities and directions for effective monitoring, timely execution, and regular evaluation of programmes to ensure successful implementation of the Annual Action Plan 2026-27.

JKAACL organises 20-day children's summer workshop in Jammu



KT News Desk

JAMMU, JUNE 15: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) Monday inaugurated its 20-day Summer Children's Workshop at Jammu. Additional Secretary JKAACL Sonali Arun Gupta formally inaugurated the workshop.

The Summer Children's Workshop, as per an official statement, is an annual initiative of JKAACL, organised successfully over many years with the objective of nurturing creativity and talent among children during their summer vacations.

Addressing participants, Additional Secretary Sonali Arun Gupta, as per an official statement, said that such workshops provide children with a meaningful opportunity to utilise their vacations

productively. She encouraged participants to benefit from these creative learning experiences and explore their hidden talents.

This year, the theatre workshop is being conducted by renowned theatre artist and director Neeraj Kant. The painting workshop is being led by noted cartoonist and media creator Chander Shekhar, assisted by Jyeshtha Jamwal. The dance workshop is being conducted by Himani Kapoor.

Among those present at the inaugural ceremony were Sanjeev Gupta, SOCA; Anil Tickoo, ACO, JKAACL; theatre expert Neeraj Kant; painting and arts expert Chander Shekhar; dance expert Himani Kapoor; and painting expert Jyeshtha Jamwal.

Around 90 students from various schools are participating across different disciplines.

NMJKA Campaign: Awareness, sports activities continue across Pulwama

KT News Desk

PULWAMA, JUNE 15: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukh Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan (NMJKA), a series of awareness, counselling and youth engagement activities were conducted across various parts of District Pulwama Monday to strengthen the collective fight against substance abuse and promote a healthy, drug-free society.

Awareness programmes were organised at Gulshanpora Aripal, Larkipora Awantipora, Buchoo Dadsara, Hanjipora Kakapora, Chakoor Litter, Kamrazipora Shadimarg, Dhobi Mohalla Khrew and Gangoo Pulwama. During these programmes,



participants were sensitised about the harmful effects of drug abuse and encouraged to play an active role in preventing substance abuse within their communities. Awareness sessions, counselling interactions, pledge ceremonies, Padyatras and community outreach activities were conducted to reinforce the message of a Nasha Mukh society.

Meanwhile, Self Help Group (SHG) members organised

awareness and counselling sessions along with a padyatra at Dadsara. The programme highlighted the importance of community participation, family support and collective responsibility in safeguarding youth from the menace of drug abuse and guiding them towards constructive pursuits.

The Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS), Pulwama, continued its awareness and outreach initiatives under

NMBA by organising a series of sports and educational activities across various zones of the district.

As part of the campaign, Zone Pulwama conducted Softball Trials at Boys Higher Secondary School (BHSS) Pulwama, witnessing enthusiastic participation from aspiring players.

Meanwhile, Zone Kakapora organised a zonal-level Kabaddi Tournament for AAG Boys at PS Namam. Students from various institutions across the zone participated with great enthusiasm, displaying sportsmanship, teamwork and competitive spirit.

In Zone Tral, awareness and educational programmes were organised at Government Middle School (GMS) Tral Bala, while speech

competitions were conducted at High School Rathsuna, High School Mandoora and Government Middle School Saimaoh. The events provided students with an opportunity to express their views on the harmful consequences of drug abuse and the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles.

Similarly, Zone Tahab organised a speech competition at High School Naina to educate students about the dangers of substance abuse and encourage them to become ambassadors of a drug-free society. Zone Pampore also conducted awareness programmes and speech competitions to sensitise students about the ill effects and long-term repercussions of drug abuse.

Tawi Riverfront Project 'historic gift to region': Union MoS Ajay Tamta

'Travel time between Jammu & Srinagar reduced to under 5 hours'

KT News Desk

Jammu, Jun 15: Union Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways Ajay Tamta on Monday visited the Tawi Riverfront project site and inspected development works underway, lauding all stakeholders involved and describing the project as a "landmark project" and a "historic gift to the region."

Addressing a gathering at the site, Tamta said the project has definitively aided flood control and described it as a futuristic initiative with significant scope for further growth, noting that the riverfront is already emerging as an attraction for Tawi Aarti and other aquatic activities planned at the location.

The Union MoS shared his vision for further development of the region through elaborate road connectivity projects, stating that the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is already developing roads and highways equipped with modern amenities in the toughest



terrains, right up to the frontiers of India's geography. Pointing to tangible results, he said that travel time between Jammu and Srinagar has been reduced to just under five hours owing to recent highway development.

Member of Parliament Jammu Lok Sabha Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member of Parliament Rajya Sabha Sat Paul Sharma, MLA Vikram Randhawa, Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation and CEO

Jammu Smart City Limited Dr Devansh Yadav, and other senior officers were present on the occasion. Project Director Sunil Thusoos gave a detailed presentation on the project's progress and future development plans.

RRU, JKSDRF sign MoU to strengthen training, research in disaster management

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jun 15: Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) and the Jammu & Kashmir State Disaster Response Force (JKSDRF) on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate in the fields of training, academics and research aimed at enhancing disaster management and emergency response capabilities in Jammu & Kashmir.

The MoU seeks to foster institutional cooperation through a range of joint initiatives, including certification of academic, research and training programmes, development of specialized training modules for JKSDRF personnel, and provision of technical expertise for strengthening and restructuring State Disaster Management Training Centres as required by JKSDRF.

The collaboration will also facilitate the joint organization of online and offline activities such as lectures, workshops, seminars and short-term training programmes. Additionally, both institutions will work together in designing and

undertaking research projects related to disaster management, emergency response and allied fields.

The agreement further provides for exchange of faculty, academic and scholarly information, publications, training materials and other resources to promote knowledge-sharing and professional development.

The MoU signing ceremony was held in the office chamber of A.G. Mir, DGP and Commandant General, Home Guards, Civil Defence and SDRF J&K, Srinagar.

Representing Rashtriya Raksha University, J&K Campus, were Dr. Mahesh A. Tripathi, Director; Dr. Mohammad Akmal Shah, Assistant Director; and Dr. Bilquees Dar, Assistant Professor, Disaster Management.

The JKSDRF delegation included Imtiaz Hussain Mir, DIG and Director Civil Defence & SDRF Kashmir; Masroor Ahmad Mir, SSP and Commandant SDRF 1st Battalion Srinagar; and Mohd Rafi Giri, SSP and Staff Officer to the Commandant General, Home Guards, Civil Defence & SDRF J&K.

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CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Public funds a

of development, saying their work will play a decisive role in shaping Jammu and Kashmir's future for decades to come. He also urged them to serve sincerely in all postings without seeking transfers, especially in remote and far-flung areas, stating that public service demands equal commitment everywhere.

Acknowledging execution challenges such as material shortages and other constraints, the Chief Minister said such difficulties must not weaken the commitment towards public service delivery. He added that every project should become a symbol of quality, integrity and professionalism, leaving a lasting legacy for future generations.

Later, speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the event, CM Omar Abdullah said that the Jammu and Kashmir government's plan for restoration of statehood remains unchanged.

He said the National Conference leadership will visit Delhi during the Monsoon Session to strongly raise the issue, including at Jantar Mantar.

He said the promises made to the people in the Supreme Court, Parliament and other public forums must be honoured, adding that there is no change in the government's stand.

Referring to his recent meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, CM Omar said discussions were held on statehood, Jammu and Kashmir's financial situation and ways to accelerate development projects, expressing hope that the outcomes would benefit the people.

On reservation, he said the proposal is awaiting Cabinet approval after the Centre sought clarifications. He said the Cabinet Sub-Committee report has been cleared and forwarded, while responses to queries have been prepared and a Cabinet meeting will soon be held to finalise the matter.

He also said that preparations for Muharram are being closely monitored to ensure smooth observance across the Union Territory, and welcomed pilgrims for the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, expressing hope for its peaceful and successful conduct. (KNO)

'Response to Centre's

was sent to the LG, who formally referred it to New Delhi," he said.

The Chief Minister added that the Centre had sought certain clarifications on the proposal.

"The proposal was returned. The Department has prepared responses to all clarifications. The response has been ready for the past few days. The cabinet will approve it since it was a cabinet decision. It is now a matter of a few days," he said.

In its election manifesto, the National Conference had promised to rationalize reservation in Jammu and Kashmir.

A three-member cabinet sub-committee headed by Minister for Social Welfare Sakina Masood Itoos was set up to look into grievances regarding reservation.

In its report, the CSC recommended reducing the quota for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) by seven percent and for Residents of Backward Areas (RBA) by three percent, thereby enhancing reservation for the Open Merit category by 10 percent.

On December 04, 2025, the Cabinet approved the CSC recommendations and sent the proposal to LG for approval. (KNO)

LG Manoj Sinha

including both routes. The documentary, to be released before the Yatra begins, will apprise pilgrims of enhanced facilities and educate devotees on Yatra disciplines and safety protocols.

The Guide Book is designed and printed for Tourism Federation of Jammu by Shri Shivang Satya Gupta of ESPA FEE Private Limited for free distribution among Shri Amarnathi Yatries for their welfare and information.

The release ceremony was attended by Shubhankar Pratyush Pathak, Additional Secretary in Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat; Er. Kiran Wattal, President, Amarnathi Yatra Welfare Society and Convenor of Vishwa

Kashmiri Samaj; Amrik Singh, President, Jammu Association of Tour Operators; B.B. Kotwal, President, Baderwah Patnitop Travel Trade Association; Abhay Bakaya, Vice President, Tourism Federation of Jammu; Mohd. Maqbool Shoda, Vice President, J&K and Ladakh Tourism Stakeholders Association.

'J&K records 20%

for sustained policy and institutional support," it reads.

As already reported by KNO last year, in Jammu and Kashmir, over 17 percent of students at primary level and 12 percent learners at senior secondary level quit studies midway.

The news agency had reported that "The retention rate at Primary level in Jammu and Kashmir was 82.70 and 88.42 at senior secondary level."

However, in the previous academic session, nearly 46,000 Out of School Children (OoSC) were mainstreamed.

Furthermore, the figures further reveal that during the year 2024-25, electricity coverage was completed in 87.2 percent of schools in Jammu and Kashmir.

The overall trend highlights sustained policy push, investment in school infrastructure, and greater convergence with rural electrification schemes.

"Yet, bridging the last-mile gaps in challenging geographies remains critical to achieving true universality," it reads. (KNO)

Peace deal between

from participants across age groups. Referring to the 'Praagaash' conclave, the speakers said the event provided a platform for meaningful discussions on issues concerning rehabilitation, cultural preservation and the future of the displaced community.

They welcomed Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's remarks during the conclave, particularly his reference to the events of 1989-90 as a "genocide," describing it as an important acknowledgement of the pain and suffering endured by the community.

Calling for a structured rehabilitation policy, the community representatives urged the government to explore the development of a township in Rainawari, one of the historic centres of Kashmiri Pandit habitation in Srinagar.

"A planned township can provide a secure and dignified environment for returning families and serve as a hub for educational, cultural and community institutions that can help revive the community's presence in Kashmir," Dr Kaul said.

The speakers called upon successful entrepreneurs and professionals from the Kashmiri Pandit community to invest in Valley and contribute to its economic growth.

"The time has come for us to give back to our motherland. Investment by members of the community can create opportunities, strengthen confidence and contribute to the prosperity of Kashmir," Dr Kaul said, adding that sustainable investment, however, requires an atmosphere of peace, stability and progress.

Expressing optimism about the future, the speakers said that despite the hardships endured over the last 35 years, the community remains committed to preserving its heritage, empowering its younger generations and working towards a peaceful, secure and dignified return to Kashmir. (KNO)

Peace deal between

said the US was responsible for implementing the agreement, as well as a complete halt to the Israeli attacks against Lebanon, state-run IRNA news agency reported.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Charibabadi confirmed that the signing ceremony is scheduled for Friday, after which implementation mechanisms will gradually begin.

He said that Iran's commitments under the MoU are strictly conditional and reciprocal. Iran's measures will be fully aligned with the level of compliance shown by the other side, he added.

Gharibabadi said that a 60-day negotiation period will follow the signing, focusing exclusively on the nuclear issue and the lifting of sanctions, including unilateral, secondary, and international restrictions.

"Following intensive talks, we are pleased to announce that the Peace Deal between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran has been REACHED," said the prime minister of Pakistan, which emerged as a key mediator in the US-Iran negotiations.

He added that both sides have declared the "immediate and permanent termination of military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon."

'Refined' oil doesn't

consumers into believing a product is automatically healthy, clarifying that nutritional value depends more on fatty acid composition and cooking usage rather than whether the oil is refined or unrefined. Even healthier oils can become harmful if repeatedly heated, excessively used for deep frying, or reused multiple times, generating harmful oxidation products that may increase cardiovascular disease risk, it said.

"Most adults should limit visible oil consumption to around two to three tablespoons per day, depending on physical activity level," the department said. It explained that invisible fats naturally present in milk, dairy products, eggs, meat, fish, nuts, seeds, cereals, and pulses contribute significantly to total daily fat consumption and should not be overlooked.

The department identified mustard oil as one of the best choices for routine cooking due to its favourable fatty acid profile and presence of omega-3 fatty acids. Rice bran oil was recommended for occasional frying because of its high smoke point and cholesterol-lowering properties. Groundnut oil was listed as a healthy alternative due to its richness in monounsaturated fats, while soybean and sunflower oils were recommended for periodic rotation rather than exclusive use. Olive oil was suggested for salads, dressings, and low-to-medium heat cooking, while ghee was advised only in limited quantities to enhance flavour.

The advisory cautioned against frequent consumption of hydrogenated fats, vanaspati (dalda), repeatedly reheated oils, and processed foods rich in palm oil, which increase bad cholesterol and elevate heart disease risk.

The department said there is no single "perfect" cooking oil. Instead, families should focus on using healthy oils in moderation, rotating different oils occasionally, and keeping total visible oil intake within recommended limits. "Healthy oil alone cannot guarantee a healthy heart. The real difference comes from healthy habits, sensible cooking practices, and a balanced lifestyle," the advisory stated. (KNO)

Philanthropist establishes

pads would be provided to beneficiaries, while efforts would also be made to address issues related to safe drinking water through the distribution of water filters and awareness programmes on water-borne diseases.

Noor said the project was made possible through crowdfunding and the support of donors and volunteers associated with the organisation over the years. "Education remains the key to social upliftment," he said, pledging to continue working for the cause in the years ahead. (KNO)

Ensure smooth

Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department, Ashwini Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary Tourism, Ashish Chandra Verma, administrative secretaries, both the Divisional Commissioners, all Deputy Commissioners, heads of departments and other senior officers were also present. Officers from outside Srinagar attended the meeting through virtual mode.

Addressing the meeting, the Chief Minister emphasized that preparations for Muharram had been underway for considerable time and that today's meeting was aimed at reviewing

the progress made so far and identifying any remaining gaps.

"The preparations for Muharram have not started today. Extensive groundwork has already been undertaken at the district, divisional and departmental levels. This meeting provides an opportunity to collectively review the arrangements, assess what has been accomplished and ensure that whatever remains is completed well in time," he said.

The Chief Minister noted that Deputy Commissioners, community representatives, elected representatives and departmental officers had already held extensive consultations at the grassroots level. He said the Government was committed to ensuring that all arrangements are put in place in a coordinated and efficient manner.

"Like every year, the Government will make every possible effort to ensure that there are no shortcomings and that all necessary facilities are provided to the people during Muharram," he added.

During the meeting, special focus was laid on uninterrupted power supply. Referring to concerns raised by public representatives and community leaders, the Chief Minister directed the Power Development Department to ensure regular electricity supply at all major congregation venues and procession routes.

He stressed the need for adequate backup arrangements, including generators, battery-inverter systems. He also directed that generators be deployed at major congregation points to prevent any disruption in power supply. CM called on concerned departments to explore the possibility of roof-top solarization of all major Imam Baras in J&K.

Reviewing drinking water arrangements, the Chief Minister directed the Jal Shakti Department to ensure uninterrupted supply of potable water in all affected areas. He emphasized that water tankers deployed during Muharram must provide clean drinking water and that static water distribution points should be established wherever movement of tankers may be difficult or where large gatherings are expected.

The Chief Minister also reviewed sanitation and cleanliness measures and directed Urban Local Bodies to intensify cleaning operations, particularly around Imambaras, procession routes and major congregation venues.

He instructed the concerned authorities to deploy additional manpower wherever required and ensure continuous sanitation services throughout the Muharram period. Referring to earlier directions, he called for close coordination between municipal authorities and the Fire & Emergency Services Department to facilitate effective road washing and cleaning through the use of high-pressure water hose fire tenders, wherever required.

On health preparedness, the Chief Minister directed the Health and Medical Education Department to ensure the deployment of adequate medical personnel, ambulances, critical care ambulances, emergency response teams and medical camps at strategic locations.

He stressed that all arrangements should remain fully operational throughout the Muharram period to provide timely medical assistance wherever required.

The Chief Minister also reviewed traffic management plans and instructed the Traffic Police and Civil Administration to ensure smooth movement of processions while minimizing inconvenience to commuters, tourists and the general public. He called for coordinated planning and effective deployment of traffic personnel at critical junctions and congregation points.

Reviewing road infrastructure, the Chief Minister directed the Roads & Buildings Department to undertake necessary repairs and filling of potholes along procession routes and areas expected to witness large gatherings.

Acknowledging challenges faced in academization works due to prevailing circumstances of disruption in supply chain, he

nevertheless stressed that roads should be levelled and made safe wherever full academization is not immediately feasible.

The Chief Minister further emphasized the importance of accountability and responsiveness among nodal officers designated for Muharram arrangements. He directed that all nodal officers to remain accessible to the public and available round-the-clock for prompt grievance redressal.

To strengthen monitoring and coordination, the Chief Minister announced that a Chief Minister's Secretariat shall also oversee Muharram arrangements. He said designated officers would continuously monitor the implementation of departmental responsibilities and review complaints received from the public.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister assured participants that the Government would consider a dedicated allocation in the next year's Budget to strengthen Muharram-related arrangements and infrastructure. He said such a provision would enable departments to undertake preparatory works well in advance and facilitate the smooth and efficient conduct of Muharram across Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier, several legislators, representatives of Shia organizations, clerics, civil society members and community leaders highlighted issues relating to electricity supply, drinking water, road connectivity, sanitation, healthcare facilities and other public services.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioners of Kashmir and Jammu gave detailed presentations on the arrangements being made in their respective divisions.

The presentations covered major congregation events and processions, consultations with community leaders and civil society groups, inter-departmental coordination, deployment of district-level and departmental nodal officers, field inspections conducted by Deputy Commissioners and senior officers, security and traffic management plans, identification of parking areas, healthcare preparedness including deployment of doctors, paramedics and ambulances, municipal and civic arrangements, road repairs, power and water supply management, advance distribution of ration and essential commodities in Shia-majority areas, availability of LPG and fuel, positioning of fire tenders at vulnerable locations and comprehensive contingency plans.

The meeting was informed that extensive field visits, public outreach programmes and inter-departmental coordination meetings are already underway to ensure the smooth and peaceful observance of Muharram-2026 across Jammu and Kashmir.

Omar inaugurates Free Breast

promoting early detection and awareness of breast cancer among women.

The initiative, launched by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) in collaboration with India Turns Pink (ITP), seeks to provide free breast cancer screening services at the doorstep of women across selected villages in Srinagar district.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister appreciated the efforts of the Airports Authority of India and the implementing organisation for undertaking a vital public health initiative focused on women's well-being. He underscored the importance of early detection and timely intervention in reducing the burden of breast cancer and saving lives.

The programme aims to cover ten villages in Srinagar district and benefit around 10,000 women through free screening, awareness generation and counselling services. The initiative is expected to enhance awareness about breast cancer, encourage regular health check-ups and strengthen preventive healthcare among women.

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakina Itoos, and Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, were also present on the occasion. Founder president ITP PA Anandakumar, representatives of India Turns Pink and other concerned officers attended the event.



NDA govt focused on improving ordinary citizens' quality of life in 12 yrs: PM Modi

PTI
New Delhi, Jun 15: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the NDA government has increasingly focused on improving ordinary citizens' quality of life over 12 years and worked on easier access to opportunities, better infrastructure, improved public services and quality education, among others.

are about easier access to opportunities, better infrastructure, improved public services, affordable health care, quality education, cleaner cities and reduced burdens in everyday life," Modi said in a post on X.

The 'MyGov India', a flagship citizen engagement platform of the central government, stated that under Modi's leadership, India's middle class has seen a strong rise in living standards over the past 12 years, supported by better infrastructure, improved connectivity, tax relief measures, and expanded public services.

improving long-distance travel convenience for millions of Indians, it said. According to the platform, connectivity has reached unprecedented levels with internet penetration expanding across rural and urban India. With over 103 crore connections and drastically reduced data costs, citizens now enjoy seamless access to education, employment opportunities, digital payments and entertainment at minimal cost, it said.

Nationalist Citizens Party of India NCPI claims to be Bengal's largest parliamentary bloc

■ Party office traced to Howrah



PTI
Kolkata, Jun 15: Less than a day after the otherwise obscure Nationalist Citizens Party of India (NCPI) shot to national prominence following the merger of 20 rebel TMC MPs with the organisation, it took to social media on Monday to claim it was the "largest parliamentary bloc from West Bengal".

central paramilitary forces was found deployed outside the property since Monday morning. "With 20 Lok Sabha seats, NCPI emerges as the largest parliamentary force from West Bengal, shaping the state's voice at the national level," the party said in a social media post.

Stock markets sprint for 2nd day as oil price drop

US-Iran peace deal boost investor sentiment

PTI
Mumbai, Jun 15: Stock markets rose for the second straight session with benchmark Sensex closing higher by 736 points on Monday, propelled by a rally in global equities and a sharp decline in crude oil prices after the US and Iran finalised a deal to end their 107-day war.

oil supplies, on Friday after an in-person signing of the agreement in Switzerland. US President Donald Trump made the announcement on Truth Social on Sunday evening, easing pressure on the global energy markets, as officials said the peace agreement would be signed on June 19 in Switzerland.

after the announcement of the US-Iran deal. Global benchmark Brent Crude dropped 5 per cent to trade near USD 82.90 per barrel. Among 30 Sensex firms, Trent, InterGlobe Aviation, Bajaj Finserv, UltraTech Cement, Eternal and Maruti were the major winners.

Korea's Kospi jumped over 5 per cent, while Japan's Nikkei 225 index climbed nearly 5 per cent. Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index also ended higher.

Inspired by Modi's appeal, Maharashtra family not to buy gold for son's wedding

PTI
New Delhi, Jun 15: Inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal, a family in Maharashtra's Wardha has decided against buying gold jewellery for their son's wedding and instead to refurbish a 'mangalsutra' for their future daughter-in-law.



my son Yash, a software engineer, on July 1," Choubey said.

However, his wife Seema Choubey decided to polish and refurbish her own mangalsutra and gift it to the would-be daughter-in-law.

bleed the newlyweds, and hoped that they may receive a letter conveying his blessings.

Stressing the need to save foreign exchange, Modi called for postponing the purchase of gold and foreign travel for one year.

RTI activism has become new business: SC

Refuses anticipatory bail to activist



PTI
New Delhi, Jun 15: The Supreme Court on Monday said that RTI activism has become a new business, while refusing to grant anticipatory bail to an activist and other accused of obstructing a public servant in road construction work.

Justice Mehta observed, "RTI activism has become a new business. The Central government has issued funds, it will take care of the construction of the road. You are nobody. So-called RTI activist! Yellow journalism. Dismissed."

Haryana High Court's order denying him anticipatory bail. His counsel contended that they had been falsely implicated in the case as they had highlighted the corruption involved in the road construction work.

12 cultural, heritage sites chosen for national Yoga Day 2026 celebrations

PTI
New Delhi, Jun 15: From the banks of Ganga river in Haridwar to the ancient ruins of Hampi and the historic precincts of Delhi's Red Fort, 12 iconic landmarks across the country will serve as the focal points of India's International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026 celebrations.

The selection of these sites also complements the theme "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," underscoring the idea that wellness is a lifelong journey, Jadhav stated. "Just as these monuments have endured across centuries, yoga continues to offer practices that support physical vitality, mental resilience, and healthy ageing across generations," Jadhav told PTI.

Action needed over remarks against women in comedy shows: Union min



PTI
Indore, Jun 15: Union Women and Child Development Minister Annapurna Devi on Monday said making inappropriate remarks about women in stand-up comedy shows was "extremely wrong" and called for legal action against those indulging in such conduct.

Her comments came amid a controversy surrounding comic Pranit More, web developer Himanshu Jangra and others over remarks made during a comedy show that allegedly glorified coercion and non-consensual conduct towards a woman, leading to the registration of a case. The minister, however, did not refer to that controversy in her comments.

Trump heads to G7 summit in France after announcing US-Iran peace deal | 'Ships of the World, start your engines. Let the oil flow'

AP

Evian-les-Bains (France), Jun 15: President Donald Trump is headed to the French Alps on Monday to meet with fellow world leaders at the Group of Seven summit after announcing an agreement that he says will bring an end to the US war with Iran.

Trump and Iranian officials had been saying for days they were making progress toward reaching a deal, but even on Sunday, things appeared to be on shaky ground after a new round of strikes between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon.

With the agreement, Trump is due to arrive in Evian-les-Bains on Monday afternoon with some wind at his back for talks with G7 leaders, including some who have been sharply critical of his managing of the roughly 15-week conflict that has led to a surge in global energy prices.

The conflict, which polls show American voters largely disapproved of, had made some Republicans nervous about the political impacts it could have on the November mid-term election.

"Ships of the World, start your engines," Trump said in a social media post celebrating the deal that he said would lead to the US ending its blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, through which about 20 per cent of the world's crude had flowed before the conflict. "Let the oil flow!"

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi, however, said the Iranian closure of the strait would continue until the agreement

is officially signed.

Neither the White House nor Iran published the final agreement or revealed many details. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, whose country served as a mediator in the negotiations, said there would be "pre-implementation discussions" this week to lay the ground for 60 days of technical talks on Iran's nuclear program.

The deal could change the G7 dynamic

Sealing an agreement before jetting off to the summit could certainly change the dynamic of the gathering for Trump. He has had friction with French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni over failing to consult them before the decision to go to war.

Meanwhile, Trump has pushed back on the four European leaders -- all members of the NATO military alliance -- for their lack of support for the US in the conflict.

Trump is expected to discuss with leaders the de-mining of the Strait of Hormuz, according to the White House. Britain and France have expressed interest in assisting with the de-mining once the conflict is paused. Fear of potential mines is among the reasons that tanker traffic has come to a halt during the war, and quickly clearing them will be crucial to regaining the confidence of commercial vessels. Macron, this year's summit host, invited the leaders of three nations that aren't part of the



TRUMP IS EXPECTED TO DISCUSS WITH LEADERS THE DE-MINING OF THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ, according to the White House. Britain and France have expressed interest in assisting with the de-mining once the conflict is paused. Fear of potential mines is among the reasons that tanker traffic has come to a halt during the war, and quickly clearing them will be crucial to regaining the confidence of commercial vessels. Macron, this year's summit host, invited the leaders of three nations that aren't part of the G7 -- Egypt, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates -- to take part in a session on the Middle East on Tuesday where Iran is expected to be a central focus.

G7 -- Egypt, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates -- to take part in a session on the Middle East on Tuesday where Iran is expected to be a central focus.

"The aim will be to assess the implications of this agreement, support for Lebanon, the long-term reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, and, of course, reaching a deal on Iran's nuclear and ballistic (missile) programs," Macron said in a video posted on social

media on Sunday evening. In a separate development, Trump ahead of departing for the summit said in an interview with the New York Post he has warned Macron the US will "have no choice" but to slap 100 per cent tariffs on French wines unless Paris eliminates its digital tax on American tech companies, renewing a long-running threat from the Republican that dates to his first administration.

G7 leaders likely to discuss Iran, Ukraine

AP

Evian-les-Bains (France), Jun 15: World leaders began gathering in a French spa town Monday for a summit of the Group of Seven club of powerful democracies with a new impetus following President Donald Trump's announcement of an agreement that he says will bring an end to the US war against Iran.

Trump arrives in Evian-les-Bains on Monday afternoon for talks with G7 leaders, including some who have been sharply critical of his managing of the roughly 15-week conflict that has led to a surge in global energy prices.

Trump has had sharp disagreement with host French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni over failing to consult them before the decision to go to war. Trump has threatened reprisals, including drawing down US troops in all four countries, all members of the NATO military alliance, for their lack of support.

The G7 includes France, the United States, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom. Guest nations at this summit include Brazil, Egypt, India, Kenya, South Korea, Qatar, Syria, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates.

In addition to Iran, the other leading issue will be Ukraine war that's largely slipped down the White House's list of top priorities. Trump spoke to Presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday.

At a morning session Tuesday, Zelenskyy will have the opportunity to showcase progress that Ukrainian forces are making against the Russian invasion.

Neeraj Chopra to return to action at Doha Diamond League

PTI

New Delhi, Jun 15: Fit-again Indian javelin throw superstar Neeraj Chopra will return to competitive action at the Doha Diamond League on June 19. The 28-year-old has been recuperating from a back injury which has prevented him from competing so far in the season.

"First throw of 2026 lands in Doha! Neeraj Chopra returns to competitive action on June 19," his management firm Vel Sports announced on Instagram.

Chopra is a late addition to the event as his name was not in the list announced by the organisers on June 12. In May last year, the two-time Olympic medallist India had breached the coveted 90m mark at the same venue. He had recorded 90.23m to finish second behind Julian Weber (91.06m) of Germany.

Chopra was on Sunday named in India's athletics squad for the upcoming Commonwealth Games, subject to achieving the Athletics Federation of India's (AFI) qualifying standard of 82.61m.

UK PM announces ban on social media apps for children under 16

PTI

London, Jun 15: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Monday announced that social media app access will be banned for all children under the age of 16 for their "happiness and safety".

In an address from 10 Downing Street in London, Starmer said it was the right choice both as Prime Minister and as a father of young children.

He admitted that it will not be easy to impose such a ban involving some of the most powerful tech companies in the world, but the health and well-being of children were paramount.

"Today is a big moment for our country. This is a big step, real change for our children and our future because today I can announce that the government will ban



access to social media for all children under the age of 16," said Starmer.

"This is not something I do lightly, and I will not present it as cost-free as if social media has brought no benefits to young people, because clearly that is wrong. But government is always about choices, and it's clear to me that a full ban is the right choice," he said. The announcement followed a lengthy consultation process fed into by campaigners, including

parents, whose children have been impacted by the harmful effects of social media apps such as TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram and YouTube.

While messaging apps such as WhatsApp will not be included in the ban, gaming services and live streaming platforms where strangers can contact children unchecked will be restricted through an age verification system yet to be finalised.

US-Iran agreement

Lebanon warns displaced against rushing home

REUTERS

Beirut/Jerusalem, Jun 15: Authorities in southern Lebanon warned people displaced by three months of war between Israel and Hezbollah against rushing home on Monday despite a US-Iran deal to end the wider conflict, as Israel said it would not withdraw troops from the south.

The warning comes as Lebanon has not been informed of details of the US-Iran agreement, an official source told AFP on Monday. "Lebanon was not informed of the terms of the agreement or the time of the ceasefire," the source said on condition of anonymity.

Few details have been made public about the agreement announced overnight.

Lebanon has suffered the deadliest spillover of the

conflict between the US and Iran, with thousands of people killed and some 1.2 million people uprooted by an Israeli offensive against the Iran-backed Hezbollah group, which opened fire on Israel in support of Tehran on March 2.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, a key mediator between Tehran and Washington, announced that a deal was struck early on Monday local time, and that the pact called for "the immediate and permanent termination of military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon."

In south Lebanon, where Israeli forces have occupied a self-declared security zone, municipal councils issued statements calling on residents to hold off on returning, the state-run National News Agency reported.

Mona Mazeh, a displaced woman sheltering in Beirut's



Big Bash League

Cricket Australia eyeing India's vast market is only natural: Dhumal on BBL debut

PTI

Dharamsala, Jun 15: IPL chairman Arun Dhumal believes Cricket Australia's decision to bring the Big Bash League to India is a natural step given the country's status as the world's biggest cricket market.

The BBL opener is set to be played at Chennai's MA Chidambaram Stadium in December, as Cricket Australia looks to tap into the sport's largest audiences.

Dhumal said India's position in world cricket made it an obvious destination for overseas leagues seeking to expand their reach.

"See, India is the biggest



cricket market. So definitely, Cricket Australia would want to capitalize on that," Dhumal told PTI Videos.

"And we wish them all the

best for their Big Bash inaugural game this season."

The IPL chairman viewed the move as a positive development for cricket

at a time when the sport is preparing for its return to the Olympic Games at LA 2028.

"India, being the leader in world cricket, has a lot of scope to add to world cricket," he said. "Since now cricket is becoming part of Olympics, it augurs very well for the game, for its global footprint to reach to the length and breadth across the globe." Dhumal believes Cricket Australia would have carefully assessed the commercial and sporting benefits of taking the BBL to India.

"I'm sure they would have done their calculations and they are expecting a good boost to their domestic tournament," he said.

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