

PDP marks 26th Foundation Day, Mehbooba Mufti says Kashmiris want 'peace with dignity'



GY CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, JULY 28

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) on Monday marked its 26th Foundation Day with a commemorative event at Sher-e-Kashmir Park in Srinagar. The party president and former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti used the occasion to call for a revival of dialogue and reconciliation in Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that Kashmiris want "peace with dignity." In her address, Mehbooba Mufti invoked the legacy of her father and PDP founder, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, calling the day a tribute to his vision of "Aman ki Baat, Izzat ke Saath" (Peace with Dignity). She said the PDP was born at a time of political uncertainty and was never meant to be a disruptive force, but rather one that aimed to reduce the suffering of the people.

"Mufti Sahab always believed India should be strong, but also compassionate," she said. "He called India an elephant—majestic and powerful—but sadly, this elephant has now chained

its own feet, and that chain is Jammu and Kashmir." Mehbooba criticised what she termed the shrinking democratic space for Kashmiris, especially when it comes to discussions around India's foreign policy. "Whenever a Kashmiri talks of peace with Pakistan, they're told not to interfere. But how can you talk about India's foreign policy and exclude Jammu and Kashmir? We pay the price in blood," she said. "Our children died, our fathers died—what was the result? Zero."

The PDP chief also questioned India's development priorities, drawing comparisons with China. "Despite having a younger population, we lag behind China in every aspect. Even our own External Affairs Minister admits we can't match China. So why spend on missiles when there's no investment in education or healthcare?" she asked. She warned that despite its economic struggles, Pakistan remains central to India's security discourse. "If you say Kashmir is integral, then

let Kashmiris speak. You fight wars in our name, and yet our voices are silenced," she said. Referring to past prime ministers, Mehbooba said agency, while continuing his journey, he has now arrived in Kashmir, where he has already shared two videos that have quickly gone viral. Flooded with comments like "Love from Kashmir" and "Welcome to Paradise," Zaro's posts are being widely appreciated by netizens across the Valley.

Pertinently, Zaro is also known for voicing support for global movements such as Black Lives Matter and LGBT rights, strengthening his connection with diverse audiences. Meanwhile, his visit is being seen as a positive moment of global cultural exchange and digital spotlight on Kashmir's beauty. It is worth mentioning, Kashmir, often dubbed the "Paradise on Earth," is now witnessing a slow but steady revival of tourism footfall after the month earlier Pahalgam incident. With beautiful landscapes, snow-capped peaks and a rich cultural heritage, the region continues to attract influencers, filmmakers and travellers from across the world—

German influencer Younes Zaro receives "warm welcome in Kashmir"

GY CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, JULY 28

Popular German content creator and influencer Younes Zaro, known for his viral "how-to" videos and creative photography hacks, is currently in Kashmir, drawing overwhelming love and attention from local social media users. Zaro, who previously toured Indian cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Jaipur in August 2024, credited India for significantly boosting his global online reach.

As per the details obtained by the news agency, while continuing his journey, he has now arrived in Kashmir, where he has already shared two videos that have quickly gone viral. Flooded with comments like "Love from Kashmir" and "Welcome to Paradise," Zaro's posts are being widely appreciated by netizens across the Valley. Pertinently, Zaro is also known for voicing support for global movements such as Black Lives Matter and LGBT



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Dr. Kuldeep Kumar Gupta organize a UT-Level Kabaddi Referee Course from 28th to 31st July 2025 at Srinagar

GY CORRESPONDENT
JAMMU, JULY 28

Dr. Kuldeep Kumar Gupta, General Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir Amateur Kabaddi Association, under the guidance of Shri Anil Gupta, President of the Association, has taken significant responsibility for promoting the game of Kabaddi across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. He is also committed to enhancing the standard of officiating within the region.

Dr. Gupta, who also serves as the Technical Director of the Asian Kabaddi Federation, is set to organize a UT-Level Kabaddi Referee Course from 28th to 31st July 2025 at Srinagar, Kashmir. Around 100 officials are expected to participate in this course. The training sessions will be conducted by expert technical officials and most popular Mr. Rana Ranjeet Singh from Bihar and Ms. Dhanashree from Maharashtra, who will share their knowledge and experience to improve the skills of local referees.

The participating officials expressed their sincere gratitude to Dr. Kuldeep Kumar Gupta and Shri Anil Gupta for this commendable initiative. They acknowledged that the Referee Course will play a vital role in the professional development of Kabaddi officials in Jammu and Kashmir.

Director Horticulture Jammu tours District Poonch to review developmental activities

GY CORRESPONDENT
POONCH, JULY 28

Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Sayed undertook a two day comprehensive tour of District Poonch to assess the implementation of the horticultural schemes and review on-ground developmental activities aimed at strengthening the horticulture sector in the region. During the tour, Sayed was accompanied by Chief Horticulture Poonch Sanjeev Kumar and other senior officers & officials of the department. He visited multiple farmers' orchards across Poonch, assessing the impact of HADP and ICJIP portals, apply online and avail benefits of these schemes. He highlighted the solar fencing being introduced through ICJIP scheme for the areas affected by monkeys & other wild animals.

Further, Director inspected various Govt. fruit plant nurseries across the district viz. Ajote, Poonch, Ari, Mendhar & Surankote and appreciated the working of District Horticulture department in implementing various schemes and developmental works going on in district Poonch.



In his efforts to uplift the standard of officiating, Dr. Gupta has also approached the Director General, Youth Services and Sports, requesting the deputation of officials from the department to take part in the course. This initiative is expected to greatly benefit officiating not only at the UT level but also at the national level, including departmental tournaments, private competitions, and All India Police Meets held across various stages. The participating officials expressed their sincere gratitude to Dr. Kuldeep Kumar Gupta and Shri Anil Gupta for this commendable initiative. They acknowledged that the Referee Course will play a vital role in the professional development of Kabaddi officials in Jammu and Kashmir.

One history sheeteer booked under PSA by P/S Billawar and lodged at district jail Udhampur

GY CORRESPONDENT
KATHUA, JULY 28

In a major success against Anti-National element activities, Kathua Police has booked one person under PSA following multiple involvements in Anti-National activities. On the directions of District Magistrate Kathua a detention warrant vide Order No. PSA /172 of 2025 dated 24-07-2025 was issued against the accused Bittu Ram S/o Subash Chander R/o Gali Sadrota Tehsil Lohai Malhar, District Kathua.

Police party of Police Station Billawar led by SHO Billawar Insp zakeer Mushtaq under the guidance of SDPO Billawar Sh Neeraj Padayar and overall supervision of SSP Kathua Sh. Shobhit Saksena IPS arrested the



accused and executed the said warrant under section 8 (1) (A) of J&K Public Safety Act 1978 which was issued against the accused by District Magistrate Kathua after receiving the dossier from district police Kathua

against the accused. The said accused was habitual of indulging in criminal and Anti National activities. Finally today the warrant was executed and the accused person was sent to District Jail Udhampur.

Bus Stand Police Station, Jammu recovered stolen e-rickshaw, One notorious thief arrested

GY CORRESPONDENT
JAMMU, JULY 28

In a swift and commendable action, a team of bus stand Police Station led by SHO Inspector Vikas Dogra have successfully recovered a stolen rickshaw of value 3.50 lakhs, reflecting their prompt response and effective coordination in tackling crime. Complaint was lodged regarding theft of an e-rickshaw bearing registration number jk02dh/1548 from bus stand area. Acting promptly, a case was registered, a special police team led by SHO Inspector Vikas Dogra was constituted to trace the said vehicle through intensive and coordinated efforts, the team successfully traced the stolen e rickshaw from Durga nagar jammu area. The vehicle was



recovered in a safe condition, and the thief namely Ajay sharma s/o Ramandeve R/o Durga Nagar jammu was also arrested. This timely recovery underscores the dedication of the Jammu and Kashmir Police in safeguarding public property and maintaining

law and order in the region. Pertinent to mention here that in the recent past, Bus Stand Police also recovered a stolen Bus valuing 14 lakhs and one motorcycle valuing 1.15 lakhs, their by making the total value of vehicles recovered is 18.5 lakhs.

Craft in crisis: Srinagar's known walnut carver struggles to keep legacy alive

GY CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, JULY 28

Mohammad Rafiq Najar, a 65-year-old walnut wood carving artist from Naidibon, Rainawari in Srinagar, has spent over four decades chiselling life into wood. But today, the seasoned artisan says the intricate art that once earned him awards and recognition is no longer enough to earn him a dignified livelihood.

"I started learning this craft from my father, Noor Mohammad Najar, when I was young," Rafiq said while speaking to the news agency. "For the last 40 years, I have been dedicated to walnut wood carving, but the demand for this work is declining with every passing day."

Once considered a pride of Kashmiri heritage, walnut wood carving is struggling for survival. While Rafiq has received dozens of awards over the years—including the prestigious State Award in 2011—the recognition has not translated into a sustainable income.

"I had applied for the National Award after winning the State Award, but my application was rejected. Still, an artist never gives up," he said. Rafiq now takes on work wherever it is available—travelling from one house to another, carving handmade panels into doors, ceilings, and furniture, just to make ends meet. "It has become extremely difficult to support my family through this art. We are barely able to make ends



meet," he said. The government, he said, has not offered substantial support at the local level. "The Union Government is giving Rs 8,000 per month to awardee artists, which is some help, but it isn't enough to live with dignity. The state machinery needs to do more."

Najar expressed deep concern over the fading respect and recognition for handmade work. "Earlier, artists were treated with great respect. Today, our work is seen as outdated, and people don't want to pay for quality handcrafted products," he lamented. "Until and unless handmade work is valued and artists are respected, this craft cannot flourish." Despite facing hardships, Rafiq has trained dozens of young artisans over the years. But they, too, are struggling. "Even the youth I have trained are unable to earn a decent living. If renowned artists like us are in distress, how can we expect youth to

choose this path?" he asked. The artisan has urged the government to take meaningful steps to revive the dying art. "There must be structured schemes to attract youth, support marketing of handmade items, and ensure artisans can earn decent livelihoods. We need exhibitions, online platforms, and direct market linkages," he said. Rafiq's work has reached countries across the globe, and he has even travelled abroad, where he was welcomed with respect. Yet, at home, his talent struggles for survival. "Abroad, I was respected for my work. But here, even my basic needs remain unfulfilled," he said. "I am not happy doing this work anymore—not because I don't love the art, but because there's no future in it now. At the very least, an artist should be able to feed their family. That's not the case today," he said, his voice tinged with both sadness and resilience—

J&K Police arrests 04 drug peddlers in South Kashmir, Contraband substances recovered

GY CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, JULY 28

Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from society, J&K Police have arrested 04 drug peddler in Anantnag, Kulgam & Awantipora and recovered contraband substance from their possession. In Anantnag, a police team of Police Station Kokernag at a checkpoint established at H a n g a l g u n d, apprehended a drug peddler identified as Abid Husain Mir, son of Bashir Ahmad Mir, resident of Nanupura. During search, 10 kilograms and 300 grams of Bhang Patri and Bhang seeds were recovered from his possession and was subsequently arrested. Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 80/2025 under relevant sections of law have been registered at Police Station Kokernag and investigation has been initiated. Meanwhile

in Kulgam, a police party of Police Post Mirbazar at a checkpoint established at Hstlop Bypass near Lalipora crossing, intercepted a suspicious person. He has been identified as Salman Sadiq Dar son of Mohd Sadiq Dar resident of Nai Basti Anantnag. During search, officers were able to recover 1.4 kgs of cannabis leaves and 6.5 grams of charas like contraband substance from his possession. He was subsequently arrested and a case vide FIR No. 152/2025 under investigation has been registered at Police Station Qazigund and investigation has been initiated.

Moreover, in Awantipora, a police team of Police Station Pampora headed by SHO Police Station Pampora DySP(9) Shri Shrawan Singh at a checkpoint established at Gallander Pampora, intercepted a vehicle (load

carrier) bearing registration number K03B-2127 with two persons on board. They have been identified as Javed Ahmed Sheikh resident of Sangam & Muzafar Ahmad Shalla resident of Bijbihara. During search, officers were able to recover 1.265kg of Charas like substance from their possession. They have been arrested and a case vide FIR No. 80/2025 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Pampora and investigation has been initiated.

We urge the common masses that if you witness drug peddling or any other crime anywhere near you, feel free to contact nearest police establishment or dial 112. We reassure the community members that police will act tough against the criminals as per law.

J&K UT senior women chess championship-2025 concludes at government higher secondary school Chinta



GY CORRESPONDENT
BHADERWAH, JULY 28

Bhaderkashi Chess Association District Doda (BCADD) organized two days J&K UT Senior Women Chess Championship-2025 at Government Hr. Sec Secondary Chinta. The two days tournament was inaugurated by the Chief Guest Sh. Sabir Manhas Treasury Officer Bhaderwah on 27th. All the matches were played

under the supervision of Sh. Anil Kotwal President BCADD who was Chief Arbiter of this Championship. The Champion of the tournament is Miss Arushi Kotwal where as Avni Gupta is 1st runner up and Sunali Manhas is 2nd runner up. The Championship, Sh. Govind Shekhar Sharma, Principal Govt. Higher Secondary School Chinta was Chief guest and Sh. Sanjay

Sharma was special guest on the occasion of prize distribution function. The list of winners are as follows:
1. Arushi Kotwal
2. Avni Gupta
3. Sunali Manhas
4. Simriti
5. Ananayya
6. Tapasya Sharma
Four players will represent J&K UT in Senior Women National Chess Championship-2025.