



Ensure no controversial book reaches edu institutions in J&K: LG Sinha directs officials

Reviews action against circulation of anti-national literature

Orders comprehensive audit of schools, colleges, universities

KNO Desk

Srinagar, Jul 07: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday directed the officials to put in place effective mechanism to ensure that no controversial book is circulated in any educational institution across Jammu and Kashmir.

LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) chaired a high-level meeting with senior officers and reviewed the action taken regarding the circulation of books and literature containing anti-national and separatist content in educational institutions.

Taking serious note of the matter, the Lieutenant Governor directed the concerned departments to put in place effective mechanism to ensure no procurement, distribution and



availability of any publications including books, journals, magazines or any literature containing anti-national, separatist or objectionable content in the Universities, government and private colleges and schools, public and private libraries etc.

This would include the heads of these institutions affirming within specified period against availability of any such material in their respective institutions, apart from conduct of comprehensive audit and inspection thereof. | [More on P6](#)

Amarnath Yatra integral part of our national identity: LG Sinha

Says pilgrimage cherished tradition, showcases country's unique soft power to world

Directs officers to ensure devotees are properly registered, well-assisted

KNO Desk

Srinagar, Jul 07: Stating that Amarnath Yatra is a cherished tradition and an integral part of our national identity, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said that pilgrimage reflects India's enduring civilisational heritage and showcases the country's unique soft power to the world.

LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), chaired a high-level meeting here to review the ongoing Amarnath Yatra. So far, more than 1.13 lakh devotees have paid obeisance at the holy cave.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the senior officials to ensure that devotees are properly registered and well-assisted by officers on the



ground. "Our goal is to make this pilgrimage a truly memorable experience for everyone and they have access to the best possible amenities. Safety, security and hassle-free darshan of Baba Barfani must remain our top priority. Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra is

a matter of immense pride for us and is deeply intertwined with the aspirations and spiritual consciousness of our nation. It reflects India's enduring civilisational heritage and showcases the country's unique soft power to the world. This sacred yatra is a

cherished tradition and also an integral part of our national identity. Ensuring smooth, safe, and successful conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra is our collective resolve," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor urged all | [More on P6](#)

Amarnath Yatra crosses 1.13 lakh mark in 5 days

Record 8,815 pilgrims leave Jammu in sixth batch

Over 28,000 devotees offer prayers on fifth day

Umaisar Gull Ganie

Jammu/Srinagar, Jul 07: The annual Amarnath Yatra continued to witness an unprecedented surge in pilgrim turnout, with the total number of devotees performing darshan at the holy cave shrine crossing the 1.13 lakh mark within the first five days of the pilgrimage. Meanwhile, a record 8,815 pilgrims left Jammu on Tuesday in the sixth batch for the twin base camps.

Official figures available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) revealed that 28,035 pilgrims paid obeisance at the holy cave shrine on Tuesday, taking the total

number of devotees who have undertaken the pilgrimage since its commencement on July 3 to 1,13,814.

According to the official data, 20,270 men, 7,053 women, 284 children, 136 sadhus, nine sadhvis, five transgender devotees and 278 security personnel performed darshan at the holy cave shrine on Tuesday.

The pilgrimage is witnessing one of its biggest rushes in recent years, with thousands of devotees arriving daily through both the traditional Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the shorter Baltal route in Ganderbal district.

Meanwhile, a record 8,815 pilgrims left | [More on P6](#)

CM Omar assures support to tourism, travel sectors' growth

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 07: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday met delegations representing the travel, tourism and business sectors here at the Civil Secretariat and held detailed discussions on issues concerning tourism promotion, business facilitation and the overall growth of the economy in Jammu and Kashmir.

A delegation comprising representatives of leading travel and tourism associations, including Irshad Ahmad (TAAI), Zahoor Qari, President SKAL International Kashmir; Burhan Misgar, Chairman Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI), and Waseem Goosani, President TASK, called on the Chief



Minister and apprised him of various matters relating to the travel and tourism sector.

The delegation highlighted issues concerning the tourism industry, measures to further strengthen tourist inflow, ease of travel, and initiatives

required to sustain the momentum of tourism in J&K. They also shared suggestions aimed at improving visitor experience and enhancing Jammu and Kashmir's position as a preferred tourist destination.

The Chief | [More on P6](#)

Army Chief calls on LG Sinha, CM Omar

Reviews J&K security situation

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 07: General Dhiraj Seth, Chief of Army Staff on Tuesday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Lok Bhavan and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at his residence here.

The Lieutenant Governor and the Army Chief reviewed the prevailing security situation in the region. The Army Chief was accompanied by Lieutenant General Balbir Singh, GOC Chinar Corps.

At Omar Abdullah's residence, General Seth was accompanied by General Officer Commanding (GOC), Chinar Corps, Lieutenant General Balbir Singh, along with



other senior Army officers. The meeting was held as a courtesy call following General Seth's assumption of charge as the Chief of the | [More on P6](#)

J&K Overseas Emp Corp to be revived as nodal agency for global jobs: CM

Calls for unlocking overseas employment opportunities for UT's youth

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 07: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the roadmap for the revival and operationalisation of the Jammu & Kashmir Overseas Employment Corporation Limited (JKOEC) and reviewed J&K's overseas recruitment facilitation infrastructure, with a focus on creating a robust institutional framework to connect J&K's skilled youth with global employment opportunities.

The meeting reviewed the proposed strategy for reviving JKOEC as the government's



nodal recruitment agency for facilitating safe, transparent and market-driven overseas employment. Discussions centred on strengthening institutional mechanisms, expanding

international partnerships, enhancing skill development and aligning with global standards, and establishing an integrated ecosystem to prepare youth for overseas careers. | [More on P6](#)

'J&K schools run on single teacher thread'

Over 33,000 students trapped in 'single teachers' schools

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Jul 07: In a stark illustration of the plaguing education sector of Jammu and Kashmir, 1,544 schools are being run by single teachers each wherein more than 33,537 students are enrolled.

The Union Territory is also functioning with 188 such schools that are having zero student enrolments. Interestingly, 87 teachers are still deployed to these empty institutions, drawing salaries while teaching no one.

According to the

recent report released by the Department of School Education and Literacy for the Ministry of Education (MoE), there are 1544 schools in Jammu and Kashmir that are functioning with single teachers.

The news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) has learnt that there are 33,537 students enrolled in those 1544 schools that are functioning with single teachers.

Furthermore, MoE has said that 87 teachers are posted in such schools that are having zero enrolments and 188 schools are without any student enrolled.

As already reported by KNO, MoE in a | [More on P6](#)

BJP National President meets J&K MPs, MLAs, sets 2029 poll strategy

LoP Sharma accuses govt of delaying local polls

Yogesh

Jammu, Jul 07: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National President Nitin Nabin on Tuesday chaired a joint meeting of party MPs, MLAs, former legislators, and senior functionaries at the BJP headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, to review organisational affairs, outline the party's strategy for Jammu and Kashmir, and discuss preparations for the 2029 Parliamentary elections.

Originally planned as separate interactions with district leaders, elected representatives, and former legislators, the meetings were merged into a single session following

changes in Nabin's schedule. Deliberations centred on strengthening the BJP's organisational structure in the Union Territory, expanding public outreach, reinforcing nationalist ideology, and addressing security and governance issues.

Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the meeting reviewed the party's roadmap for the 2029 Parliamentary elections and assessed organisational preparedness across Jammu and Kashmir.

Sharma accused the Jammu and Kashmir Government of deliberately delaying local body and | [More on P6](#)

Nature's fury hits Doda again, damages homes, buries vehicles

LG orders relief for affected families; Doda-Kishtwar NH blocked, MeT warns of heavy rain, flash floods across Chenab, Pir Panjal

Sajid Raina

Jammu, Jul 07: Flash floods triggered by heavy rainfall wreaked havoc in the Thathri area of Jammu's Doda district early Tuesday, damaging houses, shops and vehicles, blocking the Doda-Kishtwar National Highway (NH-244) and disrupting normal life.

The latest incident is the third flash flood to hit the twin districts of Doda and Kishtwar in the past two days following incessant rainfall over the mountainous Chenab Valley region.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that heavy rain lashed the upper reaches of Thathri around 1.15 am, triggering flash floods that carried huge boulders, mud and debris into the town.

Several residential houses and commercial establishments suffered partial damage after mudslides and debris engulfed the area.

A number of vehicles parked along the roadside were buried under mud and rocks, while locals claimed that some vehicles were washed away into



the Chenab River. However, officials said the

exact number of affected vehicles and the overall extent

of the damage were yet to be assessed.

The flash floods also blocked the Doda-Kishtwar National Highway at Thathri after debris accumulated on the road, disrupting vehicular movement. Restoration of the highway has been taken up on priority, officials said.

An official present in the affected area said the heavy rain began suddenly during the early hours, prompting security personnel to alert everyone immediately.

"After a short while, debris accumulated behind our

building, piled onto the roof and broke through it, causing water to gush inside the barracks. There has been no loss of life or injuries. Government property has suffered significant damage, but our weapons, ammunition and personnel are safe as they were evacuated in time," the official said.

He said rescue teams assisted local residents and were assessing the damage to determine the next course of action.

"The losses run into crores of rupees. Massive boulders and heavy debris have rolled down from the hills, and clearing

them will take a long time. The road towards Kishtwar is likely to remain blocked for at least the next two days," he added.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said he had spoken to Doda Deputy Commissioner Krishan Lal soon after receiving information about the cloudburst.

"I am keeping in regular touch with the Deputy Commissioner after receiving reports of the cloudburst in the Thathri region, which has caused substantial damage to property and road connectivity. However, | [More on P6](#)

Improve quality of life for citizens, promote environmentally sustainable growth: CS Atal Dulloo

Assesses infra projects to be taken-up under Urban Challenge Fund



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 07: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo chaired a meeting of the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD) on Tuesday to review the progress made in the identification and shortlisting of urban infrastructure projects proposed to be taken up under the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) of the Government of India.

The meeting, as per an official statement, attended by Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD; Municipal Commissioners and other HoDs deliberated upon the strategy for positioning Jammu and Kashmir to effectively leverage the transformative funding mechanism aimed at accelerating sustainable urban development and regional economic growth.

Emphasizing the importance of preparing high-quality and financially viable proposals, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned departments to ensure that all short-listed projects are aligned with the guidelines of the Urban Challenge Fund and are supported by robust feasibility studies, sustainable financing models and clear implementation strategies.

He stressed that the projects should not only address the immediate infrastructure needs of urban centres but also create long-term economic opportunities, strengthen urban resilience, improve the quality of life for citizens and promote environmentally sustainable growth.

The Chief Secretary further

underscored the need for coordination with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to facilitate timely appraisal and approval of the proposed projects. He called upon all stakeholders to expedite the preparation of detailed project reports and complete all requisite formalities so that Jammu and Kashmir is able to effectively leverage the opportunities offered under the Urban Challenge Fund.

During this meeting the Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur informed that the Urban Challenge Fund has been conceived by the Government of India as a paradigm shift in urban financing by encouraging cities and Union Territories to undertake bankable, revenue-generating infrastructure projects through a combination of Central assistance, market-based financing and contributions from the States and UTs.

She further apprised the meeting that, following the first round of discussions with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Jammu and Kashmir has shortlisted four major urban development projects having an aggregate estimated cost of 1,990.37 Cr. Against this, the proposed Central assistance amounts to 495.86 Cr, the UT share to 486.12 Cr, while nearly 1,008.38 Cr are proposed to be mobilized through market-based financing.

The concerned Municipal Commissioners divulged the details of the shortlisted projects from their respective areas. It was given out that the initially the shortlisted projects include Walled City and

Nigeen Lakefront Revitalization aimed at conserving heritage assets while enhancing tourism infrastructure and improving the urban environment.

The meeting also reviewed the TARANG – Tawi Area Regeneration and Green Growth Project. It envisages comprehensive regeneration of the Tawi riverfront and surrounding urban areas through sustainable, environment-friendly and economically vibrant development interventions.

Another proposal pertains to the Lidder Riverfront Development, which seeks to develop the riverfront as a catalyst for planned urban growth and position Anantnag as a counter-magnet city through integrated public infrastructure and improved urban amenities.

The fourth project discussed was KRIPA – Katra Revitalisation through Integrated Pilgrimage Amenities (Transit-Oriented Development). The proposal aims at strengthening civic infrastructure, enhancing mobility and creating integrated pilgrimage facilities to improve the overall experience of pilgrims visiting the holy town of Katra.

Concluding the Chief Secretary maintained that the successful implementation of these transformative projects would significantly enhance urban infrastructure, improve public services, boost tourism, attract private investment and contribute towards making the cities of Jammu and Kashmir more vibrant, resilient and economically competitive for the times to come.

Malaria Team conducts anti-dengue awareness, surveillance activities in Doda

KT News Desk

DODA, JULY 07: As part of the ongoing Anti-Dengue Month (ADM) campaign under the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP), the District Malaria Team from CMO Office Doda conducted an extensive field visit in Doda Town and its adjoining areas.

During the visit, the team, as per an official statement, carried out intensive Information, Education and Communication/Behaviour Change Communication (IEC/BCC) activities to raise awareness among the public regarding the prevention and control of Dengue and Malaria. Residents were sensitized about the importance of maintaining environmental sanitation, eliminating stagnant water and other mosquito breeding sites and adopting personal protective



measures to safeguard themselves from vector-borne diseases.

As part of surveillance and monitoring activities, the team also inspected the MF-8 Register maintained at the Pathology Section of Associated Hospital,

Government Medical College Doda to ensure proper recording and reporting in accordance with programme guidelines.

The activity was conducted under the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer, Doda Dr Vinod Sharma and under

the supervision of the District Malaria Officer, Doda, in line with the guidelines of the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) to strengthen vector-borne disease prevention and control measures across the district.

UT of Jammu & Kashmir Office of The Executive Engineer, Water Works Division Srinagar

Exchange Road near BSNL Office

Telephone No: 0194-2452047

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. 18/WWD/Sgr/Civil of 2026-27; Dated 07.07.2026

For and on behalf of the 'Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Executive Engineer, Water Works Division Srinagar invites e-tenders on percentage rate basis from reputed and resourceful A-Class Contractors/Firms/Companies registered with JKPWD/JS/CPWD/Railways or any other state Government for "Providing of filter media of Rapid Sand Filter houses and upgradation of under drainage system and allied works WTP Nishat", approved under City Sustainable Infrastructure Fund to SMC (Capex Budget 2026-27). The bidding process shall be completed online in two cover system with Cover 1st consisting of Qualification Criteria, Tender fee, Bid Security, General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications etc. Cover 2nd shall consist of Financial Bid (BOQ) in the prescribed format.

Name of work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Cost of Bid document (Rs)	Earnest money (Lacs)	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1 2	5	6	7	8	9
Providing of filter media of Rapid Sand Filter House and upgradation of underdrainage system and allied works of Water Treatment Plant Nishat	90.00	2000/-	02% of the estimated cost	90 days	7 Months

Tender Inviting Authority:	Executive Engineer, Water Works Division Srinagar.
Tender Opening Authority (TOA):	Executive Engineer, Water Works Division Srinagar.
Head of Account	City Sustainable Infrastructure Fund to SMC (Capex Budget 2026-27)
Position of Funds:	Available with Competent Authority

W Key/Critical Dates:

Publish Date (Online)	07.07.2026
Document Download Start / End Date	08.07.2026 To 22.7.2026 4:00PM
Bid Submission Start Date	08.07.2026 10:00 AM
Bid Submission End Date	22.07.2026 4:00 PM
Date and time of Bid opening (Technical Cover)	23.07.2026 4:00 PM in the Office of Tender Opening Authority (TOA) i.e., Executive Engineer, Water Works Division Srinagar.

No. WWDD/Sgr/CC/2191-2201
Dated:- 07.07.2026

DIPK-2963/26
DATED: 07-07-2026

Executive Engineer,
Water Works Division Srinagar.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Chinar Dev. Officer/ Floriculture Officer District Ganderbal/Bandipora Department of Floriculture Kashmir PUBLIC NOTICE

The unemployed youth farmers, registered growers etc. belonging to the district Ganderbal and District Bandipora hare hereby informed that the Department of Floriculture Ganderbal and Bandipora is implementing Floriculture part of the central sponsored scheme MIDH providing financial assistance/subsidies under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) as per the approved action plan MIDH (2026-27) financial year.

Available components

- Establishment of Small nursery.
- Tubular Poly House.
- Shade Net House.
- Plantation Material (carnation/Gerbera/Rose/Lilium).
- Construction of Bore well/Tube well.
- Aromatic Plant Cultivation (Lavender, etc).

Eligible Applicants

- Farmers/ Growers registered with department of Floriculture.
- Owner of /in possession of minimum two Kanal land feasible for Floriculture activity.
- Unemployed youth, Farmers, etc interested in Floriculture for making livelihood.

For further details regarding approved action plan MIDH year 2026-27, eligibility criteria, subsidy pattern requirement of essential documents and application process, all interested persons/ growers registered with the department are advised to contact the office of the Assistant Floriculture Officer Ganderbal RKVY Nursery Manasbal (7006299365) and Assistant Floriculture Officer Bandipora Minisectriat Bandipora (7006553107).

Sd/
Floriculture Officer,
District Ganderbal/ Bandipora,
Department Of Floriculture Kashmir.

No: -CD0/FO/GBL/

dated: - /07/2026

DIPK-2961/26
DATED: 07-07-2026

Special Drive Passport Seva Kendras in Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla to function on July 11

KT News Desk

Srinagar, July 07: In view of the high demand for passport services, the Regional Passport Office Srinagar will conduct a special drive on Saturday, 11th July 2026. Accordingly, Passport Seva Kendra in Srinagar, Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) Anantnag and Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) Baramulla will remain functional on the said date for processing of passport applications as part of a drive.

B. S. Rawat, Regional Passport Officer, Srinagar, as per a PIB statement, said that the special drive is being organised keeping in view the sustained demand for passport-related services. The initiative aims to ensure timely, efficient and transparent delivery of passport services to citizens, Shri Rawat added.

Applicants can avail passport services by booking an appointment through the official website www.passportindia.gov.in at their nearest or preferred Passport Seva Kendra and selecting a suitable time slot for July 11, 2026.

Applicants are required to report to the designated centre at the scheduled time along with the appointment confirmation and all requisite documents in original.

NABARD-RIDF

DC reviews progress of projects in Udhampur

Calls for timely completion

KT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, JULY 07: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Minga Sherpa Tuesday chaired a review meeting of officers from various line departments to assess the progress of projects being executed under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund of NABARD in the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Uttam Singh and officers of the concerned line departments.

At the outset, DDM, NABARD, Dr. Sidharth delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation highlighting the progress of ongoing RIDF projects across different sectors in the district. While

reviewing the physical and financial progress of the projects, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, directed the executing agencies to ensure the timely completion of all works within the timelines prescribed by NABARD. He emphasized the need to expedite the execution of slow-moving projects and remove bottlenecks to achieve the desired targets.

DC further instructed the executing agencies to maintain close coordination with the concerned line departments, keep them regularly updated on the status of the projects and ensure effective monitoring for their smooth and quality execution.

Maiden meeting of District AYUSH Society held in Kathua

KT News Desk

KATHUA, JULY 07: The maiden meeting of the District AYUSH Society was held Tuesday under the chairmanship of Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Kathua, Surinder Mohan Sharma to review the functioning of AYUSH institutions, infrastructure development and implementation of key programmes in the district.

District AYUSH Officer Dr. Rakesh Sharma, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vijay Raina, Assistant Commissioner Development Akhil Sadotra, District Panchayat Officer Amir Chaudhary, Medical Officer Dr. Deepak Sharma and other members attended the meeting.

The District AYUSH Officer presented the district AYUSH profile and highlighted the existing infrastructure and services. It

was informed that AYUSH healthcare is being delivered through 57 institutions, including 42 Ayush Arogya Mandirs, promoting preventive and holistic healthcare across the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, reviewed activities under the AYUSH Public Health Programme, including Yoga and specialised Ayurvedic initiatives such as Supraja, Vayo Mitra, Ayur Vidya and Karunya. It was also informed that specialist Ayurvedic procedures are being performed at GMC Kathua.

Reviewing infrastructure projects, the meeting was informed that the 50-bedded AYUSH Hospital at Mandli, Billawar is nearing completion and is likely to be dedicated to the public in September this year. Construction of an Ayurvedic Dispensary at Bhanode is also underway.

‘Lawns drain 40% of Srinagar’s drinking water’

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 07: Nearly 40 per cent of Srinagar’s drinking water is being used to irrigate lawns and gardens, prompting the government to push for the reuse of treated wastewater for non-drinking purposes, Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD) said on Tuesday.

Speaking to reporters in Srinagar, HUDD Commissioner/Secretary Man-deep Kaur said the government is working to rationalise the city’s water supply network while ensuring adequate

water availability across Srinagar.

“There are two aspects to water supply: availability and rationalisation. While water is being supplied, the rationalisation of its distribution in Srinagar is still lacking,” she said.

Kaur said one of the city’s biggest challenges is that the same potable water supply is used for both household consumption and irrigation of lawns and gardens. “In most cities, untreated or raw water is supplied separately for irrigating lawns and gardens. That infrastructure is currently missing in Srinagar,” she said. Referring to a recent assessment, the

HUDD Secretary said nearly 40 per cent of the city’s drinking water is consumed for irrigating lawns and gardens without any payment, describing it as “non-revenue water.”

She said the government, despite limited financial resources, is committed to improving water management and is seeking greater public participation in conserving the resource.

To reduce dependence on potable water, Kaur said the government is prioritising the reuse of treated water from Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) for irrigation and commercial purposes.

“Wherever treated water can be used for irrigation or commercial purposes, the drinking water supply will be replaced accordingly. This is the practice followed in other cities as well,” she said.

Kaur further said the rationalisation of Srinagar’s water supply network is underway and assured that tanker-based water supply is being provided to areas facing shortages. “We are ensuring tanker supply wherever there are shortages and will continue to address water supply issues as they arise,” she added—(KNO)



SANJY-2026

Over 1 lakh pilgrims perform darshan: Div Com



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 07: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Tuesday said that more than one lakh pilgrims have paid obeisance at the holy Amarnath cave shrine since July 3, when the annual pilgrimage commenced.

Talking to reporters, Garg said the Amarnath Yatra has witnessed a huge influx of pilgrims during the first five days. He said a huge number of devotees who had not registered online turned up during the initial days of the Yatra, creating logistical challenges for the administration. “We appeal to all pilgrims to register themselves online before

undertaking the Yatra,” he said.

The Divisional Commissioner said the situation has now been streamlined with the augmentation of transit accommodation facilities on the directions of the Lieutenant Governor. He added that the on-the-spot registration facility has also been expanded to ensure that pilgrims do not face any inconvenience.

“More than one lakh pilgrims have paid obeisance at the holy cave shrine, and the darshan process is continuing smoothly,” Garg said.

He said senior officers have been deployed at both the Nunwan and Baltal Base Camps, while regular reviews

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Wheels of Faith

20-Year-Old Skates to Amarnath

Umair Gull Ganie

Qazigund, Jul 07: A 20-year-old devotee from Uttar Pradesh (UP), who has been skating across the country for the past ten months as part of his pilgrimage to the holy Amarnath cave shrine, has said that faith in Lord Shiva kept him going despite the hardships of the journey.

Kanhaiya Kumar, a resident of Chali village near Lucknow said that he began his journey on October 25, 2025, with a pledge not to use any vehicle and to complete his pilgrimage entirely on roller skates.

“I have travelled across 14 states, visited nine Jyotirlingas and two Dhams, and now I am on my way to the Amarnath shrine. It has been ten months since I left home,

and I have been skating continuously throughout this journey,” he said.

Describing the pilgrimage as physically demanding, Kanhaiya said the journey involved numerous challenges and dangers but added that his devotion to Lord Shiva gave him the strength to continue.

“It is very difficult and risky, but I believe Baba has called me. Without His blessings, no one can undertake this pilgrimage. Only a short distance remains, and I expect to reach the holy cave within the next two or three days,” he said.

Kanhaiya said he had received overwhelming support after entering Jammu and Kashmir and praised the warmth and hospitality extended by local residents.

“The people of Kashmir

are very kind and respectful. Since entering Jammu and Kashmir, I have received immense support and encouragement,” he said.

He also lauded the security arrangements for the ongoing Amarnath Yatra, saying devotees have nothing to fear.

“The Yatra is completely safe. Security personnel are deployed throughout the route, and pilgrims are receiving full support. I urge devotees from across the country to come with faith and undertake the pilgrimage without hesitation,” he said.

Praying for peace and harmony, Kanhaiya said his wish at the holy shrine would be for people across the country to live together in peace and continue working for the progress of nation—(KNO)

Those questioning NC’s strength will get answer on Jul 11: Javid Dar



Waris Fayaz

Baramulla, Jul 07: Cabinet minister Javid Ahmad Dar on Tuesday said the National Conference (NC) would respond to those questioning the party’s strength during its July 11 programme, while maintaining that the demand for the restoration of statehood is a common cause that deserves support from all political parties, irrespective of their affiliations.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the convention at Rafiabad, Minister Dar dismissed claims that the NC had weakened politically and said the party’s critics would get their answer through the events planned on July 11.

“Those claiming the National Conference is nowhere will be answered on July 11. Let them see on July 11 and get their answer there,” he said.

Dar said the NC’s proposed protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, seeking the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, was not a party-centric programme but a collective movement aimed at safeguarding the aspirations of the people.

“We are inviting those who are part of the NDA or the UPA, and even those who are not, besides

political parties in Jammu and Kashmir. Statehood is a common cause for all and not for any single party,” he said.

He said the issue of statehood should unite all political parties and stakeholders, adding that the National Conference expects broad participation in the protest irrespective of political differences.

The minister said the National Conference enjoys strong support among the youth, which was evident during the Assembly elections. He said the party’s youth wing has been working actively at the grassroots level to strengthen the organisation.

“We have enough youth, as seen during the elections as well. Our youth wing is working hard. We believe the youth are the future and should come forward and work shoulder to shoulder, as they can play a vital role,” he said.

Dar announced that the National Conference will observe July 11 with Fatima Khwani at the “Sheikh Mazaar” in remembrance of Begum Sahiba. “Party president Dr Farooq Abdullah will participate in the programme and address party workers from different constituencies,” he said—(KNO)

Petitions Committee reviews food adulteration cases

KT News Desk

Srinagar, July 07: The Committee on Petitions of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, under the Chairmanship of Peerzada Farooq Ahmad Shah on Tuesday examined the petitions pertaining to the adulteration of essential food commodities in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Action Taken Report thereof. The Committee also reviewed a petition regarding the appointment and confirmation of a Lumberdar in Porwara, Chadoora.

Legislators Mir Mohammad Fayaz, Javid Riyaz (Bedar), Dr Sajjad Shafi along with Secretary JKLA Manoj Kumar Pandit, Commissioner FDA J&K Khalid Jahangir, Joint Commissioner Food Safety, State Drug Controller, ADCs Srinagar, Budgam and Baramulla along with other senior officers from the concerned departments were present in the meeting. During the meeting, the officers of the Drug and Food Control Organization presented a detailed briefing on the functioning of the department, its mandate under the relevant laws and rules, inspection drives conducted across the Union Territory, enforcement measures, action taken against violators and penalties imposed to curb the sale of adulterated food and substandard drugs.

The Chairman stressed the need for greater interdepartmental coordination to effectively tackle the menace of food adulteration. He also emphasized the importance of intensifying Information, Education and Communication (IEC) initiatives to create public awareness regarding food safety, quality standards and consumer rights. Underscoring that the Drug and Food Control Organization is directly concerned with the protection of human life and public health, the Chairman called for stringent enforcement of the law to eliminate the adulteration of essential food commodities. He directed the department to take strict and effective action against

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

‘Balanced sun exposure key to Vitamin-D’

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jul 07: Amid increasing awareness about skin protection and vitamin D deficiency, public health experts have urged people to adopt a balanced approach towards sun exposure. They warn that while sunlight is essential for vitamin D production, excessive exposure can have serious health consequences, including sunburn, premature skin ageing, eye damage, heat-related illnesses, and even skin cancer.

Health experts, in an advisory, say that sunlight remains the primary natural source of vitamin D, a nutrient vital for maintaining healthy bones, teeth and muscles, strengthening immunity, supporting mental well-being, and regulating the body’s sleep-wake cycle. However, prolonged exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation without adequate protection significantly increases health risks.

The advisory gains added significance for Jammu and Kashmir, where higher altitudes result in stronger ultraviolet radiation, meaning people may be exposed to harmful UV rays even on cloudy days.

Addressing a common misconception, experts said the use of sunscreen does not necessarily lead to vitamin D deficiency. Explaining the science behind vitamin D synthesis, they said ultraviolet B (UVB) rays convert a naturally occurring compound in the skin, known as



7-dehydrocholesterol, into vitamin D.

Although sunscreens with SPF 30 or higher are designed to reduce UVB exposure, real-world studies indicate that most people continue to produce sufficient vitamin D because sunscreen is rarely applied perfectly, some UVB rays still reach the skin, and routine outdoor activities contribute to vitamin D production.

Health experts stressed that avoiding sunburn, not sunlight, should be the public’s primary

goal. During summer, experts recommend brief periods of unprotected sun exposure - generally around 10 to 30 minutes on the face, arms, and forearms two to four times a week - preferably during early morning or late afternoon. If spending longer periods outdoors, sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher should be applied and reapplied every two to three hours. People are advised to avoid prolonged exposure during peak sunlight hours between 10 am and 4 pm. During winter, however,

sunlight in the region is often insufficient for adequate vitamin D production, making vitamin D deficiency relatively common. Experts recommend consuming vitamin D-rich foods such as fatty fish, egg yolks, fortified milk, and mushrooms exposed to sunlight, and taking supplements only after consultation with a healthcare professional.

Dr S. Muhammad Salim Khan, Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Government Medical College Srinagar, said the key lies in balancing the health benefits of sunlight with protection against harmful ultraviolet radiation.

“Sunlight is essential for life and plays an important role in vitamin D synthesis and overall health. However, moderation is crucial. People should enjoy the benefits of sunlight while taking appropriate protective measures to reduce the risk of skin damage. Proper use of sunscreen should not discourage individuals from maintaining healthy vitamin D levels,” he said.

The advisory also recommends wearing wide-brimmed hats, UV-protective sunglasses, full-sleeved clothing, and seeking shade whenever possible.

Health experts reiterated that sensible sun exposure, combined with protective measures and a healthy diet, remains the safest strategy for maintaining overall health while minimising the harmful effects of excessive ultraviolet radiation—(KNO)

WMDA issues public notice for strict compliance with SWM rules

KNO

Ganderbal, Jul 07: The Wullar-Manasbal Development Authority (WMDA) has issued a second public notice directing all shopkeepers, hoteliers, restaurant owners, vendors and other commercial establishments operating at Manasbal Tourist Destination to strictly comply with the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016/2026. The Authority observed that despite an earlier notice, some establishments continue to violate waste management norms by littering, dumping waste in open spaces and using banned single-use plastic items. All commercial establishments have been instructed to ensure proper segregation, storage and disposal of solid waste through authorised agencies, maintain cleanliness in and around their premises and cooperate with inspection teams.

The Authority has also directed all commercial establishments to obtain Police Verification (Character Certificate) and produce valid registration/trade licences within 15 days for verification. Establishments have been asked to submit details of their waste management mechanism, including installation of separate bins for biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste, daily collection and safe storage of waste, and disposal only through authorised agencies. The WMDA has warned that failure to comply within the stipulated time will invite strict legal action, including environmental compensation, sealing or closure of establishments, cancellation of permissions/registrations and prosecution under the relevant provisions of law.

The Authority urged all stakeholders to treat the matter as urgent in the interest of environmental protection, preservation of Manasbal Lake and promotion of sustainable tourism—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Tackling Cybercrime Demands More Than Meetings

The Jammu and Kashmir government's decision to fast-track the 'Digital Arrest' mechanism and monitor cybercrime prevention every month is a timely and welcome move. The administration has rightly recognised that cyber fraud has become one of the most serious threats to the financial security of ordinary citizens. The term 'Digital Arrest' has gained notoriety in recent months as fraudsters impersonate law enforcement officials, intimidate victims

through fabricated legal threats, and extort money under the pretence of official investigation. The government's commitment to building a robust mechanism to counter this menace is, therefore, both necessary and urgent. However, the challenge of cybercrime cannot be addressed through meetings and deadlines alone. The government's plan to complete administrative and technical requirements within a stipulated timeframe is a good start, but the effectiveness of the Digital

Arrest mechanism will ultimately depend on how quickly and efficiently it can be operationalised on the ground. Progress reports and deadlines must be treated not as bureaucratic formalities but as genuine milestones toward a functional system. Equally important is institutional capacity building. Cybercrime investigation requires specialised skills, and training of officials across police, legal, and IT departments must be continuous and rigorous. Without well-trained personnel, even the

most sophisticated system will remain ineffective. Public awareness is another crucial pillar. Citizens need to be educated about the tactics used by cyber criminals — fake phone calls, fabricated legal notices, pressure tactics — and trained to verify information before panicking or parting with their money. Awareness is often the first line of defence, and the government's push for a comprehensive media campaign is well-founded. The administration must also ensure that coordination

among departments is seamless and that grievance redressal mechanisms are citizen-friendly. The government's move to fast-track the Digital Arrest mechanism and monitor cybercrime prevention is a positive development. But success will depend on execution, training, awareness, and a genuine commitment to protecting citizens from the growing scourge of digital fraud. The administration must now translate its intentions into action — and quickly.

Empowering Excellence: How The Top Class Education Scheme Is Shaping India's Future Leaders

Implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the scheme provides comprehensive educational coverage towards tuition fees, living expenses, books, computers, and other academic requirements.



Sudhansh Pant

Across India, talented young students are translating aspirations into achievement through the Top Class Education Scheme for SC Students. By expanding access to quality education in premier institutions, the scheme is nurturing a new generation of professionals, innovators, researchers, entrepreneurs and leaders who are contributing to India's growth and development.

Implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Top Class Education Scheme for SCs seeks to ensure that meritorious students having annual family income upto 8 Lakhs have a greater access to quality higher education in institutions of national importance and other premier institutions. The scheme provides a comprehensive educational coverage towards tuition fees, living expenses, books, computers and other academic requirements, enabling students to pursue excellence with confidence and focus.

Over the years, the scheme has emerged as a significant instrument for educational empowerment, creating opportunities for students to excel across diverse disciplines and contribute meaningfully to nation-building.

A Growing Footprint of Educational Empowerment

The impact of the scheme has expanded steadily since its inception in 2007-08. The number of students supported under the Scheme has increased from 195 in 2007-08 to 4,742 in 2025-26. During the same period, annual expenditure under the Scheme has risen from 2.17 crore to 117.19 crore.

Today, students supported under the scheme are pursuing higher education in premier institutions including the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), National Law Universities (NLUs), National Institute of Design (NID), leading management institutions like Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and other institutions of national importance.

The scheme is not only facilitating access to quality education but is also enabling students to acquire advanced skills, pursue research, embrace innovation and prepare for leadership roles in emerging sectors of the economy.

Creating Excellence in Technology and Innovation

The technology sector offers some of the most dynamic opportunities in the modern economy, and students supported under the Scheme are making their mark in this field. Thousands of students have been benefitted by the scheme, some of the success stories are illustrated below:

Shri Amul Shaturia pursued B.Tech. in Information Technology at IIIT Allahabad with support under the scheme. The opportunities available through quality education, technical projects and skill development enabled him to strengthen his professional capabilities and secure placement in a leading technology company with an annual package of 56 lakh. Eventhough, he is a son of a school bus conductor of poorer financial background, his achievement reflects how the scheme is enabling talented students to compete successfully in highly competitive technology-driven sectors.

Similarly, Ms. Sushmitha Pothuraju utilized opportunities in academics, coding activities, internships and leadership engagements during her studies at IIIT Allahabad. Her placement at Amazon with an annual package of 45 lakh demonstrates the growing presence of women scholars in advanced

technology careers and highlights the role of the Scheme in fostering excellence and professional achievement.

These success stories illustrate how educational opportunity, combined with determination and talent, can create pathways to outstanding professional outcomes.

Strengthening Participation in Nation-Building Sectors

The impact of the scheme is equally visible in sectors that are critical to India's development journey.

Ms. Thamballa Sindhu, a Civil Engineering student at IIT Palakkad, who comes from rural background, utilised the opportunities available through the Scheme to pursue professional education and industry-oriented learning. She was subsequently selected as a Graduate Engineer Trainee at Larsen & Turbo Construction, one of India's leading infrastructure and engineering organizations.

Likewise, Shri Nalan S, an Electrical Engineering graduate from IIT Palakkad, a first-generation student of his community, secured placement at Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a Navratna Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Defence. His achievement demonstrates how the scheme is helping prepare highly skilled professionals who contribute to strategic sectors and technological advancement.

Such achievements highlight the scheme's contribution in creating a skilled workforce capable of supporting India's infrastructure, manufacturing, defence and technological aspirations.

Enabling Success Across Diverse Professional Fields

The reach of the Scheme extends far beyond engineering and technology.

Ms. Boggiti Shiny Jasper completed her PGDM at the Indian Institute of Plantation Management, Bengaluru. The opportunities created through the scheme enabled her to focus on academics, internships and professional development, leading to successful placement in the corporate sector.

Her journey highlights the scheme's role in facilitating professional advancement and creating opportunities for future leadership even to girl students.

In the field of legal education, Shri Rishabh Bhaskar Lade pursued the B.A. LL.B. (Hons.) programme at Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai. Following the successful completion of his studies, he secured placement as Assistant Legal Manager at IDBI Bank. His achievement reflects how the Scheme is enabling talented students to build successful careers in law, banking and governance.

These examples demonstrate the scheme's ability to support excellence across diverse disciplines and create pathways to rewarding professional careers.

Fostering Creativity, Entrepreneurship and Research

The scheme is also encouraging students to pursue innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.

Ms. Vartika Sonkar, a student of the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, utilised the opportunities created through the Scheme to develop her design expertise and creative capabilities. Today, she has established herself as a professional jewellery designer and has worked with reputed organisations in the industry. Her journey highlights how the Scheme supports talent in creative sectors and encourages students to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.

In the field of research and innovation, scholars supported under the Scheme are contributing to emerging areas of knowledge and technology. Shri Chintala Sanjay has demonstrated academic excellence through his work in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning applications, including research relating to healthcare technologies. Such accomplishments reflect the growing contribution of students supported under the Scheme to innovation-driven sectors.

Many scholars are also pursuing advanced academic and research aspirations, contributing

to India's knowledge ecosystem and strengthening the country's innovation capacity.

Creating a Culture of Aspiration and Achievement

Beyond educational attainment and professional success, the Scheme is helping create a culture of aspiration, confidence and achievement.

Students supported under the Scheme are pursuing opportunities in academics, research, innovation, entrepreneurship and professional development with greater focus and determination. Their achievements serve as an inspiration for future generations and reinforce the transformative role of education in expanding opportunities and unlocking potential.

The impact extends beyond individual accomplishments, contributing to stronger families, more aspirational communities and a more skilled and confident workforce.

Building an Inclusive and Developed India

The Top-Class Education Scheme for SC Students reflects the Government of India's commitment to educational empowerment, inclusion and equal opportunity. The achievements of students supported under the Scheme demonstrate how access to quality education can nurture talent, encourage innovation and create pathways to leadership across sectors. From technology and engineering to law, management, design and research, these scholars are contributing to India's journey towards becoming a knowledge-driven and globally competitive nation.

Every achievement under the Scheme represents the successful convergence of talent, opportunity and determination. As the Scheme continues to expand its reach, it is helping build a generation of confident professionals, innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders whose contributions will shape the future of a developed, inclusive and self-reliant India.

The author is Secretary, Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India

The Mind Is A Computer. Now The Computer Is A Mind

How AI exploits our evolved leader-follower psychology

Zachary H. Garfield

Watching how people use AI now, I've noticed something. They don't just ask for facts. They ask for advice. Should I take the job? What should I do about the fight with my sister? They get a well-constructed answer, and often do what they were told.

I study leadership, mostly in rural, subsistence-based societies. What many AI users are exhibiting is, to use the technical term, followership.

In my field, leadership has a broader meaning than just presidents and executives. Evolutionary social scientists typically define a leader as anyone who holds disproportionate influence over a group's decisions, whatever the group happens to be. A village is a group. A sports team. A family. A couple. You and your AI agent make up a group as well, the moment you start asking it what you should do. In that group of two, the agent has real influence.

So why do we hand that influence to whoever seems to know the most? Let me start with an old analogy.

For decades, cognitive science has treated the mind as a computer. An information-processing organ that takes inputs, processes them through decision rules, and produces outputs. Researchers debate the specifics, how specialized or general it is, but the basic concept has held up.

In recent papers, Ed Hagen and I pushed that concept further. A brain is an expensive computer. It costs a ton to build and run (yours burns about a fifth of your energy at rest), and a lot of that capacity sits idle most



of the time. Engineers faced the same problem with costly mainframes and solved it by sharing—timesharing, networks, and eventually the cloud, where you send a query to a distant machine, it does the processing, and you get an answer back for a small fee.

We argued that humans evolved to run a version of that market in our heads. Some people compile more knowledge or have sharper judgment, and they rent out that spare capacity, solving problems others struggle with, i.e., leadership. Decisions under uncertainty. Disputes that need settling. The challenge of organizing who does what. In the societies I work with, these knowledge specialists are the headmen, the shamans, and the mothers. They get paid for the service, not in cash, but in deference, status, and support.

This pattern is widespread. When my colleagues and I coded 109 features of leadership across 1,212 ethnographic accounts from 59 mostly non-industrial societies, a handful of

traits showed up nearly everywhere. Leaders were knowledgeable. They resolved conflicts. And they were rewarded for it. Across human societies, knowledge is one of the most reliable reasons people follow anyone.

And we follow knowledge more readily than force. When we tested the major evolutionary models of leadership against the ethnographic record, the prestige route, where people freely defer to skill and expertise, got broad support. The dominance route (leading by threat) got less. I found the same thing among the Chabu, a community of recently settled hunter-gatherers in Ethiopia. Prestige predicted who became a leader better than dominance did.

Apply this to AI. It can't credibly threaten you (thankfully). It has no way to impose a cost if you ignore it or delete it. All it can do is seem to know things and offer to think for you, which is the key ingredient of our evolved leader-follower psychology.

For decades, we have seen the mind as a computer. Now the computers are arriving as minds.

The cloud service we described, where you upload a query and get processing back for a fee, describes exactly what a chatbot does. We used cloud computing as an analogy for an evolved human leadership market. Agentic AI is actually that. Except, now, it talks. It knows your name. And it presents as a who more than a what.

That human feel is a design choice. The warmth, the first-person voice, the way it remembers your partner's name and asks about your trip, none of that is needed to run an information service. It's there because it works. It primes you to treat the system as a person, and once it reads as one who knows a great deal, my field can tell you what comes next. You defer.

This is how agentic AI exploits our leader-follower psychology. It arrives pre-loaded with the cues our minds use to follow: Knowledge, wisdom, and expertise. Close to the sum of human knowledge, with the capacity to process it.

But the people we evolved to follow came with particular connections and an interest in our outcomes, what we often call interdependence. The shaman whose expertise you relied on lived in your camp. She knew your history. She paid a price if she did you wrong. In these societies, influence lasts only as long as the group allows it. Followers have bargaining power. And they can walk away or go on to the next choice in the market.

An AI agent has the cues but lacks the same incentives. It knows your name and your vacation because you typed them in, not

because it has spent years in your life. It has no stake in how things turn out for you, except to keep you as a user. You can't hold it accountable, and it doesn't really know you, not the way a sister or a friend does. At least not yet.

I'm not anti-AI. I use it often. But it's useful to think about how these tools exploit our evolved psychology and how they might be changing how we think and behave the more we use them. The pull you feel toward the calm voice that seems to know everything is an ancient motivation. It evolved for a world where knowledge came embedded in a relationship, in a real person who had a stake in your well-being.

That's the part the machine is missing. Keep people who actually know you in the loop. Let the agent do the computation. Just don't blindly follow without using your own mind.

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Courtesy: Psychology Today

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Govt's focus on inclusive, people-centric development: Deputy CM

Inaugurates Rs 2.49 cr conference hall at PWD Dak Bungalow, Nowshera

KT News Desk

NOWSHERA (RAJOURI), JULY 7: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Tuesday inaugurated the newly constructed conference hall at the PWD Dak Bungalow in Nowshera, built at a cost of Rs 2.49 crore.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, said that the new facility will strengthen the administrative infrastructure of the area by providing a modern venue for official meetings, conferences and public interactions. He reiterated the government's commitment towards creating quality public assets that enhance governance and improve the public service delivery.

Addressing the gathering of local residents, the Deputy Chief Minister highlighted the government's focus on inclusive and people-centric development. He said that infrastructure development remains a key priority and every effort is being made to ensure that developmental projects are completed within the stipulated timeframe while



maintaining the highest standards of quality.

Earlier, the Deputy Chief Minister undertook an extensive inspection of various ongoing developmental works across the Nowshera constituency, including road, bridge and other infrastructure projects. He reviewed the progress of the works and directed the concerned officers to expedite execution while ensuring transparency, quality and adherence to the prescribed timelines.

He emphasized that timely completion of public projects is essential to provide better connectivity, improved civic amenities and enhanced quality of life

to the people.

The Deputy Chief Minister also held a detailed public outreach programme during which he interacted with the local residents, public representatives and various delegations. He assured them that all their genuine issues would be addressed on priority through coordinated efforts of the concerned departments.

Among those present were Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera, Superintending Engineer PWD, Executive Engineers and other senior officers of the district administration and line departments.

Javid Dar reviews compensation cases of Rohama-Ladoora road project affected families

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, JULY 7: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, on Tuesday chaired a review meeting at Baramulla, to assess the cases of 26 families whose residential and commercial structures are likely to be affected by the alignment of the Rohama-Ladoora road project.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Tehsildars, concerned Executive Engineer and other senior officers.

The Minister conducted a detailed review of the status of the affected structures and the progress made in the assessment process. Stressing the need for a fair, transparent and time-bound approach, Javid Ahmad Dar directed the concerned officers to conduct an on-the-spot inspection and complete the valuation of all affected structures at the earliest.

The Minister further instructed the Revenue authorities to verify the land status of each affected property to ensure that all eligible families



receive adequate compensation strictly in accordance with the established rules and provisions.

Emphasising the government's commitment to safeguard the interests of the affected families, the Minister said that developmental projects should be implemented in a manner that balances

infrastructure development with the welfare and rights of the people. He directed the district administration to expedite the necessary formalities so that compensation cases are processed without unnecessary delay.

The Deputy Commissioner Baramulla assured the Minister that the district administration

is taking all necessary measures to complete the required assessments and procedural formalities promptly. He further assured that every genuine case will be dealt with fairly and that all eligible beneficiaries will receive compensation in accordance with the applicable norms, ensuring that no affected family suffers undue hardship.

JKTPO commences 7-day exhibition at Yatri Niwas Bhagwati Nagar

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JULY 07: Reinforcing its commitment to promoting the products and enterprises of Jammu & Kashmir, the Jammu & Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO), under the aegis of the Industries & Commerce Department, Government of Jammu & Kashmir has commenced a seven-day exhibition-cum-sale at Yatri Niwas, Bhagwati Nagar Jammu from 7th to 13th July 2026.

The exhibition, as per an official statement, has been organized with the objective of providing artisans, weavers, craftsmen, self-help groups, MSMEs, start-ups and local entrepreneurs from across Jammu & Kashmir with a dedicated marketing platform and enhanced market linkages. Timed to coincide with the annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, the initiative offers exhibitors a unique opportunity to showcase and market their products to thousands of pilgrims visiting the Union Territory, while also remaining open to the general public.

The exhibition comprises 13 exhibitors showcasing an extensive range of authentic products

that reflect the rich cultural and artisanal heritage of Jammu & Kashmir. Visitors can explore handloom and handicraft products, Pashmina and woollen articles, crewel embroidery, traditional textiles, Handmade toys, dry fruits, saffron, honey, processed food products, organic produce along with a wide array of locally manufactured and value-added products from MSMEs, artisans and entrepreneurs.

By organizing the exhibition at Yatri Niwas, Bhagwati Nagar, one of the key transit points for the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, JKTPO aims to create sustainable business opportunities for local producers by facilitating direct interaction with consumers from across the country. The initiative is expected to strengthen market access, expand customer outreach, promote the Made in Jammu & Kashmir brand and contribute towards enhancing the visibility and commercial prospects of local enterprises.

The exhibition also provides an opportunity for pilgrims and visitors to experience the unique craftsmanship, quality and diversity of Jammu & Kashmir's products while supporting the livelihoods of local artisans, craftsmen and entrepreneurs.

Mandeep Kaur reviews green campus initiatives at SKUAST-K Proposes replication in urban projects

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JULY 7: In a strategic move to foster sustainable development and urban ecological balance, Commissioner Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Mandeep Kaur on Tuesday visited the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) to evaluate the University's pioneering Green Campus initiatives.

The Commissioner Secretary, as per an official statement, was accompanied by Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb. The delegation conducted an on-site inspection of the university's comprehensive sustainability ecosystem. The visit highlighted SKUAST-K's successful implementation of a zero-waste campus model, which included advanced rainwater harvesting systems, Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) and plastic waste management protocols.

Following the tour, an exclusive meeting was convened by Commissioner Secretary with Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Professor Nazir Ahmad Ganai,



alongside senior officers from the university. The discussions centered on finalizing a comprehensive roadmap to further strengthen and scale these green campus objectives, ensuring that the integration of nature, resource conservation and technology remains at the forefront of the institution's growth.

During the session, Mandeep Kaur appreciated university's proactive approach towards environmental stewardship. She highlighted the intent to replicate the successful green models, particularly water conservation and waste recycling mechanisms, established at SKUAST-K across various other government initiatives and public sector projects.

"The work being done here at SKUAST-K serves as a vital, replicable blueprint for

our future urban planning. By integrating these scalable green practices such as effective STP management and comprehensive plastic waste reduction into wider governance projects, we aim to create more resilient, energy-efficient and environmentally conscious public spaces across the region", maintained the Commissioner Secretary.

The University leadership reaffirmed its commitment towards providing technical expertise and knowledge support to the Urban Development Department, ensuring a collaborative effort in achieving long-term sustainability goals. The roadmap discussed today marks a significant step towards institutionalizing green governance and promoting sustainable development as a core pillar of public infrastructure.

CPO, ACD Doda review progress of PMAY-Urban, PMAY-Gramin



KT News Desk

DODA, JULY 07: Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Doda Manesh Kumar, along with Assistant Commissioner Development

(ACD) Doda Din Mohammad Afagi, Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the physical and financial progress of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) across the district, with emphasis on timely completion of housing projects and effective implementation of the flagship schemes.

The meeting, as per an official statement, reviewed the overall status of sanctioned, completed and under-construction houses under both schemes. Detailed discussions were held on accelerating the pace of construction, timely geo-tagging of completed houses, updating beneficiary details on the PMAY-U portal and ensuring prompt release of benefits to eligible beneficiaries.

The Chair directed all concerned officers to maintain accurate and updated records for effective monitoring and seamless implementation.

The progress of organizing Loan Melas for eligible beneficiaries was also reviewed. The CPO emphasized the need to create greater awareness about the Interest Subsidy Scheme (ISS) so that eligible beneficiaries can avail themselves of its benefits. He further instructed the concerned departments to

take appropriate action in respect of non-starter beneficiaries and expedite the completion of non-starter Beneficiary-Led Construction (BLC) houses.

The meeting also reviewed the status of geo-tagging under PMAY-U 2.0, identification of projects under the Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP) component and the preparation of District and Urban Local Body (ULB)-wise action plans for completion of all PMAY-U houses within the extended mission period.

Reviewing the implementation of PMAY-Gramin, the Chair assessed the status of completed and under-construction houses, pending cases and convergence with MGNREGA/VBGRAM-G to ensure timely completion of rural housing units. He directed the concerned officers to identify bottlenecks delaying construction and resolve all pending cases on priority.

The progress of Capex works being executed under the housing sector was also reviewed. The officers were instructed to ensure quality execution of works, strict adherence to timelines and regular field monitoring for timely completion of all approved projects.

Emphasizing the objective of providing safe, secure and dignified housing to every eligible family, the Chair called upon all implementing agencies to work in close coordination, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and ensure that all pending houses are completed within the stipulated timeframe.

PMDDKY review meeting held in Kishtwar

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, JULY 07: Under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma, a review meeting on PMDDKY regarding the compilation and submission of Output Data and Outcome Data for the financial year 2025-26 was held Tuesday under the chairmanship of Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Kishtwar, Vinod Behnal.

During the meeting, as per an official statement, the progress achieved by various departments in furnishing Output and Outcome Data was reviewed in detail. The ADDC stressed the importance of timely and accurate submission of data to facilitate its upload on the PMDDKY Portal.

All concerned departments were directed to compile and submit their Outcome Data on or before July 10, 2026, so that the information can be uploaded to the PMDDKY portal within the prescribed timeline. The Chair emphasized that adherence to timelines and data accuracy is essential for effective monitoring and evaluation of developmental programmes.

All concerned HODs of the line departments were instructed to ensure prompt compliance with the directions issued during the meeting.

HADP: Horticulture Department organises awareness camp at Panchayat Dhanu

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JULY 07: The Department of Horticulture organized a comprehensive awareness camp at Panchayat Dhanu under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

The programme was chaired by Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Syed.

Among others present were

Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu Rakesh Kotwal, Chief Scientist, KVK Jammu, Dr. Puneet Choudhary, DLSMS Vishal Magotra, Rakesh Kumar Bhagat, Horticulture Development Officer Bhalwal Ravinder Kumar along with officials and field staff of the Department.

During the awareness camp, farmers and orchardists, as per an official statement,

were sensitized about various developmental schemes being implemented by the Department, including HADP, ATMA, CSS and RMHPD.

Detailed information was provided regarding financial assistance, modern horticulture practices, establishment of orchards, protected cultivation and other farmer-oriented initiatives. The experts also highlighted the importance

of value addition to horticultural produce, emphasizing processing, packaging, branding and marketing to enhance farmers' income and generate employment opportunities.

The participants appreciated the initiative and actively interacted with the experts, seeking guidance on adopting modern horticulture technologies and availing benefits under different government schemes.

SHRI AMARNATH JI YATRA

Monsoon Season: SDRF 2nd Battalion Jammu intensifies Public Safety Awareness Campaign

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JULY 07: The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), 2nd Bn Jammu is continuously undertaking preventive awareness campaigns to ensure the safety and security of pilgrims and the general public during the ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY-2026) and the prevailing monsoon season.

The campaign, as per an official statement, at various places has been organised under the overall supervision and guidance of CO 2nd Bn SDRF Jammu Mohamad Aslam keeping in view the "Monsoon Safety Advisory" for all citizens and pilgrims.



The official deployed by SDRF 2nd Bn Jammu under the supervision of Dy. SP Lalit Kumar at the Yatri Registration Point, Tawi River Front, Jammu, conducted public safety announcements using megaphones to educate and sensitize pilgrims about the potential dangers associated with rivers during the monsoon season.

Pilgrims were advised not to

venture near or enter the Tawi River, as the water level may rise suddenly due to heavy rainfall in the upper catchment areas, resulting in strong currents and flash flood-like situations that pose a serious threat to life and safety.

The pilgrims were urged to remain vigilant, follow the instructions issued by the administration and security agencies and

cooperate with SDRF personnel deployed at the site. They were also requested to discourage fellow pilgrims from taking unnecessary risks near water bodies.

Similarly, personnel of SDRF 2nd Bn Jammu deployed at CD Town, Akhnoor, conducted Public Awareness Announcements at various ghats along the Chenab River.

Residents, visitors and devotees were informed that continuous heavy rainfall in the upper reaches, particularly in Doda and Kishtwar districts, has led to a significant rise in the water level of the Chenab River.

The Public was strongly advised to stay away from the riverbanks and refrain from entering

the river under any circumstances. People were cautioned that swift currents, sudden increase in water level, slippery embankments and hidden underwater hazards can lead to fatal accidents within moments. In view of the ongoing monsoon season the CO 2nd Battalion SDRF Jammu Mohamad Aslam advises all citizens and pilgrims to observe the safety precautions:

Do not approach or enter rivers, streams, nallahs, waterfalls or other water bodies during or after rainfall, never attempt to cross overflowing bridges, flooded roads, or fast-flowing streams, stay away from riverbanks, as erosion and sudden surges in water level can occur without prior

warning, avoid bathing, swimming, washing clothes, or taking selfies near rivers during the monsoon, keep children under constant supervision and prevent them from playing near water bodies, follow weather advisories and warnings issued by the District Administration, IMD and Disaster Management authorities, do not spread or believe rumours; rely only on official information and advisories, report any emergency, rising water level, landslide or distress situation immediately to the nearest SDRF, Police, or District Administration authorities, cooperate with emergency responders and immediately evacuate vulnerable areas if advised by the authorities.

PM Modi's Australia visit to boost defence and trade ties, say experts

Press Trust of India

Canberra, Jul 07: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Australia this week will strengthen ties between New Delhi and Canberra, and help both sides play a larger role in keeping the Indo-Pacific stable and secure, at a time when the region faces security challenges, experts said.

Modi's visit will help both countries work together on key sectors such as defence, trade and technology, they said.

During the three-day visit to Melbourne from July 8 to 10, Modi will meet Prime Minister Anthony Albanese for talks. He will also call on Governor General Sam Mostyn, address a gathering of top business leaders at the India-Australia CEOs Forum and meet members of the diaspora.

As both nations seek to build a stronger partnership, experts noted that the Indo-Pacific is becoming increasingly important as major powers compete for influence in the region.

Former Australian Senator Lisa Singh, who is the chief executive officer of the Australia India Institute, highlighted the importance of the visit at this juncture.

Strengthening the India-Australia partnership "sends an important message, not just to each other, but to developing nations in our region that Australia and India want to play



a leading role in creating security and prosperity for all," she told PTI over an email.

Singh pointed to defence ties and maritime security as key areas of cooperation. "Australia has recognised through its national defence strategy the role it needs to play in the Indian Ocean, a theatre that India has been leading in for decades," she said.

On energy, Singh said, "If Australia can assist in the delivery of clean energy to India through the supply of uranium, then that is a win-win for both nations."

Frederic Grare, senior research fellow at ANU National Security College, however, offered a cautious view. He said earlier visits had promised much but delivered little.

Grare saw trade as the main

opportunity. "New steps towards a broader Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement would be a possible outcome. The growth of two-way trade has been significant over the past few years and negotiations are continuing," he said.

Australia is India's 14th-largest trading partner, with bilateral trade in goods and services valued at USD 24.1 billion in 2025-26.

The visit will give fresh momentum to negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), the Ministry of External Affairs said in a press briefing last week in New Delhi.

India and Australia are actively negotiating a CECA to build upon the foundational Economic Cooperation and

Trade Agreement, which entered into force in 2022.

Grare said that both sides "may also explore other opportunities across critical minerals, renewable energy, digital technology and investment."

"Modi will be the first Indian prime minister to visit Australia three times, which in itself is quite unique and significant. It emphasises the importance both countries attach to their bilateral relations," Pradeep Taneja, senior lecturer at the University of Melbourne, told PTI.

Modi's previous official visits to Australia were in 2014 and 2023.

Taneja expected India and Australia to update their security cooperation framework. "It is expected that the 2009 Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation might be updated, introducing new security pillars to the bilateral security cooperation framework," Taneja said.

The 2009 agreement formally designated the bilateral relationship as a "strategic partnership," which was later upgraded to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2020.

"It is important that Australia, India and Japan keep the Quad alive through bilateral and trilateral cooperation among themselves, for the pressure from China that the Quad member countries face is unlikely to abate any time soon," he said.

The Quad is an informal

grouping of India, Australia, Japan and the United States that works with a commitment to support an open, free and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

Salvatore Babones, associate professor at the University of Sydney, said Modi's visit is important because Australian politics often distracts the government from focusing on India.

However, Babones warned that India-Australia ties remain weak overall. "The India-Australia relationship is remarkably thin. Whether you look at security, trade, or investment, ties between these two Indian Ocean neighbours are much weaker than they should be," he told PTI.

Ian Hall, professor at Griffith University, expected concrete results.

"I expect to see a significant defence agreement signed at the summit, as well as more commitments to expand bilateral trade and investment flows. I hope that we see some deals made on critical minerals, moving beyond past promises to concrete commitments," he said.

"Both sides still have some work to do to improve their understanding of each other's priorities and positions, as well as to coordinate their work to ensure that the Indo-Pacific remains peaceful and stable. We could also do more on energy, given Australia's abundant natural resources, including gas," he said in an email.

Delegations call on LG Sinha, discuss tourism, dev issues



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 07: Several delegations and individuals called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday, projecting various public issues, cultural initiatives, and developmental concerns.

A delegation led by former Minister and President of J&K People's Democratic Front (PDF), Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen, projected various public important issues of Budgam District, including reopening of Tosamaidan, night halts of tourists at Doodhpathri, reopening of the Bugroo-Raithan-Mujpathri-Doodhpathri road, and water supply in Humhama area.

Dr. Suheel Rasool Mir, Sociologist and Cultural Researcher, called on the Lieutenant Governor and apprised him of several initiatives aimed at documenting, preserving, and promoting the

Union Territory's diverse cultural heritage. He briefed the Lieutenant Governor on his extensive research and cultural documentation initiatives, including the conceptualization, curation, and establishment of China Cultural Centre at Gurez, Pahari Cultural Centre at Karnah, and Shina-Dard Cultural Centre at Darchik.

The Lieutenant Governor was also presented with the inaugural edition of Shinoon Meeras Dard Heritage Magazine and a book titled Voices Across the Pir Panjal, authored by Dr. Mir. Adv. Jehanzeb Allaqaband, Founder of The Kashmir Conclave, and Mian Yaseen, Founder of Kashmir AI & Creator Summit (KACS), briefed the Lieutenant Governor on the objectives and proposed framework for the upcoming Kashmir Conclave, an annual intellectual forum, and the Kashmir AI & Creator Summit.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Ensure no controversial

The Lieutenant Governor also instructed the authorities to examine the websites and digital repositories of universities and higher educational institutions and immediately remove any objectionable material, if any.

Emphasising that such incidents must not recur, the Lieutenant Governor directed the formulation of a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) governing the procurement of books and academic material for schools, colleges and universities. The SoP should provide for a robust screening mechanism, including periodic random scrutiny by a panel comprising eminent educationists, intellectuals and senior officers, to ensure that no material promoting anti-national or separatist narratives enters educational institutions.

The Lieutenant Governor warned that any lapse would invite strict accountability, and the Head of the Institution concerned would be held personally responsible for the same.

Reiterating the administration's commitment to safeguarding the educational ecosystem, the Lieutenant Governor said educational institutions must remain centres of learning, nation-building and constitutional values, and there will be zero tolerance for any attempt to mislead or radicalise students through objectionable literature.

Officials briefed the Lieutenant Governor on the recovery of books allegedly glorifying separatism, emphasizing that those responsible for procuring, approving, or circulating the literature will face strict legal consequences.

The meeting was attended by Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Ashwani Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department; Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary, Home Department; Dr. Mandeep K Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor and CEO Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board and other senior officers. (KNO)

Amarnath Yatra

stakeholders to work together in close co-ordination to make this year's Yatra truly historic and set a benchmark for spiritual tourism across the country.

"Such a collective effort can create a model that inspires similar pilgrimages nationwide," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also appealed to all devotees to immerse themselves in the spiritual bliss of this sacred journey to Lord Shiva's abode while experiencing the warmth of local hospitality and the richness of J&K's traditional arts and crafts.

"By supporting and promoting local products, we can ensure that the pilgrimage becomes not only a profound spiritual experience but also a meaningful celebration of the local economy, culture, and heritage," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also reviewed the operations of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board's 24x7 Control Room, established at Lok Bhavan, for the smooth conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra.

He took stock of arrangements at various sections along the routes, deployment of security personnel, the functioning of langars, queue management systems at different junctions as well as the Holy Cave.

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Governor and CEO Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board and other senior officers. (KNO)

Army Chief

Army Staff on June 30.

The Chief Minister extended his best wishes to General Seth on taking over the prestigious appointment and wished him success in his new responsibilities.

CM Omar assures

Minister gave a patient hearing to the delegation and reiterated his government's commitment to creating an enabling environment for the tourism sector, recognising it as one of the key drivers of economic growth and employment in Jammu and Kashmir.

He assured the representatives that the concerns raised by them would be examined sympathetically and addressed in a time-bound manner in coordination with the concerned departments.

Later, Tariq Ghani, Secretary General, Kashmir Chamber of Commerce, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed a range of issues pertaining to business, trade and tourism.

Amarnath Yatra crosses

the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu early Tuesday as part of the sixth batch of the yatra, officials said.

They said pilgrims departed under elaborate security arrangements in a convoy of 363 vehicles.

Of them, 3,989 pilgrims travelling in 181 vehicles left for the Baltal base camp at 3:35 am, while 4,826 pilgrims in 182 vehicles departed for the Nunwan base camp via the traditional Pahalgam route at 4:08 am.

The batch comprised 5,831 men, 2,193 women, 30 children, 598 sadhus, 131 sadhvis, one child sadhu and 31 foreign male pilgrims. The convoy included 172 buses, 58 medium motor vehicles (MMVs), 130 light motor vehicles (LMVs) and three two-wheelers.

Officials said the pilgrimage is progressing smoothly under multi-layered security arrangements, with extensive measures in place to ensure seamless movement of pilgrims, besides adequate medical care, accommodation and other essential facilities.

The 57-day annual pilgrimage began on July 3 and is scheduled to conclude on August 28, coinciding with Shravan Purnima (Raksha Bandhan). (KNO)

J&K Overseas Emp

A detailed presentation by Director Employment J&K Harvinder Singh outlined a phased roadmap for operationalising JKOEC, including the creation of a digital overseas employment portal, partnerships with licensed recruiting agencies, foreign languages and international certification programmes, employer engagement, counselling, pre-departure orientation and post-placement support. The proposed framework seeks to position JKOEC as the nodal agency coordinating with the Ministry of External Affairs, the Protector of Emigration, Indian Missions abroad, skill institutions and licensed recruiting agencies to ensure ethical, transparent and legally compliant overseas recruitment.

Protector of Emigration, Chandigarh, Ministry of External Affairs, Yashu Deep Singh, also made a presentation on emigration trends from Jammu & Kashmir, the region's contribution to overseas remittances, and employment opportunities available through India's labour mobility agreements with several countries. He highlighted sector-wise demand for workers,

emerging job roles in global markets, and key challenges affecting overseas migration from J&K, including limited public awareness of legal migration channels, inadequate institutional outreach, dependence on unverified social media information, and the need to develop skills that meet international standards.

Reviewing the proposals, the Chief Minister emphasised that the objective should not merely be to facilitate migration but to prepare a globally competitive workforce.

"We should not only send people abroad; we should send skilled people there. Our focus should be on skilling," he said.

The Chief Minister directed the concerned departments to prepare a time-bound implementation plan and convert the proposed pillars into clearly defined, actionable outcomes. He also called for adopting best practices from states such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu, which have successfully institutionalised overseas employment facilitation.

Emphasising long-term sustainability, Omar Abdullah directed that the forthcoming Industrial Policy should provide for the establishment of skill development and training institutes to nurture an ecosystem capable of meeting international workforce requirements. He also stressed the need for a complementary industrial policy that encourages greater private sector participation in skill development and employment generation.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Education Sakina Itoo, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary Finance Shailendra Kumar, Commissioner Secretary School Education Ram Niwas Sharma, Secretary Labour & Employment Rajiv Ranjan, Protector of Emigration, Chandigarh, Ministry of External Affairs, Yashu Deep Singh, Director Employment, Director Skill Development and other senior officers.

J&K schools run

meeting of Project Approval Board (PAB) for considering the Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWP&B) 2026-27 has said that in Jammu and Kashmir at least 146 schools have reported functioning without any student enrolled and over 1355 other schools are functioning with single teachers.

"141 primary schools and five upper primary schools were reported with zero enrolment," MoE said.

It also said that 1,762 primary schools and 135 upper primary schools had enrolment of less than 15 students, while 5175 primary schools and 748 upper primary schools had enrolment of less than 30 students.

The Ministry has said that a large number of schools with low or zero enrolment was highlighted as a matter of concern.

The MoE advised the Jammu and Kashmir authorities to undertake a detailed analysis of these schools and adopt strategies to improve enrolment.

MoE has urged the Jammu and Kashmir authorities to undertake a detailed review and appropriate corrective measures, and ensure compliance with RTF norms at all levels.

Earlier in March, the Jammu and Kashmir government had said that over the past four years, nearly 3200 schools in the UT were either functioning with less than ten or zero student enrolment—leaving over 2500 teachers deployed in empty schools.

The figures were revealed in the Legislative Assembly that said 3192 schools in Jammu and Kashmir reported less than ten or zero enrolment since 2022 including 1494 schools

in Jammu and 1698 in Kashmir region respectively. (KNO)

BJP National President

panchayat elections. "It is concerning that the J&K Government is deliberately delaying local body and panchayat elections and is not committed to establishing a true three-tier democracy in the Union Territory," he said.

Addressing party leaders, Nabin said the BJP would continue working for the development of Jammu and Kashmir while discharging the responsibilities of a constructive opposition.

Calling his visit significant as it coincided with the 125th birth anniversary of Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder Syama Prasad Mukherjee, he said the programme was primarily aimed at reviewing organisational affairs and interacting with party workers.

Nabin asserted that the abrogation of Article 370 had fundamentally transformed Jammu and Kashmir by integrating it more closely with the rest of the country. "Our MLAs and workers will remain vigilant and continue to raise issues concerning the people. Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed significant changes after the removal of Article 370," he said, adding that the region was registering progress in infrastructure development, tourism, women's empowerment, and preservation of cultural heritage.

Highlighting the ideological significance of Jammu and Kashmir for the party, Nabin said the BJP's roots were linked to the movement for "Ek Pradhan, Ek Nishan", associated with the sacrifice of Syama Prasad Mukherjee. "Jammu and Kashmir is the ideological cradle of the BJP. The party's foundation is rooted in the movement for 'Ek Pradhan, Ek Nishan' (One Constitution, One Flag), which began with the sacrifice of Mukherjee," he said.

Earlier in the day, Nabin, accompanied by BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh, visited the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) office Keshav Bhawan at Amphalla, where he met senior Sangh functionaries. He also paid floral tributes to veteran Praja Parishad and Bharatiya Jana Sangh leader Prem Nath Dogra at his statue and interacted with BJP workers, including representatives of the Gujar and Bakerwal communities. He participated in programmes marking Mukherjee's 125th birth anniversary at Dogra Chowk before proceeding to the party headquarters.

Nabin cuts short J&K visit, skips Mata Vaishno Devi pilgrimage

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president cut short his two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir, cancelling his scheduled pilgrimage to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine and returning to New Delhi due to official commitments, party leaders said.

Nabin, who arrived in Jammu on Monday afternoon on his maiden visit to the Union Territory after taking over as the BJP president, attended a series of organisational meetings during his brief stay. He visited the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) headquarters and later chaired a joint meeting of the BJP's sitting and former legislators at the party's Trikuta Nagar headquarters, which lasted around one-and-a-half hours and focused on organisational matters.

The BJP president was scheduled to visit the revered Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop the Trikuta Hills in Reasi district on Tuesday. However, the programme was cancelled following a change in his itinerary.

While the BJP did not officially specify the reason for the revised schedule, senior party leaders said Nabin had to return to the national capital because of official commitments, with

party insiders saying he is expected to attend an important organisational meeting in New Delhi. The change in schedule brought his maiden visit to Jammu and Kashmir as the BJP's national president to an earlier-than-planned conclusion. (KNO)

Nature's fury hits

there has been no loss of life. The administration has promptly swung into action and is taking all possible measures to provide relief and restore damaged infrastructure. My office remains in constant touch," Singh said.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also reviewed the situation with the Deputy Commissioner and directed the district administration to ensure immediate relief to affected families.

"While several houses and shops have suffered damage, fortunately no casualties or injuries have been reported. I have directed the Deputy Commissioner to ensure immediate relief and assistance to the affected families and expedite restoration work, including clearance of NH-244," Sinha said.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said no rainfall was recorded at most weather stations between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm on Tuesday, though Gulmarg received 0.4 mm rainfall.

During the previous 24 hours ending at 8.30 am, Katra recorded the highest rainfall at 39.6 mm, followed by Gulmarg (8.8 mm), Banihal (5.5 mm), Kukernag (2.8 mm), Pahalgam (2.2 mm), Qazigund (2 mm), Batote (1.7 mm), Jammu (0.2 mm), while Srinagar and Baderwah recorded only trace rainfall.

According to the IMD, Jammu was the hottest place in the Union Territory on Tuesday with a maximum temperature of 37.9 degrees Celsius, 2.5 degrees above normal. Katra recorded 33.6 degrees Celsius, Kupwara 32 degrees, Srinagar 30.6 degrees, Banihal 30.8 degrees, Qazigund 30.4 degrees, Kukernag 29.6 degrees, Batote 29.5 degrees, Baderwah 29.2 degrees, Pahalgam 25.5 degrees and Gulmarg 22 degrees Celsius.

Night temperatures settled at 26.1 degrees Celsius in Jammu, 20.4 degrees in Srinagar and Katra, 19.1 degrees in Batote, 18.3 degrees in Kupwara, 17.8 degrees in Baderwah, 17.5 degrees each in Qazigund and Banihal, 16.7 degrees in Kukernag, 15.1 degrees in Pahalgam and 11 degrees Celsius in Gulmarg.

MET PREDICTS LIGHT TO MODERATE RAIN, THUNDERSHOWERS ACROSS J&K

The Meteorological Centre, Srinagar, has forecast light to moderate rain and thunder-showers at many places across Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, with heavy rain and brief intense showers expected at a few places in the Jammu division, particularly during late night and early morning hours.

Many areas of Kashmir division are also likely to receive light to moderate rainfall with brief intense showers at isolated places during the afternoon and early morning hours.

The weather office has predicted light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places on July 9 and 10, accompanied by brief intense heavy showers at a few locations. Similar conditions are expected on July 11 and 12, with isolated heavy rainfall.

The Met department has warned of heavy rainfall and brief intense showers at a few places on July 7-8 and again on July 11.

It also cautioned about the possibility of flash floods, landslides and mudslides at vulnerable locations in the Chenab Valley and Pir Panjal range, advising people to stay away from streams, nallahs and landslide-prone areas. (KNO)

PM Modi conferred with Indonesia's highest honour 'Bintang Adipurna' in Jakarta



PTI

Jakarta, Jul 7: Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on Tuesday conferred with Indonesia's highest honour 'Bintang Adipurna' of the Republic of Indonesia' medal for his role in strengthening the ties between both the countries. Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto presented the medal to Modi. "This morning, I have also been conferred with Indonesia's highest honour with immense affection. This honour belongs to the crores of Indians... it belongs to the sentiments of the people of Indonesia, to the historic and intimate ties between India and Indonesia," Prime Minister's Office posted on X. "I express my heartfelt gratitude to President Prabowo Ji, the

Government of Indonesia, and the people here: PM @narendramodi," the post said. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that the award is a "tribute to the India-Indonesia friendship." "Prime Minister @narendramodi was conferred 'Bintang Adipurna' of the Republic of Indonesia' Medal of Honour by President @prabowo. This is the highest honour of Republic of Indonesia," Jaiswal posted on X. "It has been awarded in recognition of PM's leadership in strengthening India-Indonesia friendship and furthering unity, continuity and prosperity of Indonesia," the post read. "PM dedicated the honour to the people of India and the enduring bonds of friendship between India

and Indonesia," it said. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also said that the honour is "a testament to PM Modi's steadfast efforts towards deepening our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, as well as stronger India - ASEAN ties." "The conferment of 'Bintang Adipurna' of the Republic of Indonesia' Medal of Honour upon PM @narendramodi is a matter of immense pride for all Indians," Jaishankar posted on X. Instituted in 1959, the Bintang Adipurna of the Republic of Indonesia is the highest honour in the Republic of Indonesia. This award is given to individuals who have rendered exceptional service to the unity, continuity and prosperity of the Republic of Indonesia.

New Delhi to supply BrahMos missiles to Indonesia

PTI

Jakarta, Jul 7: Supplying BrahMos and Astra missiles to Indonesia, boosting maritime security, and strengthening critical mineral supply chains emerged as the key outcomes of Tuesday's talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Prabowo Subianto. The two sides inked nearly a dozen agreements to significantly shore up two-way cooperation in a range of areas including critical minerals, technology, food security, medicines and maritime security. Modi landed in Jakarta on Monday to a red-carpet welcome in the first leg of his three-nation tour to strengthen trade and security cooperation under the framework of the India-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of 2018. With both sides aiming to bolster their defence ties, Indonesia decided to import India's air-to-air Astra missiles following the weapon's success during Operation Sindoor, it is learnt. The BrahMos missile deal with Indonesia came after India inked similar pacts with Vietnam and the Philippines. The exact number of missiles to be supplied to Indonesia is not immediately known. To strengthen the critical mineral supply chain, India decided to invest in the manufacturing of steel, nickel and rare earth permanent magnets in Indonesia.

India, Indonesia sign health, education pacts

IIM Bangalore to open campus in East Java

PTI

Jakarta, Jul 7: India and Indonesia signed agreements in health, education and other sectors on Tuesday, including one on the establishment of an overseas campus of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Bangalore in the South-East Asian country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced here. Modi landed in Jakarta on Monday to a red-carpet welcome in the first leg of his three-nation tour -- which will also cover

Australia and New Zealand -- to strengthen trade and security cooperation. "We are going to establish an overseas campus of the prestigious Indian Institute of Management Bangalore in Indonesia. This will greatly benefit young people across the ASEAN region," Modi said, while delivering a joint press statement with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto. The IIM Bangalore campus will be set up at the Singhasari Special Economic Zone in Indonesia's East Java province. IIM Ahmedabad was the first premier

Indian business school to open a campus outside India. It was launched in Dubai last year. In the health sector, India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation and Indonesia's National Agency of Drug and Food Control signed a memorandum of understanding. It is aimed at cooperation in medical products regulation, enabling knowledge exchange on global regulatory standards and enhancing market access for Indian medical products in Indonesia. "Our cooperation in the health sector

will make a significant contribution to ensuring quality healthcare services in both our countries. The agreement concluded today will facilitate greater access for the people of Indonesia to India's high-quality and affordable medicines," Modi said. The two countries also signed an Implementation Agreement on Health Workforce Collaboration, facilitating fellowship programmes for health professionals and advancing mobility of qualified healthcare workers.

Centre to refer 'Satluj' to inter-departmental committee under IT Rules after takedown



PTI

New Delhi, Jul 7: The Centre plans to refer the Diljit Dosanjh-starrer "Satluj" to an Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) constituted under the IT Rules 2021 for a detailed examination and future course of action, government sources said on Tuesday, two days after streaming platform ZEE5 was directed to take down the film over "security concerns". The film, which was earlier titled "Punjab '95" and details the life of activist Jaswant Singh Khaira in Punjab in the turbulent 1990s when the state was reeling under terrorism, was stuck with the censors for more than three years. Released uncut on ZEE5 under the new title of "Satluj" on July 3, the film was removed from the platform on July 5. Sources said the matter will now be examined by the IDC, a committee constituted under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, to consider grievances relating to content published by OTT platforms and digital news publishers and

make recommendations to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The committee comprises representatives from the ministries of Information and Broadcasting, Home Affairs, Electronics and Information Technology, Women and Child Development, External Affairs, Defence and Law and Justice, besides such other ministries and domain experts as the government may decide. The committee may recommend a range of measures, including warnings, an apology or disclaimer, reclassification or modification of content and, where warranted, deletion or blocking of content under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act. OTT content does not fall within the CBFC's certification regime and is regulated under Part III of the IT Rules, 2021. The rules prescribe a Code of Ethics requiring publishers to exercise due caution while publishing content affecting the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign countries or public order, among other grounds.

'Spiderman' helps commuters navigate waterlogged roads in Bhiwandi

PTI

Thane, Jul 7: The video of a man dressed as Spiderman helping people navigate potholes on waterlogged roads in Maharashtra's Bhiwandi has gone viral on social media, with netizens lauding his novel gesture. Heavy rains in Thane district on Monday caused waterlogging in Bhiwandi and adjoining areas. Waterlogging on the roads concealed potholes, resulting in many vehicles losing their balance. This was when Shadab Momin, a content creator, entered the scene. Dressed as Spiderman, he stepped forward to volunteer and help the people. The video shows Shadab carrying two children on his shoulders to help them cross the waterlogged roads safely. He is also seen helping vehicles move through the flooded roads. Momin said his intention was not only to help residents but also to draw attention to recurring civic issues. He said he wants to know why roads continue to get waterlogged after every spell of heavy rain despite crores of rupees being spent annually on road repairs and desilting of drains.

'Distinct brain regions involved in spontaneous, voluntary laughter'



PTI

New Delhi, Jul 7: Researchers have analysed reports of medical procedures in which the brains of awake people were electrically stimulated and found that distinct brain regions may be responsible for spontaneous and voluntary laughter. Two types of laughter have been identified in humans. "Think about the last time you were laughing and you could not stop," author Sophie Scott of University College London, London, UK, said. "Something set off of you and you are helpless with mirth," she said. That is the

spontaneous, involuntary laughter and can be uncontrollable, which can be sometimes associated with certain types of seizure disorders, mood disorders, Alzheimer's disease, and schizophrenia, she said. The second is the volitional kind, forming most of the laughter one encounters and timed "incredibly precisely", according to Scott. "If you look at people having a conversation, they will laugh together at the end of a sentence and then breathe together," she said. "When people are talking to each other, volitional laughter starts and stops really quickly," Scott said. The coordination points

to a degree of control that is lacking in spontaneous laughter, the author said. The researchers turned to reports of pre-surgical brain stimulation in epilepsy patients for discerning the brain circuits underlying the two distinct types of laughter. During brain stimulation, clinicians identify brain regions to be targeted for surgery by electrically stimulating parts of the brain while patients are awake -- the probes can often unintentionally evoke laughter, and patients are able to describe their feelings in real time, the team said. The reports were looked together with clinical and animal studies

and two distinct brain networks were identified. The spontaneous network consists of brain regions involved in motor control and emotional regulation, including the pregenual anterior cingulate cortex, nucleus accumbens, and the temporal pole. Stimulating the brain regions produces laughter accompanied by enhanced mood, euphoria, and mirth, the researchers said. The voluntary network comprises areas involved purely in motor control of laughing and smiling, such as the rolandic operculum, globus pallidus, and presupplementary motor area. A stimulation of the regions was found to evoke laughter without positive emotions. The team added that the spontaneous network is a more evolutionarily ancient pathway that arose in animal 'rough-and-tumble' play, with laughter-like vocalisations serving as a signal to prevent aggression and promote social bonding. However, the voluntary network was found to overlap with brain regions that produce speech, supporting the idea that it controls more purpose-driven, conversational laughter.

India's E-way bill generation surges 14.5 per cent in June

ANS

New Delhi, July 7: India's E-way bill generation under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in June this year registered a robust 14.5 per cent increase to 136.77 million from 119.46 million in the same month of the previous year, reflecting the rising level of economic activity in the country. On a

sequential basis, e-way bill generation increased 0.5 per cent from 136.08 million in the previous month. E-way bills are mandatory for the transportation of consignments valued at more than Rs 50,000 and are widely tracked as a high-frequency indicator of domestic trade activity, supply chain movement, and GST compliance.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir (UT) OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER SRINAGAR

Block A 3rd Floor, Old Secretariat, Srinagar Phone-Fax: 01942452499

AUCTION NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of all concerned that the auction of fruit crop at Government Leper Hospital, Behrar, Lal-bazar, Srinagar shall be held on Thursday 16-07-2026 at 11:30 AM in the hospital premises.

Terms and Conditions:

1. All interested bidders may visit the site for assessment of the fruit crop to be auctioned during any working day during office hours, up to the date of auction. 2. The auction will be conducted under the supervision of the Zonal Medical Officer, Zadibal, in the presence of a constituted auction committee. 3. The starting bid amount is Rs. 27,095/- (Rupees Twenty-Seven Thousand, and Ninety-Five only). 4. Interested bidders must deposit a refundable security amount of Rs. 3,000/- with the department prior to participating in the auction. 5. The successful bidder shall be required to deposit 100% of the final bid amount on the spot. 6. In case of a holiday or any other unforeseen reason, the auction shall be held on the next working day at the same time and venue. 7. The auction committee reserves the right to accept or reject any bid without assigning any reason thereof. 8. The successful bidder shall be responsible for the watch, ward, and security of the auctioned material.

DIPK-2973/26

Dated: 07/07/2026

Chief Medical Officer
Srinagar

Macron says France ready to help rebuild Syria



REUTERS

Damascus, Jul 7: France is ready to help rebuild Syria's economy and banking sector, French President Emmanuel Macron said on Tuesday as he pressed on with a visit to Damascus after two bombs exploded near a hotel where he had been holding meetings.

"We want to continue working on the restructuring of the banking sector," Macron said at a

news conference alongside Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa. France was working on helping the Syrian central bank, Macron added.

Speaking in a press conference alongside Macron, Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa said Tuesday that he wants France to be a primary partner for Damascus, which he said has regained its role as a transit hub after the Strait of Hormuz closure.

"After the Strait of

Hormuz crisis, the world realized the value of safe and stable corridors... here the importance of Syrian geography is highlighted, which today has regained its vital role as an indispensable link in the global corridors market, and we want France to be our primary partner in this path," Sharaa said in an economic forum with his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron and representatives from both countries.

Explosions heard in Damascus during Macron visit

REUTERS

Damascus, Jul 7: Bombs exploded near the hotel where Emmanuel Macron was staying in Syria on Tuesday, a security source said, but the French president did not hear the explosions, the Elysee said, and he met Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa soon afterwards.

Macron is said to be safe and unharmed and is continuing with his visit. Eighteen people were injured including four police, according to the Syrian state news agency. The blasts underscore the major security challenges in Syria, where Macron is the first head of state of a European Union country to visit since rebels led by Sharaa toppled Bashar al-Assad in 2024.

A witness heard explosions in the vicinity and saw smoke rising. Roads were sealed off and security measures were implemented, the security source said. The Elysee said the blasts were not audible from the presidential motorcade and a Reuters journalist with the press group accompanying Macron did not hear the blast or see any commotion during the French president's morning events.

El Nino is expected 'to break records': top expert

AFP

Paris, Jul 7: The current El Nino weather phenomenon is expected to break records for its overall strength, a top expert said Tuesday, raising concerns about droughts, floods and other extremes linked to the event.

Forecast models are pointing to an "extreme" event, said Tim Stockdale, an El Nino expert at the European Center for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), an intergovernmental organization.

Stockdale said this year's El Nino is unlike anything he had seen in more than three decades of tracking the phenomenon.

"I think it's absolutely true to say we've never had a forecast of an El Nino that was so strong and so consistent across (forecast) models," he said in a media briefing.

Stockdale said it would be "a very, very big surprise" if the event failed to be a record-breaker.

"I would expect it to break records, but no guarantees," he said.

El Nino warms surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, bringing worldwide changes in winds, pressure and rainfall patterns.

It typically takes place every two to seven years and lasts around nine to 12 months.

Combined with human-induced climate change, the last El Nino contributed to making 2023 the second-hottest year on record and 2024 the all-time high.

The weather phenomenon can lead to droughts in some parts of the world and flooding in others.

You're at start of very exciting journey: Suryakumar to Vaibhav



"A special word for Vaibhav- you are at the start of what promises to be a very exciting journey. Enjoy every moment and keep making the country proud,"

PTI

New Delhi, Jul 7: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is at the start of what promises to be a "very exciting" journey in international cricket, feels World Cup winning captain Suryakumar Yadav who also backed the cricketer's sensation to make India proud.

The 15-year-old from Bihar became the youngest to play for India when he made his debut in the second T20 against England at Old Trafford, surpassing the legendary Sachin Tendulkar who had made his debut as a 16-year-old.

"I am very happy for the team. I wish them nothing but the very best, always.

I know the boys are giving their all and they will always have my full support," Suryakumar wrote on social media.

"A special word for Vaibhav- you are at the start of what promises to be a very exciting journey. Enjoy every moment and keep making the country proud," he added.

Suryakumar was dropped from the Indian team after he led the side to a World Cup win at home earlier this year. Shreyas Iyer replaced him as the captain.

A prolonged lean patch in international cricket with the bat was one of the main reasons behind Suryakumar's axing.

Trump lands in Ankara for NATO summit

AFP/AP

Ankara, Jul 7: US President Donald Trump landed in Ankara on Tuesday for a NATO summit in the Turkish capital, an AFP correspondent said.

The US leader is due to hold talks with Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan at his sprawling presidential palace before joining an official leaders dinner ahead of the main session of the summit on Wednesday.

NATO will showcase a series of new military projects worth billions of dollars in an attempt to convince Trump that the allies are stepping up defense spending and converting investment into real firepower.

At an event dubbed the "big reveal," several leaders are due to announce new deals with defense companies, plenty of them in the United States. Trump has branded NATO a "paper tiger" that would cease to function without American arms and leadership.

"We will announce tens of billions in new contracts that will provide the crucial kit we need to deter and defend," NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte told reporters on the eve of the military alliance's two-day summit in Türkiye.

The defense industry splash comes a few weeks after Rutte tried to ease US concerns about military spending at NATO with a new pitch using a chart labeled the "The Trump Trillion" — showing \$1.2 trillion in



spending by European allies and Canada since 2017.

Far from being impressed, Trump appeared unmoved, saying he was still disappointed at some NATO allies' refusal to join the Iran war, which he had launched alongside Israel without consulting them.

"We don't need their money — we don't need anything," Trump said. "I just want loyalty."

NATO surveillance planes up for renewal Among the contracts to be unveiled, many of them drawn up and some signed long before the summit, is expected to be one to replace NATO's aging fleet of surveillance planes.

NATO as an organization does not own any weaponry — these are the property of the 32 member countries

— but it does have a fleet of AWACS aircraft that are about 50 years old and some newer surveillance drones.

Some of the other projects will notably be paid for with funds from a system of cheap loans for defense purposes set up by the European Union, comprising up to \$170 billion raised on capital markets.

"We need to ensure that we are translating our economic might into military capabilities, putting the cash to work from defense plans to drones, from money to missiles and interceptors," Rutte said.

The summit is being held in President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's sprawling palace compound in Ankara and Trump has suggested he would come bearing gifts for the Turkish leader.

Japan says Chinese ships expelled from near disputed islands

AFP

Tokyo, Jul 7: Japan said Tuesday it expelled two Chinese coast guard ships from waters near disputed islands also claimed by Beijing.

The Chinese ships were approaching a Japanese fishing vessel operating in the area, Japan's coast guard said.

The two countries have a long-running territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands — known as the Diaoyu in China — which lie between Taiwan and Japan's Okinawa.

They have figured for decades in bilateral tensions, which have worsened since Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi made comments about Taiwan in November that angered Beijing. Chinese



ships last entered waters Japan claims as its territory on June 10, but it is rare for vessels to approach Japanese fishing boats.

The coast guard "issued orders to leave ... successfully forcing the Chinese coast guard vessels to leave Japanese territorial waters by

approximately 9:20 am (0020 GMT) today," it said in a statement. In addition, the coast guard "was deployed around the Japanese fishing vessel to ensure its safety."

There were four Chinese ships sailing around the area before two of them entered Japanese waters, the statement

said. It added that the activities of the Chinese coast guard vessels constituted "a violation of international law."

"The Japan coast guard will continue to respond calmly and resolutely in accordance with international and domestic law, and will take every possible measure to ensure the security of our territorial waters," it said.

China routinely deploys its coast guard ships around the disputed islands, prompting dangerous maritime standoffs with its Japanese counterpart.

China has also sent boats to other disputed waters in the East China Sea, which is believed to hold possible deposits of energy reserves, despite repeated protests by Japan to stop.

A stoic Cristiano Ronaldo exits his final World Cup as Portugal falls 1-0 to Spain



AP

Arlington, Texas, Jul 7: Cristiano Ronaldo heard the cheers while walking off the pitch after his final World Cup match for Portugal. The stoic look on his face and his brief wave acknowledging the fans

showed this wasn't the desired outcome.

The sixth and final World Cup for the 41-year-old superstar ended with a 1-0 loss to border rival Spain in a Round of 16 game on Monday. Ronaldo was denied a goal in the first half when record-setting

goalkeeper Unai Simón made impressive leaping stop. Ronaldo, the only player to score in six World Cups in a row and the career leader in international goals with 146, took three shots against Spain.

Two of those were on target, including the one

on which Simón was still in midair when he reached back to grab the ball with both hands. Ronaldo got off a backward kick with his right foot after a header by teammate Joao Felix bounced off Simón's shoulder.

On the day before the round of 16 game, Ronaldo spoke to reporters for about 25 minutes and said he hoped it wouldn't be his last match and wanted "to enjoy what will be my last World Cup to the fullest."

The deepest Ronaldo ever made it in the World Cup was a semifinal run in 2006, his debut in the tournament.

Ronaldo's finale on soccer's biggest stage came eight years after he recorded a World Cup hat trick at age 33. That was in a 3-3 draw with Spain in a group stage opener considered one of the tournament's best matches, although both powers didn't reach the knockout stage.

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(HINDI) | U/A 16+
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COCKTAIL 2
(HINDI) | A
12:00 PM

MINIONS AND MONSTERS
English with English Subtitles
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BABY DO DIE DO
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