

## Mercury Up Under Cloud Cover In J&K

Press Trust Of India

**Srinagar:** The famous ski resort of Gulmarg and some other areas in the higher reaches received fresh light snowfall but the minimum temperature improved by several degrees to provide relief from the intense cold conditions in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Saturday.

Gulmarg, in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, and few other areas in the upper reaches received fresh snowfall on Saturday morning, the officials said.

They said Shopian district in south Kashmir also experienced light snowfall owing to a very weak Western Disturbance.

The Meteorological Department had forecast a possibility of light rain/snow over isolated places in the higher reaches last night and Saturday early morning.

It said the weather is likely to improve on Saturday, and would stay generally dry till December 27 when there is a possibility of light snow over isolated places in the higher reaches.

The MeT office said overall, there would be no significant weather activity till December end.

Meanwhile, owing to a cloud cover, the mercury witnessed a remarkable rise on Friday night and settled above the freezing point at most places.

The summer capital of Srinagar recorded a low of 1.2 degrees Celsius on Friday night an increase of about four degrees from the previous night's minus 3.3 degrees Celsius, they said.

Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district recorded a minimum temperature of 0.2 degree Celsius, up over four degrees from the previous night's minus 4.8 degrees Celsius, they said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 1.5 degrees | [More on P6](#)

## POONCH CIVILIAN KILLINGS

# Govt Announces Compensation, Jobs To Kin



Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** Tension mounted in the border districts of Poonch and Rajouri after three men died allegedly during interrogation by the Army following the killing of five soldiers in a terrorist ambush, prompting the Jammu and Kashmir government to step in swiftly and announce compensation and jobs to the kin of these civilians.

Authorities suspended mobile Internet services in the

two districts as a precautionary measure to check rumour-mongering and prevent any law and order problem, and senior administrative and police officers have been camping in the area to monitor the situation.

In a post on X, the Information and PR department of Jammu and Kashmir said, "The death of three civilians was reported yesterday in Baffliaz of Poonch District. The medico legal formalities were conducted and legal action in

this matter has been initiated by the appropriate authority."

"Government has announced compensation for each of the deceased. Further Government has also announced compassionate appointments to the next of kin of each deceased," it stated.

The three civilians, aged between 27 and 42, were found dead on Friday. Their relatives and political leaders alleged that they died due to "custodial torture" as they | [More on P6](#)

## Poonch Terror Attack

### Security Forces In Hot Pursuit Of Terrorists

Press Trust Of India

**Poonch:** Mobile Internet services were suspended in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch and Rajouri districts early Saturday as security forces continued their massive search operation to track down terrorists behind the recent ambush on two Army vehicles that left five soldiers dead, officials said.

The suspension of the mobile Internet services in the twin border districts followed mysterious death of three persons after being allegedly picked up by the Army for questioning, and widespread resentment among people after the circulation of videos purportedly showing torture of the suspects.

While both Army and civil authorities are tight-lipped on the ground situation, official sources said mobile Internet services were suspended both in Poonch and Rajouri districts as a precautionary measure to check rumour-mongering and prevent miscreants from creating any law and order problem.

Senior Army, police and civil officers are monitoring the situation, the sources said, adding additional police and paramilitary personnel were deployed in sensitive pockets of the districts to maintain peace.

Three to four heavily-armed terrorists targeted an army gypsy and a truck at Dhatyar Morh between | [More on P6](#)

## Lal Singh Gets Regular Bail In PMLA Case



Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** A special court here on Saturday granted regular bail to former minister Lal Singh, arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case.

Singh, the chairman of the Dogra Swabhimani Sangathan Party (DSSP), was granted an interim bail by the court on November 23 after his arrest from a house in Jammu on November 7.

Singh is under investigation by the federal agency in connection with the case against an educational trust run by his wife and former legislator Kanta Andotra.

"...since petitioner has complied with the conditions of the bail, so no further proceedings are required in the present application."

"Therefore, interim bail granted to the petitioner is made absolute, of course all conditions drawn shall remain alive pending proceedings, if any, by way of complaint by the ED," principal sessions judge Sanjay Parihar said in a three-page order.

The money laundering case stems from an October 2021 charge sheet filed by the CBI in this case which alleged criminal connivance in the issuance of land between January 4 and January 7, 2011, without mentioning details in respect of violation of the ceiling limit of 100 standard kanals imposed under Section 14 of the Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian | [More on P6](#)

## Parties Stage Protests, Demand Fair Probe

**S**everal parties in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday staged protests and demanded an impartial probe into the deaths of three civilians after they were allegedly picked up by the Army for questioning. The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Saturday | [More on P6](#)

## Army Assures Full Support In Investigation

**T**he Army is committed to extending full support and cooperation in the conduct of investigation into the death of three civilians during an operation to track down terrorists behind the recent ambush on two Army vehicles that left five soldiers dead, the force said on Saturday. In a post on X, the | [More on P6](#)

## HC Seeks Go's Response On Constituting GSTAT In J&K

M Ahmad

**Srinagar:** The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has sought response from the Ministry of Finance, Government of India, for constituting the GST Appellate Tribunal in Jammu and Kashmir.

Hearing a suo-moto Public Interest Litigation, a division bench of Chief Justice N.Kotishwar Singh and Justice M.A. Chowdhary arraigned the Government of India through its Secretary, Ministry of Finance as respondent, "considering the fact that the presence and consent of the

officer will be necessary for constituting the GST Appellate Tribunal."

Accordingly on the asking of the court, T M Shamsi, DSGI, entered appearance and he accepted notice on behalf of the Secretary.

"He may file his response by or before the next date of hearing," the court said and ordered the listing of the PIL on March 11.

The court had earlier this year registered the PIL suo-moto, considering that the GST Appellate tribunal is not in place and such the litigants are facing considerable | [More on P6](#)

## Man Takes BUMS, Job On Fake Certificate; Charge Sheeted

Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** The Crime Branch of police on Saturday produced a charge sheet against a man for using a fake 12th class certificate to get admission to BUMS course and subsequently securing a job in the Jammu and Kashmir government.

The charge sheet was filed by Special Crime Wing of Crime Branch Srinagar before the court of Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Ganderbal in a case FIR No. 17/2023 registered against Shahid-ul-Islam of Prang, Kangan for his involvement

in commission of offences punishable under section 420,465,468,471,201 RPC, an official spokesperson said.

The accused, he said, had



used a fake/forged 10+2 certificate for obtaining admission in BUMS course and even had managed to get a government job, to which he was

not entitled.

Giving more details, he said, the case was registered on the basis of a complaint lodged by Dr. Zaffar Shaheen of Manigam, Ganderbal, alleging that Shahid-ul- has obtained admission in BUMS Course, session-2014 at Institute of Asian Medical Sciences, through the University of Kashmir, on the basis of a fake and forged 10+2 marks certificate.

"It was also alleged that the said accused has applied for issuance of a "Provisional Registration Certificate" to the Registrar, Board | [More on P6](#)

## DSEK Cracks Whip On Private Schools

Asks Private Institutions To Desist From Charging Admission Fee, Other Non-Notified Fees; Conducting Interviews And Screening At The Time Of Admission



Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** A day after the fee and fixation panel cautioned school administrators not to charge admission fee during the ongoing admission process in Jammu and Kashmir, the School Education Department Saturday warned private schools from conducting screening procedures or interviews of children besides charging capitation fee.

The department also said that the private recognized schools of Kashmir division shall desist from charging the admission fee and other non-notified fees.

In a circular issued on Saturday, Director of School Education Kashmir (DSEK said that it has come to the notice

of Directorate that some recognized private schools charge capitation fee at the time of admission and subject the students and their parents or guardians to screening test.

Section 13 of Right to Education Act 2009 clarifies that 'no school or person shall, while admitting a child, collect any capitation fee and subject the child or his or her parents or guardian to any screening procedure.'

The government further said that under the section 13 of Right to Education Act 2009 if any school or person, in contravention of the provisions of sub-section(1), "receives capitation fee, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to ten times the capitation fee charged or | [More on P6](#)

## Rise In Tourist Footfall In Kashmir Shows Improved Security: Minister

Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** Nearly two crore tourist footfall in Kashmir this year speak for the improved security situation in the Valley, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Saturday and asserted that security agencies are taking necessary measures to counter terrorist activities.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a function in Kathua district, he said it was not right to say that the security situation was deteriorating.



About the ambush by terrorists who targeted two Army vehicles, killing five soldiers and

injuring two, in Poonch district on Thursday, Singh said, "We cannot ignore these types of

incidents and the agencies concerned are taking necessary measures to counter these."

"About two crore tourists visited Kashmir this year... the number speaks for itself about the improved security situation in the Valley. The tourists visit any place only after making sure that it is safe for them and their families," the minister said.

On the Supreme Court verdict on December 11 upholding the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution, Singh said Prime Minister | [More on P6](#)

## 2 Tailors Die In Doda Army Camp Fire

Press Trust Of India

**Doda:** Two civilian workers were charred to death in a fire inside an Army camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district on Saturday, police said. Parshotam (55) of Samba and Som Raj (45) of Kathua were running a tailor shop in the Arnodia Gatt Army camp and were caught in the fire caused due to some snag in a kerosene heater, a police official said.

The fire was reported at around 2.30 am, the official said, adding that the charred bodies of both the workers were recovered from the scene and are being handed over to their next of kin for last rites.

## Infiltrator Killed Along IB In Jammu

**O**ne terrorist was killed as Army troops guarding the International Border (IB) scuttled an infiltration attempt here early Saturday, officials said. The operation happened when a group of four heavily-armed terrorists was noticed sneaking into this side from across the IB in the Khour sector of Akhnoor in the early hours, the officials said. Army's Jammu-based White Knight | [More on P6](#)

## JBC Operator Dies Of 'Asphyxiation'

**A**non-local resident reportedly died of asphyxiation in North Kashmir's Pattan town of Baramulla district. Local sources said that the body of a non-local resident was found at the rented house in Zangam area of Pattan town. He reportedly died of suffocation due to the use of a coal heater. The deceased has been identified as Suresh Kumar, | [More on P6](#)

## Car Linked To Terror Activities Seized

**P**olice on Saturday seized a car in connection with terror activities in North Kashmir's Bandipora district. The Maruti Swift (JK15B/0992) was seized by police in a case registered this year in Police Station Bandipora, under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), police said. "Bandipora Police seized a Maruti Swift bearing | [More on P6](#)

## Drug Smuggler Booked Under NDPS Act

**A**notorious drug smuggler has been booked under Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PIT NDPS) Act in central Kashmir's Budgam district, police said on Saturday. In a statement, a spokesperson said that the drug peddler identified as Ashfaq Rehman Khan of Sheikhpora Budgam has been booked under the | [More on P6](#)

## Woman Killed In Uri Road Accident

**A**woman was killed while eight others suffered injuries after a vehicle they were travelling in met with an accident in north Kashmir's Uri district on Saturday, officials said. The vehicle was on the way to the Kazinag Ziyarat when it skidded off the road at the Madiyan village of Kamalkote area, resulting in injuries to its occupants. After the accident, the injured persons | [More on P6](#)

## India Logs 752 Covid Cases, 4 Deaths

**I**ndia saw a single-day rise of 752 coronavirus infections, the highest since May 21, 2023, while the active cases have increased to 3,420, according to Union health ministry data updated on Saturday. The death toll was recorded at 5,33,332 with four new deaths -- two from Kerala, one each in Rajasthan and Karnataka -- reported in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at | [More on P6](#)

## S H O R T T A K E S





Tragic Blaze Shatters Dreams Of Marriage For Two Sisters In Solina

Affected Family Seeks Monetary Assistance

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A devastating pre-dawn fire in centre of Solina area has not only claimed a life but also shattered the dreams of marriage for two daughters...

es. While two houses suffered partial damage, the third was entirely destroyed. The official said the department received the distress call and immediately rushed to the spot.

Najar, 62, son of Abdul Karim Najar from Solina Bala, succumbed to the flames, while another person, Feroz Ahmad Najar, 60, is reportedly in stable condition, the official said.

es, said, "At around 4:30 in the morning, we heard cries about a fire. When we came down, we saw one house burning, which then engulfed another two houses."

daughters, along with his brother who also has four daughters, lamented, "Two of our daughters were set to be married next year, but all their dreams were consumed in the fire today, leaving us with nothing."

ODIC Srinagar Organizes Awareness Program At Bemina, Alamgari Bazar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Outreach and drop in centre (ODIC) Srinagar run by NESSWO project of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment organized two days awareness program on the menace of drug abuse at Hamdania Colony Bemina & Alamgari Bazar Srinagar in collaboration with District Social Welfare Department and Educational Trust of Kashmir, Srinagar on 22 and 23 December, 2023.

All Municipal Wards In Srinagar Covered Under VBSY

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' (VBSY) culminated on Saturday with great success in the Srinagar city. Over the course of nine days, the yatra traversed all Municipal wards of the city, including Ward No.33 (Humhama), Ward No.34 (Pantha Chowk), and Ward No.35

(Bagh-e-Mehtab) today, engaging citizens and promoting the government's flagship schemes. From December 15th, 2023, the yatra reached 35 locations, including prominent areas such as Nishat, Lal Chowk, Dal, Kralyar, Habakadal, Zainakadal, Khanayar, Makhdoom Sahib, Madin Sahib, Hawal, Lal Bazar, Hazratbal, Batpora, Zakura, Ahmad Nagar,

Soura, Nowshera, Safa Kadal, Palpora, Jamalatta, Islamyarbal, Karanagar, Qamarwari, Bemina, Parimpora, Lawaypora, Khomani Chowk, Batmaloo, Magarmal Bagh and Jawahar Nagar. The enthusiastic participation of a large number of people underscored the yatra's focus on achieving the widespread implementation of Centrally Spon-

sored Schemes (CSS). The primary objectives of the yatra was to aware and facilitate the access to all essential government schemes viz. Jal Jeevan Mission, Ayushman Bharat Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, Jan Dhan Yojana, PM Awas Yojana, PM PRANAM Yojana, Urea Subsidy Scheme and PM Svanidhi.

NORTHERN RAILWAY Expression of Interest. Chief Medical Supdt. Northern Railway, Firozpur for an on behalf of the President of India, invites expression of interest on the prescribed form for the following work- 1. Name of work: Expression of interest from ESI/ECHS/CGHS recognized/Others private hospital for empanelment for treatment of Railway patients of Divisional Hospital/Firozpur, Sub-Divisional Hospital Amritsar, Health Unit/Ludhiana, Jalandhar City & Cantt, Pathankot, Kolkapura, Jammu Tawi, Katra and Budgam (J&K) of Firozpur Division.

Office of the Chief Executive Officer SRINAGAR SMART CITY LTD. NOTICE INVITING Tender. E-N.I.T No. 34-SSCL of 12/2023-24, DT:- 18-12-2023. Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), invites bids, from interested reputed Coffee Ice Cream chains or their local franchisee for the following as detailed in table below: S. No. Name of the contract, Cost of Bid Document (INR), Bid Security Deposit (INR), Minimum Reserve Amount (INR per year), Contract Duration (Years).

TRAINS HANDLING PLAN FOR TRACK DOUBLING WORK AT DHABLAN STATION. In order to upgrade the existing infrastructure and enhance the safety standards, Northern Railway will undertake the Pre-Non-interlocking and Non-Interlocking work in connection with commissioning of doubling at Dhablan station on Rajpura-Bathinda section. CANCELLATION OF TRAIN: Train No. & Train Name, Date of Cancellation. SHORT TERMINATION/ORIGINATION OF TRAINS: Train No. & Train Name, Train to Short Terminate/ Originate at/from station, Train to be Partially cancelled between Stations, Date of Cancellation. REGULATION OF TRAINS: Train No. & Name, Regulation of Train (from originating station). DIVERSION OF TRAINS VIA AMBALA CANTT.-RAJPURA-SANEHWAL ROUTE AND SKIPPING OF STATIONS: Train No. & Train Name, Date from originating station, Stations Skipped. SKIPPING OF STOPPAGE AT DHABLAN AND PROVISION OF ALTERNATE STOPPAGE AT PATIALA STATION: Train No. & Train Name, Date from originating station. SKIPPING OF STOPPAGE AT DHABLAN AND PROVISION OF ALTERNATE STOPPAGE AT NABHA STATION: Train No. & Train Name, Date from originating station.

TRAFFIC POLICE: 9419993745, 01998-266686. AIRPORTS: SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311. RAILWAYS: SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259. HIGHWAY STATUS: Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open), Mughal Road - (Open), Srinagar-Leh - (Open).

PRAYERS: FAJR 6:03, ZUHR 12:28, ASR 3:49, Magrib 5:30, ISHA 6:55. HIJRI CALENDAR: 10 Jumada al-Sani 1445.

This Day In History: 563- The Byzantine church Hagia Sophia in Constantinople is dedicated for the second time after being destroyed by earthquakes. 640- John IV begins his reign as Catholic Pope. 1046- Pope Clement II, [Suitger] elected. 1294- Cardinal Benedetto Gaetani chosen as Pope Boniface VIII. 1476 - 400 Burgundian soldiers freeze to death during siege of Nancy. 1515 - Thomas Wolsey appointed Lord Chancellor of England. 1565- Compromise of the Nobles in Habsburg Netherlands closes against inquisition. 1568- Uprising of Moriscos in Granada. 1593 - Storm hits Texel: 40 ships hit, 500 killed. 1651- Jan van Riebeeck departs for Cape of Good Hope to found 1st permanent European settlement. 1715 - Swedish troops occupy Norway. 1798 - Russia & Britain sign Second anti-French Coalition. 1814 - Treaty of Ghent signed, ending the War of 1812 between the United States, the United Kingdom and their allies. 1815- Karol Kurpi ski's melodramatic opera "The Reward, or the Revival of the Polish Kingdom" premieres at the Warsaw Opera. 1818- Christmas carol "Silent Night" composed by Franz Xaver Gruber is first sung at St Nicholas parish church in Oberndorf, Austria. 1832- 1st US Negro hospital founded by whites chartered, Savannah, Georgia. 1832 - HMS Beagle anchors in Wigwam Bay at Cape Receiver. 1849- First great fire of early San Francisco starts east side of the Plaza, first of great seven fires in 2 years. 1851- Fire devastates US Library of Congress in Washington, destroys 35,000 volumes. 1853- William Henry Fry's "Santa Claus: Christmas Symphony" premiere performance by conductor Louis Antoine Jullien's orchestra at Metropolitan Hall, NYC [1]. 1860- Actor Joseph Jefferson's dramatization of "Rip Van Winkle" premieres in NYC. 1864 - Battle of Gordonsville, Virginia. 1877 - Thomas Edison files a patents for the phonograph. 1884 - Austria-Hungary admits King Leopold II's Congo Free State. 1889 - Daniel Stover & William Hance patent bicycle with back pedal brake. 1900 -Foreign powers present the Chinese Empire with their list of 'irrevocable conditions' before their nations will withdraw troops from China. 1914 - German plane drops bombs on Dover, England. 1924 - Albania becomes a republic (ex-premier Ahmed Zogoe's coup). 1936 - 1st radioactive isotope medicine administered in Berkeley, California. 1939 - World War II: Pope Pius XII makes a Christmas Eve appeal for peace. 1942 - Red army occupies German airports at Tsjinskaja & Morozowsk. 1943 - US President FDR appoints General Eisenhower Supreme Commander of the Allied forces. 1946 - French Fourth Republic is founded. 1948 - Greek government disbands due to state of war, press censorship. 1951 - United Kingdom of Libya gains independence from Italy via UN. 1954 - Laos gains its independence. 1962 - USSR performs nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya USSR. 1963 - Greek & Turks riot in Cyprus. 1966 - Soviet spacecraft Luna 13 lands on Moon. 1966 - USAF C144 military charter aircraft crashes near Binh Thai, Vietnam, killing 129. 1967 - China performs nuclear test at Lop Nor, PRC. 1979 - 1st Ariane rocket launched 1986 Iran offensive against Iraqi islands of Shatt al-Arab.

# The Perils Of Postage

## A Look At Kashmir's Inept Postal System

As I embarked upon my journey from the serene landscape of Dehradun to the breathtaking beauty of Kashmir. I was reunited with my dear family. The night was lively, and everyone was exuberant with joy. It was then that my mother, with a tone of gratitude, shared how fortunate we are to have the convenience of mobile phones, a luxury that was not always available in the past. In contrast, she recounted the days of yore when my father would send letters from the far-off city of Calcutta.

My late grandfather (May Almighty Allah Elevate his ranks in Jannah) would read those letters aloud, and the family would bask in the warmth of his love evoking a sense of warmth and nostalgia. The postal service in India has a long history and plays an important role in connecting people across the country. With the advent of digital communication, the demand for traditional postal services has decreased in recent years but not to that extent. As I contemplated the bygone era's postal services, I couldn't help but marvel at their impeccable efficiency despite being confined to bicycles as their primary mode of transportation.

One cannot help but wonder how packages and vital missives, teeming with emotions, were delivered to our doorsteps with unprecedented timeliness – all without the aid of intermediaries or technological innovations. Were the letters that we cherished so much really dispatched via post offices? The art of postal services has been a quintessential element of our lives, an enduring legacy that has withstood the test of time. Reflecting on the past, I couldn't help but ponder over the erratic nature of postal services back in the day.

Despite having good transport facilities and with the advent of technology I wondered how packages and important documents often got delayed or failed to reach our doorsteps. In today's world, where the pace of life is frenetic, and time is of the essence, the importance of postal services has only grown manifold, with the advent of lightning-fast speed post services.

### Addressing the Fault Lines

Alas, the perennial question arises – do our treasured belongings truly reach us on time? Regrettably, it appears not. The question now lingers, where is the system faltering? Why do we continue to encounter such issues? Are the postmen going the extra mile to ensure our parcels are delivered with utmost care and diligence?

It seemed almost like a work of fiction, with parcels and letters stuck for months, wandering aimlessly without any direction, ultimately leading to nowhere. The inefficacy of Kashmir's postal service leaves us questioning the timely delivery of our coveted possessions and essential documents. Despite the advancements in transportation and technology, why do we still hesitate to entrust our parcels to the postal service, opting instead for alternative means of delivery?

Although other means of delivery may seem more reliable, there is an underlying unease when it comes to entrusting our possessions to the speed postal service. Something seems amiss, prompting a plethora of questions to arise. What is the reason for this doubt, and why does it persist despite the technological advancements of our time?

My reliance on online bookstores for my literary needs had me experimenting with different delivery services. While private delivery proved



to be prompt and dependable, the speed post service failed to live up to its promise of tracking my articles. The frustration peaked when my parcels languished for days at the nearby post office, necessitating a personal visit to retrieve them. The efficacy of the speed post service was cast into doubt, raising questions about its capacity to deliver parcels in a timely and efficient manner.

### What Can be done to Protect our Precious Parcels?

Are your precious belongings safe with the Indian postal service? Think again. Unlike private delivery services, the Indian postal service doesn't offer compensation for lost or damaged packages. Your only recourse? Filing an F.I.R, which is hardly worth the trouble. It's time to question the quality of service provided by the Indian postal service. How can you trust them with your valuable packages?

Urgent changes to their policies and laws are necessary to ensure better protection for their customers' belongings. Don't settle for sub-par service, demand better! As a matter of fact, I, too, have had an unsettling encounter with a postman, further fueling my skepticism towards the postal service and left an indelible mark on my perspective. The postman, who earns a meager salary, enlightened me about the challenges of serving a vast area encompassing numerous villages and towns. The enormity of the task becomes apparent when considering the geographical expanse, making it an arduous task for them to dispatch articles in a timely manner. The onus of responsibility falls on the people too, who sometimes neglect to attend to phone calls or furnish accurate delivery details. The practice of the postman what grates on me the most is the practice of dispatching articles to shops, with the intended recipient sometimes notified or may not be aware to collect their belongings from that location. This mode of delivery can take several days and poses a risk of the recipient being unaware of the package's arrival.

The person designated to inform the recipient often falters in their duty, causing perplexity and delay. The delivery of possessions to one's doorstep is a fundamental expectation from postmen. However, in Kashmir, this is not always

the case. To revitalize the postal service in India, the government has been implementing various initiatives, such as modernizing infrastructure, introducing new services, and improving operational efficiency. The Shikara postal service in Kashmir is a unique initiative that aims to provide postal services to people living in remote and inaccessible areas using traditional Kashmiri boats. While such initiatives are commendable, it is important to ensure that they are sustainable and efficient in the long run. India Post, despite being a public postal and delivery service, could benefit from emulating the practices of private courier companies by keeping their customers informed through timely delivery notifications and regular updates on their belongings' whereabouts. Ensuring that consignment numbers are readily accessible on their website without any impediments, coupled with prompt responses to inquiries and reports of misplaced possessions, is essential for establishing trust in their services.

However, until the laws governing their operations are revised, it seems unlikely that India Post can offer any guarantees for the safekeeping of our belongings. Furthermore, with the need for swift delivery services extending to mobile phones in today's fast-paced world, India Post's speed post services should consider offering this service as well. The government can explore public-private partnerships to improve the quality of postal services. By partnering with private companies, the government can leverage their expertise and resources to improve the overall quality and efficiency of postal services.

Finally, it is important to address any bottlenecks or inefficiencies in the postal service operations, whether it be through better training and incentives for postal workers, or by improving the coordination between different departments and stakeholders involved in the postal service.

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer*  
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**The Shikara postal service in Kashmir is a unique initiative that aims to provide postal services to people living in remote and inaccessible areas using traditional Kashmiri boats. While such initiatives are commendable, it is important to ensure that they are sustainable and efficient in the long run**

I am compelled to write this essay in a deeply subjective tone and tenor. Only because an honourable minister chose to share her "personal views" as a "menstruating woman", I'm responding to the said views as another "menstruating woman".

I also write as a menstruating woman who hasn't taken a single day off work because of menstruation in my 15 years of work life. I should get an award for not seeking a "paid period leave". My periods are anything but pleasant. Actually, they are deadly. Yet, I have run a half-marathon on the first morning of my period. I have travelled to villages, hiked the mountains, trekked in forests, cycled across valleys, and used makeshift sanitary items when surprised by a period. I have a clinical diagnosis of obsessive hygiene - my domestic fights are only about cleanliness. I am constantly worrying whether I'm subjecting people around to my bodily odours: mouth, armpits, feet, or period. When I'm menstruating, my hygiene-related anxiety peaks.

Before moving further, however, let's get certain things out of the way.

It's not a matter of hygiene. It's a serious health concern. Yes, the oft-joked-about and chronically meme-fied period. When we use words like hygiene, the onus is conveniently shifted to the suffering individual. Somehow, it is the woman who is responsible for, firstly, not dealing with periods cleanly and bravely, and then feeling entitled enough to demand a paid leave for it. It is a part of a woman's existence, after all.

By that argument, sexual harassment is a part of a woman's existence, too. Shall we shut our eyes to it in the name of equality and say that

## Instead Of Seeking Period Leave, Women Should Remove Their Uteruses

Nishtha Gautam

it's not a "handicap"?

Should women get their uteruses removed before joining the workforce? You want productivity? Here's productivity. Ironically, it's the same set of people that demonises women for choosing to not have children. Productivity without reproduction doesn't bring women laurels. Basically, women need to be producing and raising children quietly. Not a squeak about an enabling environment. Because, hey, it's not a disability! Work like you don't have children, be a mother like you don't have work. Ask for nothing for it will upend the equity cart. And, remember, it's not a handicap!

We live in a country where menstrual health is in the pits. The informal sector is like an active killing field for women with little to no access to toilets, clean water, or even privacy to handle menstrual products. The corporate world, on the other hand, with its glitzy feminist campaigns, kills women metaphorically. By punishing them for being women. Women continue to be subtly penalised for seeking maternity leave, childcare leave, safe commute to work, safe working environments, or mechanisms to deal with sexual harassment.

Before anyone quotes the latest women in workforce statistics to gloss over the issue of equity, here's the truth.

Yes, as the periodic labour force surveys show, female participation in the labour force has gone up from 36.9 per cent in 2017-18 to 42.4 per cent in 2022-23. But the numbers are made up largely of rural women engaged in either self-employment enterprises (family work, agriculture et al) or NREGA work. Many women are finding the corporate world biased against them and are, rightly, choosing to quit.

Why bear the biological burden of maternity and be called a freeloader on top of it? It is not women's responsibility alone to keep the human race alive, even after being sniggered at and ridiculed for the process involved. Because reproduction is only seen as a "part of a woman's existence", men can easily go about being unaffected by it, unless they can somehow profit from it.

The patriarchal way of looking at reproduction is the reason why endometriosis or dysmenorrhoea, cervical cancer, hormonal imbalance et al are not seen as serious health concerns de-

spite impeding women's everyday functioning in a significant manner. Postpartum depression is still something of a legend. Why go to boring science when something can be easily explained by epithets like "moody", "weak", or "bad mother"? In many cases, it's the women who are the harshest in their condemnation of such "weak" women. Because in the arena of patriarchy, they must play their best to retain their tiny corner of influence.

When I quit my job, my leave encashment amount was higher than my monthly salary. Forget about period leaves, I didn't even take marriage leave and decided to marry during a long weekend in December. I've braved my worst period days, stared blankly at the computer screen, and ordered large helpings of desserts at my desk in the office. Not because my employers were particularly averse to the idea of paid leave. (In fact, I once turned up very late to the office and told my boss that I overslept. I did not get penalised for it.) I continued to work under physical and mental distress because our general work culture punishes any kind of weakness. We women have to always be on top of everything, whether our bodies and minds are up to it or not.

Things spoken from a pulpit, religious or secular, have far-reaching consequences. When we argue against paid menstrual leave, we make it even more difficult for women to find a stable footing in the workforce. And when menstruating women do it, it is even worse.

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by NDTV.com*

# Kashmir-Central Asia Connect

## Since Medieval Times

S.Sarwar Malik

Our active connections with Central Asia and other countries date back to medieval times. This much is expected to be widely known. Remnants of Inns (Sarais), dotting the Silk route; some see-able even in Srinagar, and some in Ladakh of yesteryears, testify that some kind of exchange was taking place on all such routes. Other significant proofs, too, exist here in (our) Kashmir & all together they speak about travelers, traders and transactions of different types- including that of ideas, philosophies etc; with positive face or of negative nature.

Pondering a little more leads us to question: If silkworm seeds and silken cloth could come and go from China and Buddhist teachers could come & go from Kashmir- at least after Councils were held here, why shouldn't it be safe to say that, surely, other transactions too must have happened.

Doesn't History tell us that in the sunset period of B.C Jalaka- the son of Indian Emperor Ashoka (273-236 BC), ruled Kashmir & other areas? Greek ruler Meander too ruled over Kashmir and Punjab-around 150 BC. Coins in our Museum corroborate it.

It is also said that Kashmir had the honour of being named 'The Seat of Learning' in, what historians call, 'Hindu'-Period. See the date when Raj-Tarang-ni and 'Antiquities of Ladakh' have been written.

Researchers acknowledge that Kashmiri painters have contributed a lot to the listed 'World Heritage Site' -The Great Buddhist Monastery of ALCHI, Ladakh (958-1055 AD). Now think, dear reader: Were our artistic skills and craftsmanship restricted to painting only? Nay it can't be so. Only thing is that not much research has been done in the other areas of strength that Kashmiris had in the Pre- medieval period. Information about the arrival of many Central Asian Islamic scholars or traders is comparatively more, partly due to proximity of a number of arenas. Do you agree that we lag behind in giving our own people the place they deserve? How insensitive of us that we don't acknowledge properly the

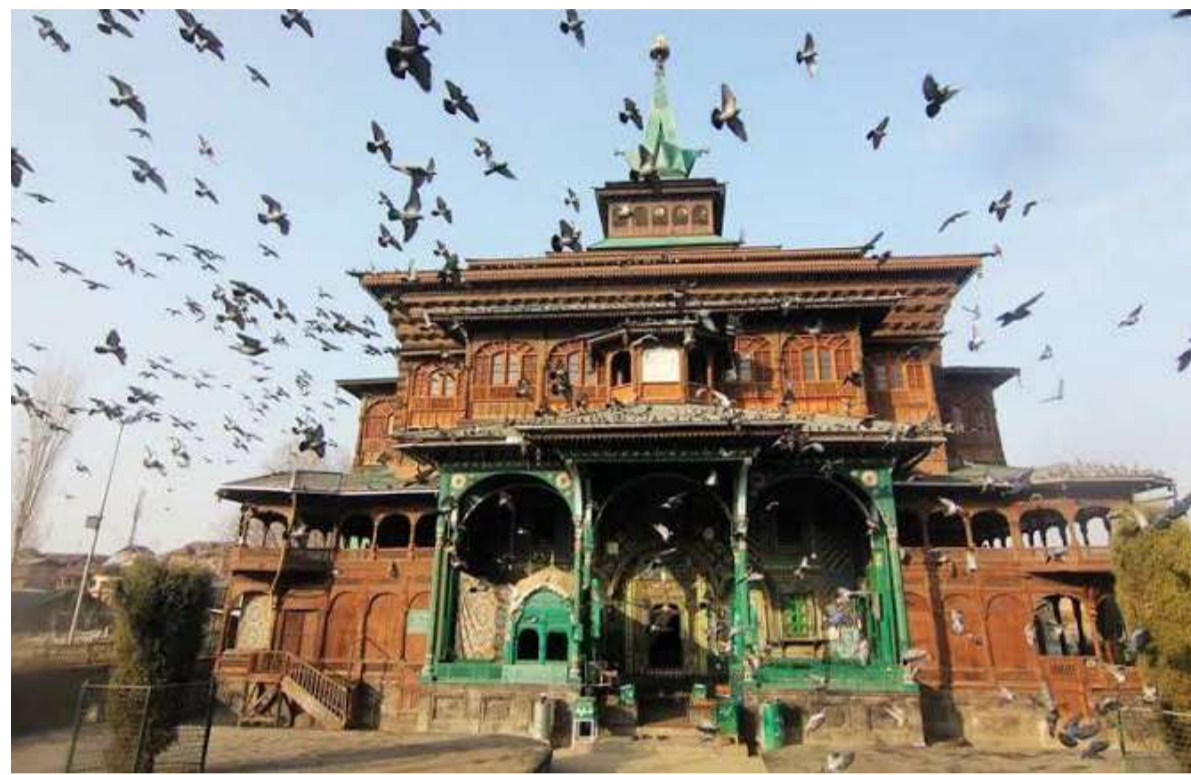
status of our achievers; not to speak of fearless dissemination.

Travelers have played a role, right from the day one of evolution/ creation, and give & take is universal two way traffic. Transactions happen from both sides. Eliot's Wasteland flashes on my mind's screen!

We Kashmiris have to express appropriate gratitude to all who came with positive things, if we have really evolved, but why should we play low key in case of indigenous. Both benefit by coming in contact for positive transactions, as 'give & take' is in fact a universal phenomenon.

In fact, no language was born in isolation. All imbibed from and exuded to other languages- changed shape, script, absorbed new words, discarded much unused. They adapted to the time and need of the hour. Same is true about literature- of all genres, the shape they took or better say continue taking, in different periods of human history. Likewise is the case with the belief system of inhabitants. Why not see Kashmir in this Universal frame? Actually transactions have commenced first at individual level and then moved on to the collective level, but learning from the past -out of which we have evolved & are benefiting from the-thus-accumulated-'inheritance' is how we grow up.

Hence we individuals, in reality, own very little, on which we can boast of proprietary rights. How superbly the Persian couplet: "Mun gilay naacheez boodam...." drives home this fact. Now back to our old connections with Central Asia. It was around 1370 AD when Timur had eye on Iran; and even prior to 1374-1389 AD - the period Bamzai & Parimo call 'Black Death Plague'. It is said many people from Central Asia traveled to & fro Kashmir- including traders and those called refugees. Proselytizers came too and those among them, who succeeded in obtaining patronage of the Sultans of Kashmir; possibly in Kishtwar as well, stayed here for longer periods. Widely known as Syed Ali Hamadani (1312-1384) -whom we lovingly call Shah e Hamadaan. But there are many other names too, if we care to study things, analytically and critically; and above



**DO YOU AGREE THAT WE LAG BEHIND IN GIVING OUR OWN PEOPLE THE PLACE THEY DESERVE? How insensitive of us that we don't acknowledge properly the status of our achievers; not to speak of fearless dissemination**

all Sheikh Noor u Din Reshi/ Wali (1377-1439); who was destined to appear on Kashmir's horizon, wasn't the first Muslim of Kashmir (- wasn't his grandfather named Sheikh Salahudin of kishtwar?... and hadn't other Muslim seminaries visited Kashmir before?).

No doubt Syed Ali Hamadani of Kubravi Silsila-who visited Srinagar thrice in 14th century AD, is credited with the successful establishment of the Sofi tareeqa & teachings of his first spiritual guide Sheikh Mazdaqani and his first teacher Syed Alludin Hamdani. He first impacted mainly the urban class of Kashmir with his efforts, teachings, books, and proselytizing techniques like zikr and the

material available in Awarad e Fatiha ('and his other sixty seven books'; the earlier mentioned, Awarad, is recited aloud in many shrines and mosques till date). Besides Shah e Hamadaan due credit has to be given to all those who had come earlier like Bulbul Shah, Syed Hassan Simmani & others [ As handy information let me add Sultan Shahab ud din's time was 1354-73 AD and that of Sultan Qutb ud din's; 1373-89 & Sultan Sikender's;1389-1413 [- it was the latter mentioned who attempted to introduce Sharia law here, results whereof are controversial ] ). How can we forget Balkhi, Qazi, Bahaqi, Syed Kamil etc who worked in many urban as well as

rural places; not to forget the period before our great local personality; Alamdaar-e-Kashmir, Sheikh Noor u Din, was even born.

We have it that Alamdaar's parents were disciples of a central Asian saint. Sizable activity was going on in Kishtwar and other areas. Were these, Kashmir's - the first ones- who could understand Persian- that too poetic form, and Arabic, ] or their Previous generation had obtained mastery over these foreign languages that too with such a great understanding that their taught, Noor u Din was able to leave for us the high quality kalaam-e-Sheikh ul Aalam that reveals his deep knowledge and understanding of Islam, his mastery over the kind

of genre he chose . Great is the impact he had made on Kashmiris of that time; acknowledged even today. Shah e Hamadaan came later on the scene and by the time of his arrival, Noor Din Rishi's name and fame was well established among locals- of course, mostly rural.

A verse of Shah e Hamdaan: Mara Daraan e Rozgaar Kasay Na Shinakht \* and S.M Kamal u din Hakim writing (-in 1984) that Shah e Hamdaan was himself master of sozan kari ( Needle work embroidery) comes to my mind whereby we may conclude that in early stage of his life he was dealing with Art & Craft business and here in Kashmir he gave the local cottage type artisanship a great fillip & shaped our Industry/ Karkhaanas .

It was the time of budding Economy, Arts & Craft Trade (- that caught the attention of westerners luckily), & upliftment thereby because...political uncertainties had to a great extent settled. So the timely arrival of Shah e Hamdaan gave a shot in the arm. We owe debt to all visitors.

More Next time, Dear Reader.  
\* = My calling couldn't give me the identity-that proselytization and my books bequeathed me.

\*\* = In GK dated 16 Sept 2009 in the article about ALCHI GOMPHA of Ladakh I had given the extract out of my book ' JEWEL IN THE LOTUS-Ladakh ', that contained following words that support my contention of my Previous Write-up ' Kashmir Central Asia Connect- part I:

"Alchi Choskor captivated me most. 69 Kms from Leh , Alchi- the treasure house of wall paintings and images, is said to have five lac miniature paintings adorning the walls of this five- chambered monastery and after Ajanta these constitute biggest collection of Buddhist frescos in India. Most of the paintings have been done by a group of 32 Kashmiri artists- headed by one Bhidaka, the image maker, in 10th and 11th century AD; executed in accordance with the Indian (not Tibetan) traditions."

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer*

# Behind Reels, Kashmir's Winter is Harsh and We're Responsible

Najam Sakib

ON the first of this month, Kashmir Observer ran an editorial concerning the grim record of the authorities regarding providing sufficient electricity during the winter months. It hoped that this time authorities would "surprise" people with timely readiness to tackle the "challenges". However, these always have turned out to be false hopes.

It is an appalling situation that there are always fingers raised at the authorities regarding the preparedness in Kashmir. And every time, the pleas, requests, and anger fall to dumb ears. The authorities' attitude has always been to see things through, not to prepare and find a lasting solution. Unfortunately, that is not only confined to providing sufficient electricity but clearing off snow from roads, ensuring sufficient LPG and food supplies, and so on. As soon as the winter is over, authorities take a sigh of relief and then seem to go into a deep slumber only to wake up when the winter is knocking at the door. This escapism certainly has not helped in any way.

The ideas discussed above invoke multiple questions simultaneously. Why, in the first place, are winters harsh? Also, is it because they inherently are harsh, or is it because we have been conditioned to think like that? More importantly, is it because we have yet to systemise the preparedness and logistics that would make winter feel as easy as any other season?

Kashmir is prone to witness snowfall from early November to the first half of March. Winter's core spans from the 20th of December to the 30th of January. It is called Chillai Kalan and is extremely chilly during this time. Temperature dips down to as extreme as -8 degrees Celsius



in the capital Srinagar during these days. Keeping in mind the topography of Kashmir, other places tend to be colder than Srinagar. Heavy snowfall sometimes cuts off the valley from the rest of the world. Therefore, it makes it challenging to see through the winter months. There are always apprehensions about the disruption in the normal functioning of institutions and the perturbation of everyday life. This causes concern among the people regarding essential supplies that cannot enter the valley. It shows how much things

can get uglier if Kashmir valley remains isolated for around a week if an unexpected snowfall happens. For many years now, climate change has been a concern which has exponentially increased the chances of witnessing surprising trends. Is Kashmir ready to face that challenge?

Winters are not exclusive to Kashmir. More than half of the world's population witnesses snowfall. Our very own Ladakh is an example where winter is harsher due to its distinct geography with prolonged freezing temperatures for geograph-

ical and demographic reasons. Similarly, winters are probably more brutal compared to Kashmir in North America, Europe, and North Asian territories. However, Kashmiris tend to believe that winter is written only in their fate. We only prepare individually to face winter. Our only job seems to start collecting charcoal, Kangris, and other things. It is absolutely fine to do that. But that is all we think of. We have been conditioned to think like that. Even in the third decade of the twenty-first century, we do not have substantial

collective efforts on the ground to tackle the challenges we face during winter. As the editorial mentioned at the beginning suggests, we do not have enough electricity to keep our spaces warm and our homes out of the darkness. It is ironic because most of the electricity produced in Kashmir lights up most of the North Indian states instead.

The concerned power corridors should be serious about bringing a change. It would not only make things less challenging but would make our time more productive.

For almost four months, we sit and do nothing productive, and we only wait to see winter pass away. As mentioned before, winters with snowfalls are almost everywhere in the world, but they are far ahead of us. It is because they do not waste time to see winters pass but instead make winters easy and suitable to work. Any argument that there is no money to bring such change is just living in a fool's paradise. We have enough money to get a tangible change along the same lines. We have young human resources who want to work instead of staying inside homes. We will accept any change on the ground, however little that may be. Let us start by making resources available to help continue economic activities in winter. Electricity is one. Technically, it will push other sectors to help boost the local economy and will not bring unemployment down that skyrockets during winter months.

Therefore, it is evident that there is not a tinge of doubt about winters putting up a challenge, but to perceive it as inherently harsh may not be fair. However, human callousness is the primary factor that worsens things. Kashmiris accept when nature feels slow and when life seems to slow down. How are we, in this day and age, using medieval answers to a challenging winter in a fast-paced world? Adapting to preparedness will also better our behaviours, and our psyches will accept the change if and when resources and logistics are available. Our overtly sedentary lifestyle needs to go. We are hard-working people; only the intent is missing at the top.

However, there is a section of people who apparently enjoy winters. Their day starts with capturing the winter landscapes and night passes by uploading reels of the same on Instagram.

## LG Pays Tributes To Swami Shradhanand On His Punyatithi

### Addresses Commemorative Event Organized By Arya Samaj, Matunga At Mumbai

Observer News Service

Mumbai: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday paid tributes to the Swami Shradhanand on his Punyatithi. Addressing a commemorative event organized by Arya Samaj, Matunga at Mumbai, the Lt Governor remembered the remarkable contributions of Swami Shradhanand in freedom struggle, social equality & justice and uniting all sections of society for nation building.

"Swami Shradhanandji was dedicated to the ideals of peace, right conduct, self-reliance and strengthened the bonds of brotherhood in the society. His vision of new and developed India is being realised by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor highlighted the lifelong campaigns of Swami Shradhanand to promote Vedic values and to empower women through education. He called upon the people, especially the youth to rededicate themselves to the ideals of Swami Shradhanand and work for the welfare of the society and the nation. The Lt Governor also interacted with the people from Jammu Kashmir living in Mumbai who were special invitees on the occasion.

## Chief Secretary Highlights Strategic Initiatives For Higher Education

### Pitches For Securing 'A And Above Grade' For All District Colleges Under NAAC Accreditation

Observer News Service

Jammu: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Saturday while discussing important issues pertaining to Higher Education Department stated that it is in the interest of times that in order to have a quality higher education National Assessment & Accreditation Council (NAAC) evaluation be got done of all degree colleges of the UT at an earliest so as to have a peep into the quality of education provided there.

He made these remarks while chairing a meeting to take stock of the functioning of the higher education institutions of the UT.

The meeting besides Principal Secretary, Higher Education Department was attended by Director, Colleges and other senior officers of the department.

While speaking in this meeting the Chief Secretary observed that the quality of higher education institutions has a direct bearing on the potential of human resource of that area. He maintained that the right kind of grooming and capacity building of youth in such institutions can safeguard their



future for better.

He stressed on the necessity of securing 'A and above grade' for at least each district college that had been established here decades before. He made out that with little more interventions as per the NAAC guidelines these colleges are poised to attain this grade with ease.

Dulloo also enjoined upon to make skilling part of the courses by ensuring that tie up with industries/paramedical colleges/other skill institutes like Shri Vishwakarma Skill University, Haryana is done and youth of J&K

is given opportunity to hone their skills, which will have a great impact on boosting the employment opportunities across the UT. He made out that the partnership with industry by the Department in producing the qualified manpower fit for addressing its requirements be undertaken on priority wherein tours to industries be undertaken along with arranging the lectures by industry people.

Chief Secretary also enquired about the status of Institutions Innovation Councils (IICs) in UT of J&K wherein it was appraised

that around 20 colleges have been identified for the same. A work done report in this aspect was sought with a specific focus on kickstarting innovation and entrepreneurship-related activities promptly for the youth of J&K.

It was also stressed upon that department shall prioritize the delivery of high-quality online courses to maximize student enrolment on the portal. This initiative shall provide students with various benefits, including skill courses, akin to the successful model of the DAKSH KISAN portal developed by the UT of J&K for farmers.

During this meeting, the Chief Secretary also took the insights into the other issues faced by the Department. He enquired about the implementation of New Education Policy in the UT, position of faculty in degree colleges, functioning of engineering colleges and infrastructure building for newly established colleges etc.

In his presentation the Principal Secretary, Higher Education, Alok Kumar apprised the meeting about the initiatives taken by the Department in furthering the impact and reach of higher education

in J&K. He gave out that the UT currently has 09 Universities in addition to 1042 government and 208 private colleges.

He further added that out of these colleges, 65 are NAAC accredited including 5 colleges having 'A&above' Grade. He made out that four year undergraduate programme (FYUGP) has been rolled out in all concerned institutions since last year with which students will now be able to get an undergraduate 'Honours' degree after completing four years, instead of three, along the lines of the international standards.

It was also revealed that as per NIRF Rankings, Kashmir & Jammu University stand at Rank 33 & 63 respectively. It was also said that there are currently 3 autonomous colleges which are being targeted for multidisciplinary education and research universities and 10 more colleges are being targeted to have the autonomous status soon.

The meeting was further apprised that a SAMARTH, centralized attendance portal and feedback mechanism is devised by the Department to enhance the efficiency in our institutions.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Mercury Up

Celsius, the officials said. It was the coldest recorded place in the Kashmir valley.

Qazigund recorded a low of 1.4 degrees Celsius, the Kokernag town saw the mercury settle at 1.2 degrees Celsius and Kupwara recorded the minimum of 1.3 degrees Celsius.

The improvement in the mercury has provided relief to the residents from the intense cold conditions which had resulted in the freezing of many slow-moving water bodies.

The cold also caused the water supply lines in some areas to freeze, and forced people in the valley to put on extra layers of clothes to stay warm.

With electricity supply erratic in many areas of Kashmir, people are using Kangri, an earthen firepot, to beat the chill. The cold and dry weather has resulted in an increase in respiratory problems among children and elderly.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chilla-i-Kalan' -- the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies, including the Dal Lake as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the valley.

The chances of snowfall are the highest during this period and most areas, especially the higher reaches, receive heavy snowfall.

'Chilla-i-Kalan' will end on January 31. However, the cold conditions continue even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day-long 'Chilla-i-Khurid' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chilla-i-Bachha' (baby cold).

### Govt Announces

were among the eight people picked up by the Army for questioning during an ongoing search operation to track down the terrorists involved in the ambush of Thursday.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police is preparing an inquest report under Section 174 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which gives powers to police to inquire and submit a report to executive magistrate when a person has died under circumstances raising a reasonable suspicion that some other person has committed an offence.

This may lead to the registration of a case in the matter, officials said.

Jammu Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar and Inspector General of Police Anand Jain have been camping in Poonch and are monitoring the situation, officials said.

Videos of the alleged custodial torture surfaced on Friday, after which the authorities suspended mobile Internet services in the two districts, the officials said.

The bodies of the three civilians -- Safer Hussain (43), Mohd Showket (27) and Shabir Ahmad (32) of Topa Peer village of Buzliaz -- were handed over to their families after postmortem on Saturday morning. They were later laid to rest at their ancestral graveyard in Buzliaz.

"All the three were innocent civilians and died of torture in the custody of the Army," Mohd Sadiq, a relative of one of the deceased, told PTI over phone from the village.

He said they have performed the last rites of the deceased following the assurance of action by Poonch Deputy Commissioner Choudhary Mohd Yasin and Senior Superintendent of Police Vinay Kumar, who were in the village throughout the day.

"They have assured us action...we want justice for the deceased. We want registration of FIR against the Army unit and adequate compensation along with a government job to

the next of kin," he said.

Sadiq, a panch, said he had informed senior police and civil officers about the random arrests and torture but nobody paid any heed.

Officials said four other civilians -- Mohd Zulfkar, his brother Mohd Betab, Fazal Hussain and Mohd Farooq -- were admitted to the Government Medical College Hospital in Rajouri with alleged torture injuries.

Additional police and paramilitary personnel have been deployed in sensitive pockets of the districts to maintain peace.

Five soldiers were killed and two injured when heavily armed terrorists ambushed two Army vehicles at a blind curve at Dhaty Morh between Dhera Ki Gali and Buzliaz on Thursday. The ambush took place when the security personnel were moving to an ongoing search operation in the general area of Dhera Ki Gali in the Thanamandi-Surankote region.

Soon after the ambush, security forces launched a massive search operation in the densely forested areas, but there was no fresh contact with the fleeing terrorists so far, officials said.

Sound of firing was heard deep inside a forest in Dhera Ki Gali area Saturday afternoon but security agencies later clarified that forces resorted to speculative firing to check a natural cave.

### Security Forces

Dhera Ki Gali and Buzliaz under the jurisdiction of Surankote police station in Poonch late Thursday afternoon, killing five soldiers and injuring two others.

After the attack, the terrorists reportedly mutilated the bodies of at least two soldiers and took weapons of some of them.

A massive search operation was launched immediately after the attack in the densely forested areas, also covering nearby Thanamandi in Rajouri but there was no fresh contact with the fleeing terrorists so far, the officials said.

### Parties Stage

announced compensation and jobs to the kin of the three civilians who were found dead under suspicious circumstances on Friday near the site of an anti-terrorist operation in Poonch district.

According to officials, the bodies were found near the site of an ambush by terrorists on Army vehicles in Poonch, leaving five soldiers dead and two injured the previous day.

The deceased -- Safer Hussain (43), Mohammad Showket (27) and Shabir Ahmad (32) -- were among the eight people reportedly picked up by the Army for questioning in connection with Thursday's attack, the officials had said.

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti, however, claimed that 15 people were picked up by the Army for questioning, of whom three died, while the remaining were seriously injured.

"After the Poonch incident, 15 people were picked up by the Army for questioning from Topa Peer village, out of which bodies of three bearing injury marks were found near the encounter site. The remaining 12 persons are admitted to different hospitals and are in critical condition," Mehbooba said at a press conference at the party headquarters here on Saturday.

The former chief minister of J-K demanded that the Jammu and Kashmir administration sanction a compensation of Rs 50 lakh each for the families of the three deceased.

"I request the Lieutenant Governor that till the time an inquiry is done into the matter, the three families be provided with a relief of Rs 50 lakh each and the injured admitted to hospitals be provided Rs 5 lakh each. Their families are very poor," she said.

She also referred to a video purportedly showing a few Armymen torturing some suspects.

"I also watched a video that shows Armymen thrashing people and spraying red chilli powder on their wounds. It is a heart-wrenching video, however, I do not know about its authenticity," Mehbooba said.

Meanwhile, scores of activists of the Apni Party led by their Kashmir provincial president Ashraf Mir protested at the party headquarters in the Church Lane area here on Saturday against the civilian deaths.

The protestors tried marching out of their office but were stopped by the police.

"We want justice for the killed civilians. A thorough investigation of the case should be done," Mir said, speaking to reporters.

The National Conference (NC) Saturday also protested over the same issue.

The NC workers shouted slogans demanding authorities to "stop the bloodshed of innocents". They, too, were stopped by the police when they tried to march out of their party office.

"NC has always condemned terror. We condemn the killing of five Armymen. But, we also condemn the killing of innocent civilians. When the government announced NIA inquiry into the killing of Armymen, then an inquiry should also be launched into the killing of civilians," the party's general secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar said.

Meanwhile, senior CPI(M) leader Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami demanded a prompt and impartial inquiry into the mysterious death of the three persons.

"Demanding a fair probe into the 'mysterious' death of 3 civilians near the encounter spot in Poonch. A prompt & impartial probe is crucial to ascertain the cause of their death," Tarigami said in a post on X.

"Also condemning in no uncertain terms the militant attack in which 5 soldiers made ultimate sacrifices in the line of duty. My deep condolences to their families," the CPI(M) leader's post added.

A BJP leader said the Jammu and Kashmir administration's prompt action in providing compensation and jobs to the kin of the deceased civilians demonstrates its commitment to address the concerns of affected families.

The ongoing search operation and suspension of mobile Internet services reflect the authorities' commitment to ensuring security and restoring peace in the region, he said.

Hurriyat Conference led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq expressed also called for a thorough investigation into the civilian deaths.

The amalgam, in a statement, said it grieved the loss of precious human lives and condemned bloodshed, which has been taking place for decades in J-K and "continues, with apparently no end in sight".

"The Hurriyat repeatedly advocates exploration of the cliché d sounding engagement and talks as the viable peaceful alternative available to resolve issues and put an end to loss of human lives and suffering," it added.

### Army Assures

Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADGPI) of the Indian Army said, "Search operations by the security forces are continuing

in the area of operations after the incident of 21 Dec 23. Reports have been received regarding three civilian deaths in the area. The matter is under investigation. Indian Army stands committed to extending full support and cooperation in the conduct of investigations."

### Lal Singh Gets

Reforms Act, 1976, thereby giving undue pecuniary advantage to trust. Based on this, the trust acquired multiple pieces of land of about 329 kanals vide three gift deeds executed on January 5 and January 7, 2011, the CBI charge sheet claimed.

### HC Seeks Gov's

hardships. Given the complexity of the issue, the court appointed senior advocate RA Jan as amicus curiae.

Pertinently the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday last granted an approval to a bill aimed at facilitating the setting up of Goods and Services Tax (GST) appellate tribunals (GSTAT).

The approved bill brings about crucial modifications to the terms of appointment for tribunal members and establishes a minimum age cap of 50 years for both members and presidents of the tribunal.

The Bill aims to diversify the pool of eligible candidates for judicial appointments to these tribunals. It introduces a provision allowing advocates with a minimum of 10 years of experience, particularly in matters related to indirect taxation, to serve as judicial members.

### Man Takes BUMS

of Ayurvedic/Unani System of Medicine, on the basis of said fake and forged 10+2 marks certificate," he said.

Accordingly, the spokesperson said, an enquiry under Reg. No. ME: 01/2022 was initiated at Special Crime Wing, Crime Branch Kashmir, Srinagar, which turned into the registration of the instant case.

During the course of the investigation, he said, the records having bearing on the subject matter were obtained and seized as per procedure. Besides, he said, the statements of the persons familiar with the facts and circumstances of the case were recorded.

"The investigation has revealed that the said accused has produced fake 10+2 marks certificates at the Institute of Asian Medical Sciences through the University of Kashmir for getting admission in the BUMS programme Session-2014," the spokesperson said.

He further said that the investigation has also found that after completion of the said course, the accused submitted an application before the Registrar Board of Ayurvedic 'Unani System of Medicines' for issuance of a Provisional Registration Certificate.

"On the basis of a degree certificate of BUMS and a fake 10+2 marks certificate, the accused was selected as Medical Officer (AYUSH) vide order No. 08 DRHSG of 2014 dated 20.01.2014 issued by the Director Rural Health Mission, J&K. The accused submitted his joining report on 20.01.2014. However, the accused was terminated from government services vide Govt. order No. 178 of 2022 dated 12.12.2022, issued by the Secretary of Health and Medical Education Department, J&K," he added.

The spokesperson added that on the basis of facts and circumstances that emerged during the course of the investigation, the case has been charge-sheeted against the accused before the court of CJM Ganderbal, from where he has been sent to judicial custody.

### DSEK Cracks

Corps said the suspected movement of terrorists was captured through surveillance devices during the intervening night of December 22 and 23. "Effective fire brought down. Terrorists seen dragging one body

if that school subjects a child to screening procedure, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to twenty-five thousand rupees for the first contravention and fifty thousand rupees for each subsequent contravention."

It is pertinent to mention here that capitation fee - means any kind of donation, admission fee or contribution or payment other than the fee notified by the school.

DSEK said, "Various complaints from parents and civil society are pouring in regarding the demand of admission fee by private schools which is totally against the law of the land and a punishable offence."

It also said that due to change in the academic session in Jammu and Kashmir in conformity with the academic calendar of the entire nation as per NEP-2020, the admission time in schools should begin in the month of March and many schools are flouting this norm as well.

"Therefore, in the light of the facts, it is impressed upon all the private recognized schools of Kashmir division to desist from charging the capitation fee (admission fee) and other non-notified fee and avoid conducting screening procedures or interviews of children for admission," it reads.

The directorate further said that in case of deviance from any school in this matter, action under rules shall be initiated to the extent of cancellation of registration of the said school.

DSEK in this regard appointed all Chief Education Officers as nodal officers in their respective jurisdiction to ensure implementation of these circular instructions in letter and spirit.

### Rise In Tourist

Narendra Modi has done a favour for the people by setting right the "miscarriage of Constitution and miscarriage of democracy".

"Even the architect of Article 370 (former Prime Minister Jawaharlal) Nehru had described it as temporary. But his successors developed vested interests in continuation of this constitutional provision," he said.

The Union minister said the BJP has completed the unfinished job and there is no doubt about it.

Singh was in Kathua, which is a part of his Udhampur parliamentary constituency, to attend a women's symposium and a 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' which aims at raising awareness among the people about the Central government's flagship schemes.

"Through the yatra, people living in far-flung areas of the Union Territory are drawing benefits irrespective of their caste, colour or creed," he said.

The minister announced that Kathua is being developed on many fronts to make it a model district not only for Jammu and Kashmir but also for the rest of the country. In the last 10 years, no other constituency has seen all-round development as the Udhampur-Kathua Constituency, he claimed.

At the women's symposium, the minister asked students to realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a developed India by 2047, saying the government has taken it upon itself to scale up the capacity building of its youth. "It is now incumbent upon the youth to ensure that the India of 2047 reaches the glory it deserves," he added.

### Infiltrator Killed

Corps said the suspected movement of terrorists was captured through surveillance devices during the intervening night of December 22 and 23. "Effective fire brought down. Terrorists seen dragging one body

back across the IB," it posted on X.

A defence spokesman shared a clip recorded on a surveillance device, showing four terrorists making an attempt to cross over into India from across the border under the cover of darkness.

The officials said the area was kept under a tight vigil and a search operation was launched with the first light of the day.

Blood stains confirmed the killing of a terrorist whose body was, however, dragged back by his associates to the Pakistan side, the officials said.

The operation was still underway when the reports last came in, they said.

### JBC Operator Dies

a JCB operator by profession who hails from Punjab.

Police have taken cognizance of the incident. (KNT)

### Car Linked

Reg No JK15B /0992 involved in Case FIR No.103/2023 U/s of UA(P) & Exp Sub Act of PS Bandipora. The said vehicle was seized as "proceeds of terrorism" under UA(P). Bandipora Police said in a post on X.

The seizure was executed following the receipt of a confirmation order from the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir.

### Drug Smuggler

Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PIT NDPS) Act in Budgam as he was involved in promoting and supplying drugs to the local youth.

The statement reads that this is the 14th arrest made under the PIT NDPS Act this year in Budgam district.

It reads that police have registered 77 cases related to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in the district this year alone.

"In the process, 127 individuals involved in various drug-related offences have been taken into custody. These efforts of the police have resulted in the confiscation of a significant cache of drugs, preventing their circulation within the community," it said.

### Woman Killed I

were shifted to a nearby hospital from where two critically injured were referred to GMC Baramulla for advanced treatment, officials said.

However, a woman, among the two referred injured, succumbed to her injuries in transit to GMC Baramulla. The deceased has been identified as Shazia Begum (36) wife of Lateef Ahmad.

The other injured persons have been identified as Fayaz Ahmad (30) son of Alim Din, Kulsum (38) wife of Shabir Ahmad, Begum Jan (57) wife of Alim Din, Sumaya (14) daughter of Ifrikhar Ahmad, Mehjabeen (15) daughter of Mukhtar Ahmad, Wajid (14) son of Shabir Ahmad, Alim Din (64) son of Alif Din and Sahil (15) son of Ifrikhar Ahmad.

Meanwhile, the police have taken cognizance of the incident and registered a case in this regard. (CNS)

### India Logs 752

8 am started. The country's Covid case tally stood at 4.50 crore (4,50,07,964).

The number of people recuperated from the disease has increased to 4,44,71,212, and the national recovery rate stands at 98.81 per cent, according to the health ministry's website. The fatality rate stands at 1.19 per cent.

The ministry's website stated that 220.67 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far.

## IMPROVING AIR QUALITY

# Kashmir's Brick Kilns Shift To Cleaner Technology

Syed Mohammad Burhan

SRINAGAR: In Jammu and Kashmir, the long-standing concern over pollution caused by traditional brick kilns is gradually being addressed. A notable shift is underway as a portion of brick kilns, approximately 20 to 25 percent, have embraced the innovative zig zag technology, according to the officials of the J&K State Pollution Control Board (JKSPCB).

According to the officials, this shift signifies more than just a technological upgrade; it reflects a conscientious effort to tackle environmental concerns.

"The adoption of zig zag technology in these brick kilns is proving instrumental in curbing particulate matter emissions, thereby contributing to a significant reduction in overall pollution levels," J.N. Sharma, Environmental Engineer, J&K State Pollution Control Board (JKSPCB) said.

Sharma further said that the technology has been recommended by the Central Pollution Control Board, Government of India and approximately 25 percent of the brick kiln owners in J&K have already transitioned to this technology. "However, the remaining kiln owners have been given a one-year time period to switch to the new technology," Sharma told



Abid Bhat/NO

Kashmir Observer.

Bashir Wani, a scientist at J&K State Pollution Control Board & District officer Achabal also said, "New guidelines set by the government order brick kiln owners to shift to this technology. As the day progresses more and more people are bound to opt for this technology."

"Out of 54 brick kilns in Achabal, around 10 brick kilns owners have adapted this technology," Wani added.

Mohammad Yusuf, a brick kiln owner in South Kashmir's Achabal village, voluntarily adopted a zig-zag brick kiln in compliance with the Government of India's directives. "I dismantled my old kiln and constructed a new one. I shifted to cleaner technology to make the environment better by reducing harmful emissions," Mohammad Yusuf said.

"In traditional kilns, any-

thing combustible, from torn old shoes to animal feces, is burnt, causing immense pollution. In the zig-zag method, only powdered coal less than 4mm thick is used, ensuring complete combustion and producing higher-quality bricks," he said.

A 2022 study titled 'Air Pollutant Emissions in the Pristine Kashmir Valley from the Brick Kilns' found that an increase in the number of brick kilns has given rise to the surplus gathering of contaminants in the atmosphere, creating air quality issues. Brick kilns in Kashmir, like other parts of the country, were using Fixed Chimney Bulls Trench Kiln (FCBTK) that emits black soot, causing heavy air pollution.

In February, last year the Union Environment Ministry had made it mandatory for the brick-kilns to convert to the eco-friendly zig-zag technology. As per the Environment (Protection) Amendment Rules 2022. All new brick kilns shall be allowed only with zig-zag technology or vertical shaft or use of piped natural gas as fuel in brick making.

Zig zag technology introduces a zig zag pattern in the kiln's firing system. This design allows for a more controlled airflow, optimizing the combustion process that helps in achieving better heat distribution, resulting in increased energy efficiency and reduced emissions.

A research by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) found that the technology reduces coal consumption by 20 per cent, carbon emissions by 40-60 per cent, produces more A-grade bricks and brick production can be enhanced as well.

Dr Bilqees Ara, a senior scientist at Pollution Control Board, Srinagar said that the technology, when operated according to Standard Operation Procedure (SOP), meets the existing emission standard of 750 mg per cubic metre. "Local communities are witnessing a positive shift as switching over to Zig Zag technology not only avoids deterioration of air quality but also creates employment opportunities through the installation and maintenance of these upgraded kilns," Dr Bilqees said.

# 237 People Turn Up At DGP's Public Darbar In Jammu

Initiative Purely About Resolving Complaints, Grievance Related To Police Services: Swain

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The DGP's public grievance redressal programme continues to evoke huge response as scores of persons turned up at Police Headquarters Jammu on Saturday to present their grievances before the police chief.

During today's grievance redressal programme, which spanned over 5 hours, 237 individuals, including women, elderly, presented their grievances

to the DGP R.R. Swain, a police spokesperson said.

The DGP, he said, while presiding over the programme listened to the grievances/complaints and pleas of the people one by one patiently.

He assured that Police is committed to addressing the people's issues related to police services in the union territory on priority.



In some cases, on-the-spot directives were given to various police units to ensure immediate and effective redressal.

The DGP on the occasion reiterated that the initiative is purely about resolving the complaints/grievances related to police services. It is not for the recruitment of SPOs or for the general transfer of police personnel, he clarified.

The DGP's grievance redressal programme is an initiative to have a platform for the citizens of J&K to submit their complaints/grievances directly to DGP, J&K. It enhances the JKP's responsiveness and accountability to the people of J&K by ensuring that grievances are promptly reviewed and addressed. The programme is mainly aimed to fix and correct the concerns of the public towards police services at different levels.

## DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ OFFICE OF THE BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER ACHABAL

Subject: Invitation for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Solid Waste Management in Block ACHABAL District Achabal.

On behalf of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Expressions of Interest (EOI) from the eligible and interested agencies are hereby invited for the execution of a Solid Waste Management Plan in District Achabal Block Achabal.

### 1. BACKGROUND:

The Solid Waste Management program aims to implement effective and scientific waste management practices in Block ACHABAL, in line with the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen). The program will cover the CD Block ACHABAL comprising of 27 Gram Panchayats mentioned below:

S.No	Name of Panchayat	Approximate No of Households	Other Establishments
1	Akingam A	374	41
2	Akingam B	381	35
3	Badoora	140	22
4	BB Nowgam	169	80
5	BB Nowgam A	564	25
6	Brakpora	490	60
7	Brinty A	540	47
8	Brinty B	492	49
9	CS pora	515	36
0	Damhall	426	68
11	Gopalpora A	235	45
12	Gopalpora B	230	16
13	Hardpora	297	49
14	H Tooru	531	61
15	Immoh	473	39
16	Issoo	424	31
17	Kadapora	420	38
18	Kawarigam	675	50
19	Khundroo	550	51
20	Magraypora	537	83
21	Mohripora	184	8
22	Shelipora	227	24
23	Sundoo	253	25
24	Tailwani	379	112
25	Tailwani A	379	30
26	Thajiwara	260	92
27	Trahpoo	469	45

### SCOPE OF WORK:

The contracting agency will be responsible for the following processes:

#### ► SOLID WASTE COLLECTION

- Sanitation and door-to-door collection of both biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste from all households of one of the three designated clusters covering all households, shops, factories, industrial establishments, etc. at least thrice a week.
- A Panchayat-Halqa-wise schedule of waste collection shall further be notified in consultation with the concerned Block Development Officer and Gram Panchayat.
- The intending agency shall collect all types of waste-door-to-door waste, waste from already installed dustbins, and legacy waste so that the objective of ODF plus is obtained and sustained.
- Ensuring segregation of waste preferably at the household level and mandatorily at the already constructed segregation shed sites.
- Effective and scientific management and disposal of collected waste in an environmentally sustainable manner. A weekly review/report shall be submitted by halqa panchayat to ascertain the effectiveness of weekly disposal.

#### ► REVENUE REALIZATION

- Conducting a fresh survey, in consultation with the field functionaries of the Rural Development Department, to update the household data and include commercial factories, business units, institutions, shops, etc. Collection of monthly Fees/Charges from the households preferably in digital mode in consultation with the officials of this department.
- Revenue generation through sustainable waste management practices, such as selling segregated dry waste to authorized dealers.
- User charges collected shall be deposited in Halqa Panchayat Fund of concerned Gram Panchayat on a monthly basis out of which 10 to 40% (to be decided later) of the Fee/user charges so collected shall form a revenue part and the remaining shall be utilized for incurring the expenditure on account of sanitation work done.

#### ► MAINTENANCE

- Maintenance and up keep of departmental garbage collection vehicles, and other amenities used for waste collection and ensuring their dedicated use only for solid waste management purposes.
- The Vehicles used for waste collection shall be departmental and the agency has to use these Vehicles/e-rickshaws etc. by engaging its own staff and ensuring the vehicle's maintenance in all respects.
- The intending agency shall be responsible for the smooth handing over of all assets (Vehicles/machinery/Civil Structures and possession of the sites in good condition to the concerned department after completing the allotment of one year (without any damage)

#### ► MANPOWER & MACHINERY

- The contracting agency has to engage sweepers/ waste collectors, Drivers, and Management staff with a unique uniform having a unique logo, the design and details of which shall be conveyed to the contracting agency later.
- The contracting agency has to operate and maintain all three-carts, garbage collection vans, and machinery at its own level and has to bear the electricity, POL, and maintenance / repair charges of the machinery. The contracting agency will be required to obtain necessary permissions/approvals from the BDO concerned for repair, and maintenance of the existing machinery, if required, at any time.

#### ► DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND PENAL PROVISION

- In case of any dispute, the Block Development Officer concerned shall be the first appellate authority, the 2nd appellate authority shall be the Assistant Commissioner Panchayats Achabal and the third appellate & final authority shall be the District Level Sanitation Committee for implementation of SBM-G.
- The contracting agency shall have to report to the Block Development Officer concerned in case of any violation by any Household/establishment for imposing a fine. Further, the agency may be required to paste color-coded notices across the panchayat
- In matters pertaining to any disputes, or repercussions arising, the District level Sanitation committee shall hold exclusive jurisdiction and serve as the ultimate deciding body. "Repercussions" in this context refer to any adverse consequences, claims, disputes, legal actions, or related incidents that may arise.

#### ► IEC ENDEAVORS AND INCITING BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

- The contracting agency shall chalk out a plan for a sustained IEC campaign for inciting behavioral change among the people through various means. The means could be composing appealing and effective sanitation jingles played through overhead speakers of waste collection vehicles on a regular basis, organizing special sanitation drives by involving local youth clubs, students, and Self Help Groups, organizing monthly felicitation ceremonies for best cooperative and complying Panchayats in consultation with the BDO concerned and the District administration, etc... Monthly IEC plans, 10 days in advance, to be submitted to the concerned BDO for review and approval.
- The contracting agency shall influence the general public through its best possible sanitation services and shall motivate and convince them to segregate the waste at the source by sides reducing the use of Single Use Plastics.

#### ► ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

The contracting agency must meet the following criteria:

- The agency can be a sole proprietor, registered contractor, registered partnership firm, limited liability partnership, public limited company, private limited company, society or NGO, etc.
- The agency must have an average annual turnover of more than Rs. 20,00,000 (Rupees twenty Lakh) for the last three years.
- Previous experience in managing public utilities as a PPP/outourcing and knowledge of waste management, including running decentralized solid waste management processes, will be advantageous.
- Additional experience in community mobilization and IEC activities will be preferred.
- The agency must deposit a Cash Deposit Receipt (CDR) of Rs. 30,000 (thirty thousand rupees) pledged to the Block Development Officer Achabal.

#### ► CONTRACTING PROCESS:

- Interested agencies must submit their EOI in sealed envelopes addressed to the Block Development Officer Achabal, by 29-12-2023 upto 2PM.
- The envelopes will be opened on the next day 30-12-2023 at 3PM in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives.
- The EOI will be followed by Technical Evaluation and Financial Evaluation.

#### ► GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- The selected agency will be awarded a one-year contract, which may be extendable based on its performance and the necessity of the Department.
- The agency shall adhere to all the terms and conditions specified in the EOI document.
- The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any EOI without assigning any reason thereof, in the interest of the government, department, and public funds.

#### ► SUBMISSION OF EOI AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Interested agencies must submit their sealed envelopes containing the EOI to the following address:

Block Development Office ACHABAL

Email: bdoachabal@gmail.com

- For any inquiries or clarifications regarding the EOI, interested agencies may contact Block Development Officer Achabal, at the above-mentioned address

#### ► NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS:

- The results of the EOI evaluation will be communicated to the eligible agencies through official communication channels.

#### ► LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- The selected agency must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and ethical standards during the execution of the Solid Waste Management project in Achabal
- The contracting agency has to adhere to a) the Environment protection act 1986, the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974 and the bylaws drafted and passed by the Gram Panchayats in letter and spirit.
- Sub-contracting shall not be allowed and shall be considered illegal.
- The contracting agency has to submit an affidavit duly attested by a Judicial Magistrate affirming therein the commitment to bear all costs related to damage, theft, or loss incurred to the vehicles / machinery of the department during the execution of the SWM project.
- In matters pertaining to any disputes, or repercussions arising, the District level Sanitation committee shall hold exclusive jurisdiction and serve as the ultimate deciding body. "Repercussions" in this context refer to any adverse consequences, claims, disputes, legal actions, or related incidents that may arise.

The process of technical Evaluation will be done by a designated committee based on the score for the solutions & procedures provided by the agencies to transform the entire solid waste management into an efficient, effective, and sustainable one in the Block.

No.BDOA/EOI/3161-64

DATED: 22-12-2023

DIPK-14173-23

DT: 23/12/2023

Sd/-

BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER ACHABAL

## Rare 12th Century AD Sculptures Found In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: A pair of sculptures of Lord Shiva and Goddess Indrani, dating back to the 12th century AD, were unearthed here, officials said on Saturday.

The ancient sculptures were found during digging at the Bhour camp in the outskirts of Jammu and were subsequently taken into possession by the Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums, the officials said.

Quoting the preliminary findings, the officials said it has been found that the sculptures are very rare dating back to the 12th century AD.

These sculptures depict the human forms of Goddess Indrani, measuring 28 x 13.5 inches weighing 55 kg and Lord Shiva measuring 21 x 14 inches weighing 40 kg, the officials said.

They said a four-member team headed by Assistant Director of Archaeology Sangeeta Sharma visited the Bhour camp and took possession of the sculptures for preservation

## Will Bring Back Roshni Scheme If Voted To Power In J&K: Azad

Press trust Of India

JAMMU: Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad on Saturday said he would restore the Roshni scheme if his party is voted to power in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a public rally in R S Pura on the outskirts of Jammu, the former chief minister claimed that the abolition of the scheme dented the economic prosperity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Under the now-repealed Jammu and Kashmir State Land (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) Act, 2001, also known as the Roshni act, land ownership rights were granted to unauthorised occupants of state land against a fee.

The scheme was repealed by the then governor Satya Pal Malik on November 28, 2018.

"My priority is to get back the Roshni scheme since it was largely benefiting people. Its abolition has dented the economic prosperity of the people," Azad said.

"It (Roshni scheme) was benefiting thousands of people and had become the source of livelihood. We have developed a vision for the people of

Jammu and Kashmir and that would be implemented once the DPAP is in power and it includes restoration of the Roshni scheme," he said.

On November 1, 2020, the union territory administration cancelled all land transfers that took place under the Jammu and Kashmir State Land (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) Act, 2001.


Over 10 lakh kanals (1 acre is equal to 8 kanals) of land was retrieved in Jammu and Kashmir after the Revenue Department directed all deputy commissioners to ensure 100 per cent removal of encroachments from state land.

Azad said people in border areas like R S Pura have suffered a lot due to cross-border shelling in the past.

"These areas need special attention from the government to compensate for the losses they have been incurring due to uncertainty on borders. I can share the pain and sufferings of these people and assure that special schemes would be introduced for such areas to benefit them socioeconomically," he said.

The DPAP chairman said he would also focus on tackling drug addiction among the youth and creation of jobs for those unemployed.





SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION  
श्रीनगर नगर निगम

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### SEALING ORDER

**Subject: Sealing of business unit at Barbarshah in front of Rambir Bhawan Srinagar under J&K Municipal Corporation Act 2000 and J&K Unified Building Bye-Laws 2021.**

Whereas, complaint was lodged on Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor's Grievance Cell vide No. 999003734983, regarding encroachment on main road of Barbarshah, for running unauthorized workshop on main road;

Whereas, matter was got examined by Enforcement Wing of SMC & it was reported that Nazir Ahmad Najar S/o Abdul Ahad Najar is running a work shop & carrying repairs of vehicles on the roadside at Barbarshah in front of Rambir Bhawan Trust, which has become cause of serious inconvenience to the general public, traffic movement and pedestrian movement & has also become source of huge traffic jam;

Whereas, the Ward Officer, Ward No. 02 SMC has served a notice to the above named person vide No. SMC/W-2/899-905, dated:- 19.09.2023, wherein directed him not to encroach on main road, while repairing vehicles, but the above named person has not paid any heed to it;


Whereas, a showcause notice for sealing of business unit in question was also served upon the above named person vide No. SMC/Enf/19690-97, dated:-29.11.2023 asking him to showcause within 07 days from the date of issuance of notice as to why the business unit in question shall not be sealed;

Whereas, the above named person has failed to submit the reply to the showcause sealing notice, which clearly indicates that he has nothing to say in his defense;

Whereas, the above named person has violated Municipal Laws in force, under sub-clause (iv), clause (a), sub-section (1) of section 302, section 303 of J&K Municipal Corporation Act 2000 & rule 2.12 of J&K Unified Building Byelaws 2021;

**Now therefore, in view of the facts and circumstances referred to hereinabove, the business unit in question is hereby sealed under J&K Municipal Corporation Act 2000 & J&K Unified Building Bye-Laws, 2021. The business unit in question is put under the Superdari with the Station House Officer Police Station Kothi Bagh and Ward Officer, Ward No. 02, SMC.**

No. SMC/Enf./21669-80. Sd-  
Dated:- 21/12/2023. DIPK-NB-4957-23 Commissioner,  
DT: 23/12/2023 Srinagar Municipal Corporation.



SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

No.BDOA/EOI/3161-64 DIPK-14173-23  
DATED: 22-12-2023 DT: 23/12/2023

Sd/-  
BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER ACHABAL

## Real Kashmir Play Delhi FC In I-League Today

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Real Kashmir FC is set to take on Delhi FC in I-League 2023-24 at Namdhari Stadium today, Sunday, December 24. The game kicks off at 2:00 PM.

Under newly-appointed coach Ishaq Ahmed, Real Kashmir have been among top-tier I-League teams thus far, going on an unbeaten run of six games. The club signed multiple Kashmiri footballers in the offseason and has been deploying several of them in its playing elevens in the league.

The Snow Leopards have won six of their 10 games, while drawing two and losing two. The team is second on the I-League table, four points behind Mohammedan SC, who have 24 from their 10 games.

Ivorian striker Gnohere Krizo leads the team in goals



(5) and assists (4).

Hosts Delhi FC enters the game winless in their previous two matches, losing 2-0 to Inter Kashi recently. In their 10 games, they have won four, lost five and drawn one.

The game will be shown live on Eurosport and can be livestreamed on FanCode and Indian Football YouTube channel.

**Real Kashmir Probable XI:** Muheet Shabir Khan, Muhammad Hammad (C),

Shaher Shaheen, Dion Menezes, Carlos Lomba, Wayne Vaz, Mohammad Inam, Kamal Isah, Jeremy Laldinpuia, Gnohere Krizo, Mohammad Asrar Rehbar.

## South Africa Hope To Unleash Full Pace Attack On India In 1st Test

Agencies

**JOHANNESBURG:** South Africa are hopeful that both fast bowlers Kagiso Rabada and Lungi Ngidi will be available for selection in the first test against India that gets underway in Pretoria on Tuesday, coach Shukri Conrad has confirmed. Rabada has been struggling with a heel injury and Ngidi with his ankle, but Conrad says they are still part of the squad.

"They are both here with us and that means they are available for selection as things stand," Conrad told reporters on Saturday.

"We have not called anybody in as a replacement and hopefully come the morning of the match we have 15 fit players to select from."

Whether the duo play or not, it is likely Gerald Coetzee, the firebrand 23-year-old fast bowler who impressed in the 50-over World Cup in India that concluded last month, will get a run on what is likely to be a Centurion Park wicket with pace and bounce, regardless of his lack of test experience. Coetzee took nine wickets in the two tests he



has played so far, against West Indies earlier this year.

"He's still a baby in test cricket," Conrad said. "He's been phenomenal every time he's stepped onto the field, whether it be with the white ball in his hand or the red one. This is just going to be another step. He brings aggression, he brings something that we've always prided ourselves on as South Africans, which is pace."

"He brings all of those elements and hopefully through the experience he builds in the (T20) league's and playing for South Africa with the white and red ball, in a couple of years' time he can be leading our bowling attack."

India are seeking a first test series win in South Africa and Conrad says his side are desperate to uphold their record of never having lost to the tourists on home soil.

"If it was possible to make this even bigger, then the fact that India have never won here does that," he said. "We certainly want to hold on to that proud record and make sure that that doesn't happen."

"There are so many matchups that this series hinges on. It's two tests, so it's a high pressured one. You go 1-0 down and you can't win the series. You go 1-0 up, you can't lose. It's going to be like a heavyweight boxing bout."

## Deaflympics Gold Medallist To Return Padma Shri Over WFI Election



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Deaflympics gold medallist Virender Singh Yadav, better known as Goonga Pehlwan, has now decided to return his Padma Shri to the government, showing solidarity with the country's top wrestlers who have objected to the election of Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh loyalist Sanjay Singh as WFI president.

Throwing his weight behind Olympic bronze medallist grappler Sakshi Malik, who announced her retirement from the sport soon after Sanjay Singh's victory in the recent WFI polls, Virender said he would return the honour as a mark of protest against the election of Brij Bhushan's close aide.

Bajrang Punia, one of the prominent faces of the protest

against the former WFI chief, had returned his Padma Shri on Friday.

"I will also return the Padma Shri for my sister and the country's daughter. Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, I am proud of your daughter and my sister Sakshi Malikkh," Virender wrote on X.

He also urged the country's iconic sports personalities such as Sachin Tendulkar and Neeraj Chopra to give their opinion on the issue.

"I would also request the top players of the country to also give their decision," Virender, said in his post, tagging cricket legend Tendulkar and Olympic champion javelin thrower Chopra.

Virender received the Padma Shri, the country's fourth-highest civilian award, in 2021.

Before that, he was honoured with the Arjuna Award in 2015.

## Indian Davis Cup Team Must Travel To Pakistan: ITF



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The ITF tribunal has rejected the All India Tennis Association's contention that its Davis Cup team could face security concerns during the World Group I Play-off tie in Islamabad, paving the way for an Indian tennis team's visit to Pakistan for the first time in 60 years.

If the Indian team fails to travel to Pakistan, the tie will be awarded to the host country and the Indian team will be relegated to World Group II.

The last time an Indian Davis Cup team travelled to Pakistan was way back in 1964 when it beat the hosts 4-0.

All India Tennis Association (AITA) Secretary General Anil Dhupar confirmed to PTI that ITF has rejected their appeal.

"I have got a message that AITA's appeal has been rejected by the ITF Tribunal. We will approach the Sports Ministry on Monday and seek guidance if we will send a team," Dhupar told PTI.

AITA had recently announced a five-member squad for the February 3-4 World Group I play-off tie and said that if ITF rejects its appeal, it will send the Davis Cup team to Pakistan.

AITA's request for a neutral venue was rejected by the 15-member Davis Cup Committee (DCC) and later the national federation approached the ITF Tribunal.

AITA's contention was that India should not be treated like other countries since the bilateral relations are tense between the two nations.

## Gaikwad To Report At NCA After Injury On SA Tour

Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** Top-order batter Ruturaj Gaikwad will head to the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru after fracturing his finger while Harshit Rana has also been ruled out of India A's four-day match against South Africa A.

remainder of the tour," said BCCI secretary Jay Shah in a statement.

"He will be reporting to the NCA for further management of his injury. The Men's Selection Committee has named Abhimanyu Easwaran as his replacement," the statement added.

However, Easwaran will only



The BCCI confirmed in a statement on Saturday that opener Gaikwad had suffered a fracture to his ring finger and will miss the upcoming two-Test series against the Proteas beginning December 26 in Centurion.

"Ruturaj Gaikwad suffered an injury to his right ring finger while fielding in the second ODI against South Africa in Gqeberha. He underwent scans, and following an expert consultation, the BCCI Medical Team has ruled him out of the

be available for the second Test as he is currently leading the India A side.

Gaikwad featured in the first two ODIs of the three-match series, which India won 2-1. He injured the finger while fielding in the second match. He was also a member of the Indian squad for the Test series.

The statement added that Rana had been ruled out of the four-day India A tour match against South Africa A in Benoni from December 26 due to a hamstring injury.

## Man City Cruise Past Fluminense In Club World Cup Final

Agencies

**JEDDAH:** Manchester City was just too good and a bit lucky for overmatched Fluminense in the Club World Cup final by winning 4-0 and taking a fifth title in 2023 on Friday.

City led after just 40 seconds to make it a match mostly free of tension. Julián Álvarez followed up fastest to meet a rebound off a post from Nathan Aké's shot.

An own goal in the 27th by Fluminense captain Nino decided the game long before Phil Foden's goal in the 72nd, guiding an Álvarez pass into an open net. Álvarez struck again in the 88th.

It gave City a first Club World Cup title and Europe a 16th in 17 editions of FIFA's competition for continental champions.

Tempers flared after the game with City captain Kyle Walker confronting Fluminense players including veteran defender Felipe Melo. Walker appeared to take offense at rough tackling that forced key midfielder Rodri



off the field injured.

Rodri later took part in celebrations with the trophy and received an award as best player at the tournament. City losses this season typically come when the Spaniard has missed games.

With Rodri in imperious form, City cruised to a second easy win in four balmy days in Saudi Arabia even without injured superstars Erling Haaland and Kevin De Bruyne. They also missed City's semi-finals win over Urawa Red Diamonds on Tuesday.

Their expected absences could help explain about 4,000 empty seats among a crowd of 52,601 at King Abdullah Sports City, the Jeddah stadium which is planned to be used at the 2034 World Cup.

Victory made Pep Guardiola the first coach to win the Club World Cup with three different teams. He led Barcelona to titles in 2009 and 2011, then Bayern Munich in 2013 with a team that won the Champions League under outgoing coach Jupp Heynckes.

Guardiola celebrated

calmly by walking across to console Fluminense coach Fernando Diniz with a handshake and arm on his shoulder. Guardiola was later hugging and smiling with Felipe Melo.

City has since become the club with the highest declared annual revenue in world soccer, banking \$890 million in its treble-winning 2022-23 season with a salary bill of \$530 million. City later added the UEFA Super Cup in August. Fluminense has said it expects to earn \$74 million this year.

## Man United's Woes Continue With 2-0 Loss At West Ham

Agencies

**LONDON:** Manchester United's scoring woes continued in a 2-0 loss at West Ham in the Premier League on Saturday, with Jarrod Bowen and Mohammed Kudus netting second-half goals.

United has now failed to score in its last four games in all competitions — that hasn't happened since 1992 — and in five of its last six matches. Rasmus Hojlund, the club's \$82 million offseason signing, was hauled off in the 57th minute as his Premier League drought extended to 14 games.

What United would give to have a player in the scoring form of Bowen, who exchanged passes with Lucas Paqueta and bundled in a finish — at the second attempt — past goalkeeper Andre Onana to give West Ham the lead in the 72nd minute with his 11th goal in the league this season.

Kudus then pounced on a mistake by Kobbie Mainoo before being played through by Paqueta to drive home the second goal in the 78th. It was the Ghana international's fourth goal in as many games.

The late goals spoiled a composed debut for United by 19-year-



old defender Willy Kambwala, who was brought in to fix a center-back crisis and did little wrong alongside Jonny Evans — a player 16 years older.

It's the issues at the other end of the field that are likely to be really

worrying United manager Erik ten Hag after the team's 13th defeat in 26 games in all competitions this season.

With the win, West Ham moved ahead of United, which will be in eighth place for Christmas.