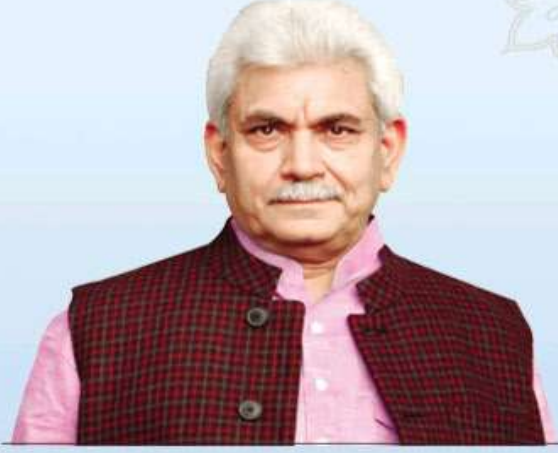




Government of Jammu & Kashmir



**Viksit Bharat**  
**Viksit Jammu Kashmir**

*Aman aur Taraqqi ki Nayi Tasveer*



**Laying of Foundation Stone,  
Inauguration & Dedication to Nation  
220 Projects | ₹32000 crore  
in Jammu & Kashmir**

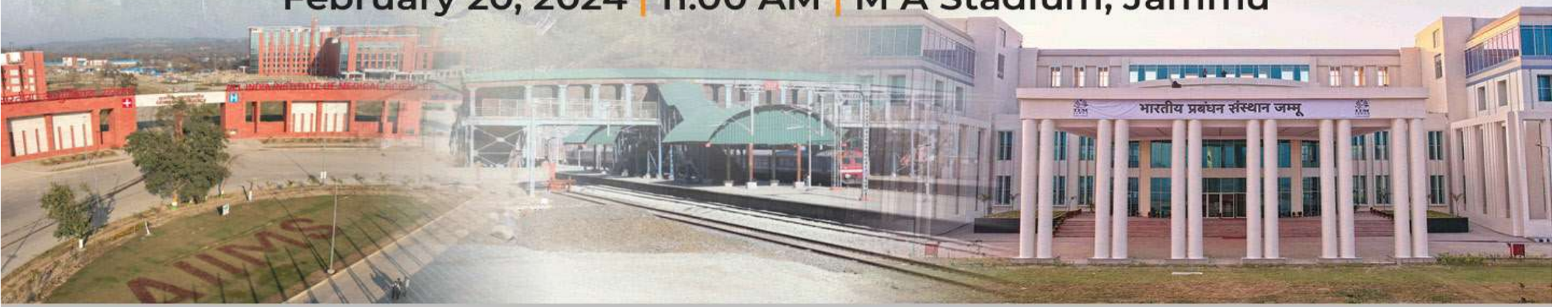
by

**Shri Narendra Modi**  
Hon'ble Prime Minister

- AIIMS, Jammu
- IIT, Jammu
- IIM, Jammu
- New Terminal Building Jammu Airport
- 206 Developmental Projects of UT
- Common User Petroleum Terminal, Jammu
- MoRTH Projects -Expressway, bridges, tunnels and other infrastructure projects
- New Railway Line between Banihal -Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan section
- Electrification of Baramulla-Sangaldan Railway line
- Distribution of 1748 appointment letters

- **Specialised Health Services** ● **Quality Education** ● **Better connectivity**
- **Employment Generation** ● **Economic Growth & Tourism**

February 20, 2024 | 11:00 AM | M A Stadium, Jammu







To place an advertisement  
**CALL +91-194 2502327**  
 Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)  
 No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

**Government Of Jammu And Kashmir**  
**Directorate Of Information & Public Relations**

**Subject: Appointment of Driver in Divisional Cadre. Kashmir of the Information Department.**

Reference: JKSSB's Letter No JKSSB-Scry/7/2023-03 (E-7259835) dated 11.01.2024 and Administrative Department's letter No. INF PR-Estt/4/2024-02 dated 25.01.2024.

**Order No: INF/459 of 2024**  
**Dated:19.2.2024**

On the recommendations of the J&K Services Selection Board and in pursuance to the approval conveyed by the Administrative Department vide letters under reference and in light of satisfactory Character ar.d Antecedent report furnished by the Criminal Investigation Department, J&K, the below mentioned candidate is hereby appointed as Driver in Divisional Cadre, Kashmir of the Information Department in the Pay level L-2 (19900 - 63200):

S No	Name & Parentage	Address	Category	Cadre Allotted	Place of posting
1	Dilawar Ali Mir S/o Gh Kalipora, Beerwah, Mohmad Mir	Kalipora, Beerwah, Budgam	RBA	Division Cadre Kashmir	Joint Director Information, Kashmir

The appointee shall report to the place as mentioned above within a period of twenty one (21) days from the date of issuance of this order failing which he shall forego his right to appointment and the same shall be deemed to have been cancelled ab-initio without any further notice.

The appointee shall be allowed to join only on the production of the following certificates/documents (in original) to be verified subsequently:-

- Academic Qualification Certificate issued by the recognised Institute/University valid for employment.
- Matriculation/Date of Birth Certificate.
- Domicile certificate issued by the competent authority.
- Health Certificate from the concerned District Chief Medical Officer.
- Valid relevant category certificate issued by the competent authority, if any applicable.
- Any other relevant document/certificate as required under rules.

The appointment of the above candidate shall further be subject to the following conditions:-

- The appointee shall furnish an undertaking in the shape of an affidavit to the effect that if on verification, his academic/technical qualification and any other certificates from the concerned issuing authorities, are found fake / forged, his appointment as Driver shall be deemed to have been cancelled ab-intio and the legal action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against him.
- The salary of the appointee shall not be drawn and disbursed to him

unless the satisfactory reports in respect of genuineness of academic/technical qualification and any other certificates is received from the concerned issuing authority.

- The appointee shall be on probation for a period of two years.
- The appointment of the candidate shall be governed by the "New Pension Scheme" as notified vide SRO-400 of 2009 dated 24.12.2009.
- The inter-se-seniority of the appointee in the J&K Information Department (Sub-Ordinates) Services Rules-2015 shall be determined as per the J&K Civil Service (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956.
- The appointee shall retain his lien in his Cadre.
- That if the candidate has taken loan for self employment from DIC/Employment Department, to be ascertained from the District Industries Centre (DIC) and District Employment & Counseling Centre of the domicile district, he/she shall relinquish the proprietorship of unit/enterprise and also stakes, if any, in such self-employment unit /enterprise before joining the Government services. He/she shall be required to repay the entire loan liability in suitable EMIs to be worked out by the DDO concerned from his/her salary. DDO concerned shall obtain an affidavit from the concerned appointee regarding both relinquishment of proprietorship and stakes, if any, in such a self-employment unit/enterprise and recovery to be made and also personally monitor its recovery.

The appointment of the above appointee shall be subject to the final outcome of writ petition(s), if any, pending before any Competent Court of law.

Sd/-  
 Director Information J&K

No: INF/Estt-137/2022-23/15066-71  
 DIPK-16643/23  
 Dated: 19.02.2024

**ASF ENTERPRISES**  
 Sale and Services of Computers 2nd. Floor Munir Manzil Regal Chowk Srinagar (J&K), Ph.0194-24 77949, 9419001176, 9419776235

Sale and Sendee of Laptops, Desktops, Printers, Photocopiers, Faxes, CCTV Cameras, Security System and Refilling of all Types of Cartridges, Toners

Registered Government order Suppliers.

**Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan**  
 Subject: Application of Gulzar Ahmad Dar S/o Gh Nabi Dar R/o Yadipora Pattan for issuance of DOB Certificate of his son namely Mohammad Asim Dar born on 26-01-2021

**NOTICE**  
 General Public is hereby informed through this notice that the undersigned office has received the above mentioned application for issuance of DOB. If any person(s) has any objection(s) he/she can visit the undersigned's office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be considered.

FKO

**Public Notice**  
 I have applied for the issuance of Death Certificate of father, Abdul Gani Bhat, who passed away on 10-08-1998. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Naib Tehsildar Kakapora within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Gh Mohd Bhat  
 S/o Late Abdul Gani Bhat  
 R/o Nehama

laa

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 Subject:- Grant Of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name & Style "M/S Funzip Kashmir Tour and Travels" Situated at Ashai Bagh, Nigeen, Hazratbal, Srinagar.

Whereas I, MR. MANZOOR AHMAD DARZI S/O MR. BASHIR AHMAD DARZI R/O ASHAI BAGH, NIGEEN, HAZRATBAL, SRINAGAR intend to apply in the Department of Tourism for registration of my proposed travel unit under the name & style of "M/S FUNZIP KASHMIR TOUR AND TRAVELS," Situated at ASHAI BAGH, NIGEEN, HAZRATBAL, SRINAGAR under tourist trade act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas I will submit state subject / Domicile certificate, Qualification Certificate, pan card \ Experience Certificate (Minimum 5years), Police character certificate, Bank statement (minimum balance 10000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent deed duly attested by sub Registrar, printing material (Latter head / Visiting card ) Photograph of the unit (indoor and outdoor) and Two passport size photographs to the department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist I Prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency.

Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12) before my case is processed for my registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/ Financial institutions/Bank/ Organization, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration(email id; dtregl23@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in a leading newspaper/newspapers of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

انجمنیت تلگام  
 درخواست منجانب غلام نبی احمد تلگام اور منجانب سائلہ گام تحصیل چن بڑوں حصول OCB سرٹیفکیٹ بحق خود

اشیاء مراد کا گاہی برعکس و عامہ۔

معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان الصد میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بھروسہ وصول RBA سرٹیفکیٹ دفتر بڑا میں پیش کیا ہے جو کہ ریکارڈ دہائی ہے۔ اس بارے میں بنیادی حلقے سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے نمایاں ہے کہ سائل موقع تلگام میں اپنے والد کے ساتھ رہائش پذیر ہے اور سائل کا تعلق واحد تلگام ہے۔ حلقے کے چیلڈ آرٹیکل میں اور سائل بھی تلگام حلقے سے تعلق رکھتا ہے۔ سائل نے پہلی پیشگی خوشگام سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کی ہے۔ اب سائل OCB سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہاں ہے۔ سائل کا کنڈیشن درج ذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

نمبر شمار	نام و مدولیت	عمر	پیشہ
1	غلام احمد تلگام ولد عبدالعزیز	60	مرسدیہ
2	سمانہ فاطمہ زوجہ غلام احمد	56	عمر سیدہ
3	غلام نبی احمد تلگام ولد غلام احمد	29	ذریعہ تعلیم ارتھکان
4	ظہیر نبی ولد غلام نبی احمد	05	ذریعہ تعلیم
5	نہالہ بی بی دختر غلام نبی احمد	02	شہوار
6	منظور احمد تلگام ولد غلام احمد	26	ذریعہ تعلیم ارتھکان
7	سید اختر زوجہ غلام نبی احمد	26 سال	گھریلو کام
8	الفت بی بی زوجہ منظور احمد	24 سال	گھریلو کام

اس طور پر سائل کا کوئی 08 افراد پر مشتمل ہے۔ سائل نے سالانہ کنڈیشن کے سالانہ 10800 روپے سے لے کر سائل کے تمام اثاثوں کو بطور ضمانت پیش کیا ہے۔ سائل نے اپنا پتہ اور سائل کے پتے کے اندر دوران دفتر میں اپنا پتہ پیش کرنے سے عہدہ کرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تہسیدار۔

fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 My name has been wrongly written in my aadhaar card as Mukhti Begum while my correct name is Zahida Begum which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Zahida Begum  
 W/o Mohammad Sultan Dar  
 R/o Tapper Waripora Pattan Baramulla

fko

**NOTICE**  
 It is to inform that I want to change the name in the PDD connection of my shop situated at Masjid Usmania Bota Kadal Lalbazar Sgr bearing consumer ID: 020404003628 and installation No: 16001 from the name of Javed Ahmad Shah S/o: Mohammad Maqbool Shah R/o Hawal Srinagar to Javid Ahmad Shah S/o Ghulam Rasool Shah R/o Lane 4 Umer Colony B Lalbazar SGR. Anybody having objection in this regard may contact PDD Office Division IV (Khanyar) Sub-Division Hawal Within seven (07) days, after that no objection will be entertained.

**Javid Ahmad Shah S/o Ghulam Rasool Shah**  
 R/o lane 4 Umer Colony B Lalbazar SGR

ni

**In The Court Of Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kaprin**  
 Subject: Application of Mohd Iqbal Lone S/o Gull Mohd Lone R/o Braripora tehsil and District Shoplan for registration of event of Birth ( delayed entry) of his Son namely Kifayat Iqbal

**PUBLICATION NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC**  
 Whereas the applicant named above has filed present application for Issuance of birth certificate of his Son with date of birth as **22-01-2010**

As such notice is issued in the name of general public that in case anybody has any objections regarding the entry of birth record of applicant's Sons with the office of Registrar (Births & Deaths)/Block Development Officer KAPRAN then he / she/they can file objections to same in this court within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which application shall be decided in accordance with the mandate of law. Issued under seal and signature of this court today on 18-01-2024

Executive Magistrate  
 1st Class Kaprin

FKO

**SAD DEMISE**  
 With Profound Grief And Sorrow We Inform The Sad Demise Of Mst.zoona W/O Late Abdul Ahad Dar R/O Rampora Chattabal Srinagar,Who Left For Heavenly Abode On Monday 18 Feb 2024 At 8Pm. Mourning Will Be Held For 4 Days. Congregational Fateh Khawani Will Be Held On Thursday 22 February 2024 At 10.Am At Their Ancestral Graveyard Syed Mohammad Mantaki R.a Situated At Guzarbal Chattabal.

NOTE: LADIES ARE REQUESTED NOT TO BRING ANY EATABLES WITH THEM

**BEREAVED**  
 DAR FAMILY  
 MEHRAJ UD DIN DAR (SON)  
 CONTACT NUMBER: 9596324921,9622527644

tb

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate in favour of my son Mohammad Asim who was born on 27-11-2019 at LD Hospital. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Sajad Ahmad Wani  
 F/o Mohammad Asim  
 R/o Krishama Kunzer Baramulla

nj

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 The name of my father in birth certificate has been wrongly written as Gh Mustafa Bhat while his correct name is Mustafa Bhat which needs to be corrected. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Municipal Committee Magam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohd Abass Bhat  
 S/o Mustafa Bhat

bmg

**Before The Hon'ble Court Of Principal District And Sesslons judge, At Srinagar**  
 In The Case of  
 1. Mohammad Maqbool Malik aged 61 years  
 2. Ghulam Nabi Malik aged 57 years  
 3. Javed Ahmad Malik aged 55 years  
 All S/o Ghulam Ahmad Malik All R/o Lasjan, Srinagar, Kashmir

.....(Caveator)

VERSUS  
 Public at Large

.....(Non-Caveators)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate in favour of my son Zehran Ahmad Zargar who was born on 03-04-2013. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohammad Ayoub Zargar  
 F/o Zehran Ahmad Zargar  
 R/o Chandian Pajan Kulgam

nj

**Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan**  
 Subject: Application of Ashiq Hussain Rather S/o Mohammad Ramzan Rather R/o Dangerpora Sopore for issuance of DOB Certificate of his son namely Faizan born on 28-04-2020

**NOTICE**  
 General Public is hereby informed through this notice that the undersigned office has received the above mentioned application for issuance of DOB. If any person(s) has any objection(s) he/she can visit the undersigned's office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be considered.

FKO

**Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan**  
 Subject: Application of Ashiq Hussain Rather S/o Mohammad Ramzan Rather R/o Dangerpora Sopore for issuance of DOB Certificate of his son namely Faizan born on 28-04-2020

**NOTICE**  
 General Public is hereby informed through this notice that the undersigned office has received the above mentioned application for issuance of DOB. If any person(s) has any objection(s) he/she can visit the undersigned's office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be considered.

FKO

**From the principal District Judge, Srinagar**  
 Present: Mr. Jawad Ahmad

**Before The Hon Ble High Court Of Jammu & Kashmir And Ladakh At Srinagar**  
 IN THE CASE OF: Caveat No. of 2024 titled below,

1. Javid Ahmad Najar (Aged 35 Years) S/o Gh. Mohamad Najar R/o Pymus, Budgam. 191111  
 2 Tariq Ahmad Sofi (Aged 36 Years) S/o Mohammad Akram Sofi R/o Betabagh Budgam. 191111

Caveators

Versus

Public at Large

Non - Caveators

**From the principal District Judge, Srinagar**  
 Present: Mr. Jawad Ahmad

1. Zeenat Jan @ Farhana (aged 45 years) D/o Ghulam Qadir Baba W/o Shahnaz Ahmad Koul R/o Shah Faisal Lane Buchpora Srinagar A/P Nowshahra Srinagar  
 2. Mehru-Nissa Adopted Daughter of Late. Shahnaz Ahmad Koul R/o Shah Faisal Lane Buchpora Srinagar A/P Nowshahra Srinagar

Petitioners

V/S

1. Suhaib Koul S/o Shahnaz Ahmad Koul R/o Shah Faisal Colony Buchpora Srinagar

Respondent

In the matter of Application for issuance of Succession certificate in favour of the petitioner(s)  
 Notice to public at Large

Where the petitioners(s) FILED ABOVE TITLED PETITION BEFORE THIS COURT OF ISSUANCE OF SUCCESSION certificate in favour of Petitioner(s) in respect of Rs 69,00,000 as debts and securities in name of Deceased Namely: Late Shahnaz Ahmad Koul S/o Late Abdul Aziz Koul. R/o Shah Faisal Lane Buchpora Srinagar who died on 19-09-2023. The petition is pending disposal before this court and the next date of hearing is fixed on 27-02-2024

Public Notice is hereby issued, informing all and sundry through the drom of this proclamation that at any anyone has any objection for issuance of succession certificate, he/she / they shall appear before this court either personally or through counsel or any authorized agent and file objections on or before 27-02-2024 Failing which the petition will be taken up and appropriate orders will be passed in the same

In case, the date fixed is declared as holiday the matter shall be taken on the next working day.

Given under my hand and seal of this court on ----

Jawad Ahmad  
 Principal District Judge, Srinagar

nj

**IN THE MATTER OF Caveat Application.**  
 MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIPS,  
 The Applicants above named most respectfully showeth as under.

1. That the non-Caveators have preferred a OA against the Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Ltd. M.A Road Srinagar and Ors before the Hon'ble Central Administrative Tribunal Srinagar. In which OA an interim order dated 11/9/2023 has been passed by the Honble Tribunal in favour of the Caveators. Copy of the order dated 11/9/2023 passed by this Hon'ble Central Administrative Tribunal Srinagar is annexed herewith and is marked as Annexure - 1.

2 The Caveators submits that should the Non-Caveators or anybody prefer any writ petition impugning the aforesaid order before this Hon'ble Court, the Caveators be afforded a reasonable opportunity of being heard in the matter before any effective orders are passed in the matter by this Hon'ble court

3. That for constituting a valid caveat a copy of the caveat Application has already been published in the Newspaper Copy of which is evidencing this fact position is annexed herewith and is marked as Annexure-II.

IN THESE PREMISES, it is, therefore, prayed that should non- Caveators or anybody prefer any writ petition or any other proceeding impugning the aforesaid order dated 11/9/2023 annexed herewith as Annexure I before this Hon'ble Court, the Caveators be afforded a reasonable opportunity of being heard in the matter before any effective order is passed in the matter by this Hon'ble court for the same would meet the ends of justice.

And for this Act of kindness the Applicants as in duty bound by law shall ever pray.

nj



## PM To Launch Rs 30,500 Cr Development Projects In Jammu Today

- Distribute 1500 Appointment Letters
- Banihal-Sangaldan Railway Line
- Electrified Baramulla-Sangaldan Rail Line
- Flagger off first electric train
- IIT Jammu, IIM Jammu
- AIIMS in Vijaypur, Jammu
- New terminal building at the Jammu airport
- Delhi-Amritsar-Katra expressway
- Phase-two for four-laning of the Srinagar Ring road.
- Common User Facility petroleum depot at Jammu.
- Projects for strengthening civic infrastructure
- Provisioning public facilities across J&K
- Interact with beneficiaries of 'Viksit Bharat, Viksit Jammu' program

### Press Trust Of India

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Jammu on Tuesday to launch multiple development projects, including for education, railway, aviation and road sectors, worth Rs 30,500 crore.

He will also distribute appointment letters to about 1,500 newly recruited government employees of Jammu and Kashmir and interact with beneficiaries of various schemes as part of the 'Viksit Bharat, Viksit Jammu' programme, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement.

Among the railway projects that Modi will inaugurate are the railway line between Banihal-Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan (48 km) and the newly electrified Baramulla-Srinagar-Banihal-Sangaldan section (185.66 km).

The statement said that he will flag off the first electric train in the Valley and the train



service between Sangaldan and Baramulla stations.

The commissioning of the Banihal-Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan section is significant as it features the usage of ballast-less track (BLT) all

along the route providing a better ride experience to passengers, it said.

India's longest transportation tunnel T-50 (12.77 km) lies in the portion between Khari and Sumber. The

railway projects will improve connectivity, ensure environmental sustainability and boost the overall economic development of the region.

In a significant step towards upgrading and developing education and skilling infrastructure across the country, the statement said, Modi will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of several projects worth about Rs 13,375 crore.

The projects include permanent campuses for IIT Bhilai, IIT Tirupati, IIT Jammu, IITDM Kanchipuram, Indian Institute of Skills (IIS), a pioneer skill training institute on advanced technologies located at Kanpur, and campuses of Central Sanskrit University at Devprayag (Uttarakhand) and Agartala (Tripura).

He will also | [More on PIO](#)

### 'People Of J&K Have Natural Connect With PM'

#### Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** Union minister Jitendra Singh on Monday reviewed the arrangements for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public rally in Jammu, and said there is huge excitement among people on the eve of the programme.

The minister visited the venue -- Maulana Azad Stadium -- accompanied by senior central government officials and a team of Jammu and Kashmir administration led by the divisional commissioner of Jammu.

Billboards and hoardings carrying Modi's pictures and BJP flags have come up across the city, especially along the Jammu-Airport road to welcome the prime minister.

This will be Prime Minister Modi's second visit to Jammu region after the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019. Earlier on April 24, 2022, Modi had addressed a rally in Pali Panchayat in Samba district.

"There is a huge amount of excitement on the eve of the prime minister's official visit to Jammu, with people eagerly awaiting his arrival. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have a natural connect with him," the minister said, after reviewing the arrangements.

He said virtually every citizen of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir wants to be a part of the programme.

"I am glad that both the society and the administration have got together to make adequate | [More on PIO](#)

### Multi-tier Security For PM's Visit

#### Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** A multi-tier security setup has been put in place and traffic advisories issued for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jammu on Tuesday, officials on Monday said.

Modi is scheduled to address a public rally at Maulana Azad Stadium in the heart of winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir during his visit on February 20, they said.

The officials said the prime minister will also launch multiple development projects, including for education, railway, aviation and road sectors, worth Rs 30,500 crore.

According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's | [More on PIO](#)

**THE RAILWAY PROJECTS WILL IMPROVE connectivity, ensure environmental sustainability and boost the overall economic development of the region."**

## Centre Agrees To Discuss Ladakh's Statehood, Inclusion In 6th Schedule

### Press Trust Of India

**New Delhi:** A delegation of leaders from Ladakh held a meeting with the government's representatives here on Monday to press for their demands, including statehood for the high-altitude region, two Lok Sabha seats and bringing the area under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

The 14-member delegation of the Apex Body Leh (ABL) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) met the High Powered Committee (HPC) for Ladakh

headed by Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai.

"The meeting discussed the Ladakh delegation's demands," a source privy to the deliberations said, without elaborating further.

The demands of the delegation are statehood for Ladakh, two Lok Sabha seats (one for Kargil and one for Leh), job opportunities for the residents of the Union Territory and constitutional protection under the Sixth Schedule. Ladakh currently has one Lok Sabha constituency. | [More on PIO](#)

## "Schools Flouting Admission Fee Ban" CEO Ganderbal Orders Probe Into Two Prominent Schools

### Syed Mohammad Burhan

**Srinagar:** In a recent development, the Chief Education Officer (CEO) Ganderbal, Muzamil Akhtar, has ordered an inquiry into allegations against Hilltop Educational Institute Darend and R.P. School Nagbal.

The complaint, lodged jointly by residents of the neighboring areas, accuses both schools of refusing admission and unlawfully

charging banned admission fees in violation of directives from competent authorities.

The directive from the Chief Education Officer (CEO), issued via order no CEO/Gbl/Estt/Pvt-Sch/1798-1803 on February 17, 2024, instructs the Deputy Chief Education Officer (Dy. CEO) of Ganderbal and the Principal of GHSS Tullamulla to conduct an inspection of the private schools and | [More on PIO](#)

## Govt Helping Farmers To Take Agriculture On A New Path: PM

Says This Is The Right Time For Investment In Superfoods Like Millets

### Press Trust Of India

**Uttar Pradesh:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that his government was helping farmers to take agriculture on a new path, and laid focus on natural farming and millets.

Addressing an event in Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, the prime minister emphasized the importance of working towards a common goal of having Indian food products on dining tables across the globe.

His remarks came amid a protest by a section of farmers over their various demands such as a legal guarantee for minimum support price for crops.

"We are assisting and encouraging farmers to take our country's agriculture on a new path," he said.



He emphasised the focus on natural farming and millets. "This is the right time for investment in superfoods like millets," he said.

He cited the emergence of large-scale natural farming along the banks of the Ganges in Uttar Pradesh, which not only benefits farmers but

also helps preserve the purity of sacred rivers.

The prime minister appealed to food processing entrepreneurs to prioritise the mantra of "zero effect, zero defect" in their endeavours.

He highlighted the success stories of products such as Siddharth Nagar's | [More on PIO](#)

## India Bringing Back Its Ancient Idols From Abroad: PM

The circle of time has moved, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday, noting that the country is not only bringing back its ancient idols from abroad but also getting record foreign investment. Addressing a gathering after laying the foundation stone of the Shri Kalki Dham temple here in Uttar Pradesh, he said on one hand places of pilgrimage are being developed and, on the | [More on PIO](#)

## Fresh Snow In Higher Reaches, Plains Drenched In Rain

### Press Trust Of India

**Srinagar:** Snowfall in higher reaches, including Gulmarg skiing resort, and rains in plains lashed Kashmir on Monday as precipitation is likely to continue in the valley over the next 48 hours, officials said.

Gulmarg skiing resort in Baramulla district, which is scheduled to host the fourth Khelo India Winter Games from Wednesday, has received around 1.5 feet of fresh snowfall over the past 24 hours, the officials said.

Snowfall was also reported from Kupwara, Handwara and Sonamarg areas of the valley.

The rest of the valley, including Srinagar city, has been lashed by moderate to heavy rains since Sunday.

Srinagar has received 12.4



mm rainfall over the past 24 hours while Qazigund received 12.8 mm rains.

Pahalgam (18.6 mm), Kupwara (42.7 mm) and Kokernag (8.0 mm) also received substantial rains over the same period.

National Highway Closed

The traffic on the 270-km Jammu-Srinagar national highway remained suspended on Monday after landslides and shooting of stones from hill-rocks at over half-a-dozen places in Ramban district rendered it un navigable, and rains and

snowfall lashed several parts of Jammu and Kashmir for the second day, officials said.

Two interstate highways were also closed as a precautionary measure in view of fresh snowfall in the upper reaches of Baderwah in | [More on PIO](#)

- Jammu-Srinagar National Highway Closed
- Avalanche Warning Issued for Ten Districts
- Gusty Winds Damage Residential Houses in Kashmir
- Tourists Rescued From Dal Lake
- Several 11KV, 33KV feeders down
- Several Exams Postponed

Azad, Abdullahs Lock Horns Over Art 370

## Azad Claims Abdullahs Were Consulted Before Art 370 Abrogation

"We Were Detained, You Were Free": Omar Hits Back

### Press Trust Of India

**Srinagar:** The National Conference hit out at former Jammu and Kashmir chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad on Monday for his comments that NC chief Farooq Abdullah and his son, Omar Abdullah, were consulted before the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution, saying he has

"stooped so low" by making "baseless and senseless allegations".

Farooq Abdullah, who is the Lok Sabha MP from Srinagar, said it was a sad day to see "Azad stooping so low in his political utterances only to remain in the political circuit. A leader like him should not be circulating what he himself has termed gossip".

The veteran leader, who has been the chief minister of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir thrice, reminded Azad about the support he got from the NC to win | [More on PIO](#)

33 Lakh Embezzlement Case

## Crime Branch Files Chargesheet Against Govt Official

### Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** Crime Branch of Jammu and Kashmir Police on Monday filed a chargesheet here against a suspended government official for his alleged involvement in the embezzlement of Rs 33 lakh from accounts of withdrawal of GPF from seventh pay commission arrears of employees, an official said.

The chargesheet was filed in the court of Special Judge

Anti-Corruption, Jammu against the then drawing and disbursing officer (DDO) in geology and mining department Aijaz Mir, who is presently under suspension in the case filed in 2021, a spokesperson of the Crime Branch, Jammu said.

He said the case refers to a complaint filed by the then Drill Operator Grade-2 S L Bhat with the then Director, Geology and Mining Department | [More on PIO](#)

## Snowfall Brings Hardships For Expectant Mothers in Rural Kashmir

### Augib Javed

**Srinagar:** On January 31, Jammu and Kashmir police received a distress call from Mashkoor Ahmad Malik a resident of Humpathri, DK Marag in south Kashmir's Kulgam district stating that his pregnant wife is in "deep labor pain" and needs to be shifted to a maternity hospital immediately.

Humpathri is a remote village, around 30 kilometers away from the District Hospital Kulgam. The road towards the village is still not fully motorable.

With each passing time, Malik and his family became anxious. The road was slippery and the family was unable to take her to the hospital.

After some time, a police

party of Kulgam reached the spot and shifted the lady to the hospital amid the snowfall.

"We have been blessed with a baby girl. Both my wife and daughter are doing fine. We were discharged from the hospital after three days," Mashkoor told Kashmir Observer.

He said that the ambulance driver arrived near the spot but couldn't reach our house.

"The administration also dispatched a 4\*4 vehicle but that couldn't reach here. Then J&K police arrived and shifted the patient along with other family members to hospital," he added.

The valley is witnessing a second spell of the much needed snowfall, while it may delight tourists and locals in the plains, it's a different story

for those in rural and border areas of Kashmir. For them, it has brought about misery, with many facing significant hardship and health emergencies.

The Jammu and Kashmir police have rescued a dozen women so far who found it difficult to reach the hospital as the roads are either blocked due to snowfall or the road was too slippery.

In a similar operation, on February 4, at around 10:30 PM, Army Camp of Vilgam village in north Kashmir's Kupwara received a call from Mushtaq Ahmed Gagi. He reported that his wife, Safoora Begum, was experiencing intense labor pains and urgently needed medical assistance.

"My wife was | [More on PIO](#)



## Samajwadi Party Offers 17 Seats To Congress In UP, Says Akhilesh Yadav Will Join Nyay Yatra Only If Proposal Accepted

Press Trust of India

**LUCKNOW:** The Congress has been offered 17 Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party said on Monday and



asserted that its chief Akhilesh Yadav will join the Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Raebareli only if the proposal is accepted.

"We have given a final offer of 17 Lok Sabha seats to the Congress. Akhilesh Yadav's participation in the Nyay Yatra in Raebareli on Tuesday will depend on their acceptance," Rajendra Chaudhary, the Sama-

iwadi Party's chief spokesperson, told PTI.

He, however, refused to identify the seats offered to the Congress.

The Gandhi-led yatra will pass through Amethi on Monday. It will then enter Raebareli, where the Samajwadi Party chief had earlier said he would join.

A Congress statement on Sunday said party chief Mallikarjun Kharge would join the yatra -- currently in Pratapgarh -- in Amethi.

The Samajwadi Party had earlier offered 11 seats to the grand old party while the Congress' state unit demanded a higher allocation.

Ajay Rai, the Congress' Uttar Pradesh unit chief, had earlier said the party should get around two dozen seats it had won in the 2009 general elections.

The Samajwadi Party and the Congress are partners in the opposition INDIA bloc.

The Congress secured victory only from the Raebareli seat in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections from Uttar Pradesh. At 80, the state sends the highest number of MPs to Parliament.

## OBC, Dalit, Tribal Are 73 Per Cent, But None Among Top 200 Firms In India Owned By Them: Rahul Gandhi

Press Trust of India

**PRAYAGRAJ (UP):** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Sunday said the OBC, Dalit and tribal constitute 73 per cent of the population but not even one of the top 200 companies in India is owned by them.

Addressing a gathering during his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra here, he said a caste census is an X-ray of the country which would "reveal everything".

"Caste census is your (youth's) weapon and you have to find out what is your population," he told the gathering as he came of the Swaraj Bhawan, at Lakshmi Talkies intersection near Allahabad University. "Secondly, you have to find out what is your share in the country's wealth." "How much wealth do the 73 per cent castes have in this country? Caste census is the X-ray of the country. This will reveal everything," he said.

Gandhi called a student from the crowd to his vehicle and asked him, "Which class do you belong to?" The student replied that he was from the OBC category. On this, Gandhi said, "The OBC class in the country is 50 per cent, Dalits are 15 per cent and tribals are eight percent." "Youths like you have no future in this country. Your (OBC, Dalit, Tribal) population is 73 percent, but not even one of the top 200 companies in India is owned by an OBC or Dalit. Only three people are from your category are in the list of 90 top IAS officers of the country. You don't have a single person in the media." Gandhi also alleged that not a single person from the OBC or tribal category at the Ayodhya Ram temple consecration ceremony on January 22.

During the public meeting, many students stood holding placards against exam paper leak. "This (paper leak) is a way to stop you from moving forward," the former Congress president told them.

Accusing the government of writing off loans of big industrialists, Gandhi said the BJP never waived off farmers' loans.

Loans worth Rs 14-lakh crore of 10-15 industrialists have been waived off, he claimed.



"Industrialists ask for bank loans worth lakhs of crores of rupees and they get the loan within seconds, but Dalits and backward people are chased away from the banks." Congress leader Pramod Tiwari said Gandhi reached the Swaraj Bhawan directly from the Prayagraj airport. He met Congress workers there before taking out the Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra.

The yatra will go to Mauaima via Teliarganj, Phaphamau and Holagarh where the yatra will halt.

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, State Congress President Ajay Rai and former MLA Anugrah Narayan Singh were present during the yatra as it got underway in an open jeep at 4 pm.

## "If By Ramadan Our Hostages Are Not Home...": Israel Warns Hamas



Agencies

**JERUSALEM:** Israel will launch its long-threatened offensive against Rafah next month if Hamas has not freed the remaining hostages held in Gaza by the start of Ramadan, Israeli war cabinet member Benny Gantz said.

"The world must know, and Hamas leaders must know -- if by Ramadan our hostages are not home, the fighting will continue everywhere, including the Rafah area," Gantz, a retired military chief of staff, told a conference of American Jewish leaders in Jerusalem Sunday.

Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, is expected to begin on March 10.

The Israeli government has not previously specified a deadline for its planned assault on the city where the majority of the 1.7 million displaced Palestinians have sought refuge.

Fearing the potential for

mass casualties, foreign governments and aid organisations have repeatedly urged Israel to spare Rafah, the last major Gaza city not invaded by ground troops during the four-month-old war.

Despite the mounting international pressure, including a direct appeal from US President Joe Biden, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insists the war cannot be completed without pressing into Rafah.

Speaking at the same Jerusalem conference on Sunday, Netanyahu renewed his vow "to finish the job to get total victory" over Hamas, with or without a hostage deal.

Gantz added that an offensive would be carried out in a coordinated manner and in conversation with Americans and Egyptians to facilitate an evacuation and "minimise the civilian casualties as much as possible".

But where civilians can safely relocate to on the besieged Gaza Strip remains unclear.

The comments come after weeks of ceasefire talks have failed to produce a deal, with key mediator Qatar acknowledging over the weekend that the prospects are dimming.

Washington, Israel's key ally and military backer, has been pushing for a six-week truce in exchange for the release of the 130 hostages still estimated by Israel to be held in Gaza, including around 30 presumed dead.

Israel has said it believes many of those hostages, as well as the Hamas leadership, are holed up in Rafah.

The militants took about 250 people hostage during the October 7 attacks that triggered the war and resulted in the deaths of about 1,160 people in Israel, according to an AFP tally of Israeli figures.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed at least 28,858 people, mostly women and children, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.

## ICJ Opens Hearings On Legal Consequences Of Israel's Occupation Of Palestinian Territories

Agencies

The UN's top court, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), on Monday opened a week of hearings on the legal consequences of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories.

Judges have been asked to review "occupation, settlement and annexation ... including measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and from its adoption of related discriminatory legislation and measures."

The advisory opinion will not be legally binding.

The UN General Assembly requested the ICJ provide the advisory opinion before the Hamas terror attacks on Israel on October 7 and the subsequent Israeli offensive in Gaza.

Israel captured the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza in the Six Day War in 1967. It withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005, while still controlling the territory's borders.

Since 1967, Israel has expanded settlements within the occupied West Bank and annexed East Jerusalem.

The UN General Assembly



asked ICJ judges to advise on how Israel's policies "affect the legal status of the occupation" and what legal consequences arise for all countries from this.

While the opinion would not be legally binding, it would carry "great legal weight and moral authority," according to the court.

Fifty states are due to address judges in the proceedings, including the United States, China, Russia, South Africa and Egypt. Israel will not participate directly but has sent written observations.

This is the second time the UN has asked the ICJ for a non-binding opinion related to Israel's occupation of Palestin-

ian territories.

In July 2004, the ICJ found that Israel's separation wall in the occupied West Bank violated international law. Israel has not dismantled the structure.

The hearings this week are separate from a case filed by South Africa at the ICJ against Israel for allegedly violating the 1948 Genocide Convention in its military operations in the Gaza Strip.

The court ruled that Israel must do everything in its power to prevent genocide and allow humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip but did not order a cease-fire. On Friday, it rejected South Africa's appeal to impose additional measures on Israel.

## PM Modi To Inaugurate 6 New AIIMS Across India In Next 6 Days

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate six new AIIMS, including the ones in Samba in Jammu and Kashmir and Rae Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, in the next six days, officials said on Monday.

He will dedicate to the nation the AIIMS in Samba district at an event in Jammu on Tuesday and five others in Rajkot, Mangalagiri, Bathinda, Rae Bareilly and Kalyani at a programme in Rajkot in Gujarat on February 25.

The AIIMS Jammu, the foundation of which was laid by Prime Minister Modi in February 2019, is being established under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana.

Established at a cost of more than ₹ 1,660 crore and in an area spanning over 227 acres, the hospital is equipped with facilities such as 720 beds, a medical college with 125 seats, a nursing college with 60 seats, an AYUSH block with 30 beds, a residential accommodation for faculty and staff, hostel accommodation for undergraduate and postgraduate students, night shelter, guest house, auditorium, shopping complex, etc.

He will also inaugurate various medical colleges and nursing colleges across the country. He will lay the foundation of many new medical colleges and various advanced health facilities, including critical care blocks and integrated public health labs, under the PM-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission.

He will also be dedicated to the nation's advanced research labs and facilities of ICMR and various National Health Mis-



sion (NHM) projects.

To ensure the safety and quality of food consumed by millions of Indians, Prime Minister Modi will inaugurate advanced food safety infrastructure projects and facilities in multiple states.

All these health projects with a total cost of ₹11,391.79 crore will bring a wave of healthcare advancements and transform India's healthcare landscape, officials said.

The projects will ensure quality, affordable, and accessible healthcare for all along with expanding medical education in the country.

The new medical and nursing colleges will nurture the next generations of doctors and healthcare professionals in the country. For a nation to truly progress, its citizens must be healthy, both physically and mentally, they said.

The new healthcare infrastructure projects and facilities will propel India towards a healthier, happier, and prosperous tomorrow.

Officials said that during the UPA, the Ministry of Health had a budget allocation of ₹ 37,330 crore in 2013-14 while under the NDA, it increased to ₹ 90,658.63 crore in 2024-25, marking a substantial rise of approximately 143 per cent.

## No New Zoo Or Safari On Forest Land Without Our Approval: Supreme Court

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Any fresh proposal for opening a zoo or starting a 'safari' on forest land will now require the approval of the Supreme Court, which on Monday issued a slew of directions for forest conservation across the country.

The top court took note of the submission that the definition of forest under the 2023 amended law on conservation leaves out nearly 1.99 lakh sq km of forest land from the ambit of 'forest' which can be used for other purposes.

Dealing with a batch of petitions challenging the amendments to the forest conservation law of 2023, a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra directed the state governments and union territories to provide the details of the forest land within their jurisdiction to the Centre by March 31 this year.

The top court said the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change will put all the details on "forest-like area, unclassified forest land and community forest land", to be provided by the states and UTs, on its website by April 15.

"No Zoos/Safaris to be notified in forests lands without prior approval...any proposal for the establishment of zoo/safaris referred to in the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 owned by Govt or any authority in forest areas other than protected areas shall not be finally approved save and except with the prior permission of this court," it said.

In its interim order, the bench asked the states and UTs to act as per the definition of "forest" as laid down by the top court in the 1996 judgement in the case of TN Godavarmam Thirumulpad vs Union of India.

It noted that the process of identifying land recorded as forests in government records is going on as per the amended law.

The petitioners have alleged that the wide definition of "forest" in the Supreme Court judgement has been narrowed under Section 1A inserted in the amended law. As per the amended law, land has to be either notified as a forest or specifically recorded as a forest in a government record to qualify as a "forest".

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, said the amendments were passed in furtherance of the Supreme Court's directions in the judgement.

## NEWS MAKERS

## Mahua Moitra Gets A Week's Time To Appear Before Probe Agency

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Enforcement Directorate has issued fresh summons to Trinamool Congress leader and expelled Lok Sabha MP Mahua Moitra for questioning in a FEMA contravention case after she did not depose on Monday, sources said.

The 49-year-old politician has been given a week's time to appear after she sent a communication to the agency expressing her inability to depose, they said.

A response from the Trinamool Congress (TMC)



politician was not available immediately.

The ED wants to question Moitra and record her statement under the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA)

once she deposes.

Transactions linked to a non-resident external (NRE) account are under the scanner of the agency in the case apart from a few other foreign remittances and trans-

fer of funds, the sources said.

Ms Moitra is being probed by the CBI too which is conducting a preliminary inquiry into the allegations against Moitra on the reference from the Lokpal.

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey had accused Ms Moitra of asking questions in Lok Sabha that were critical of the Narendra Modi government at the behest of businessman Darshan Hiranandani in exchange for gifts.

He had also accused Ms Moitra of compromising the national security for monetary gains. Ms Moitra has denied any wrongdoing.

## 3 Children Die As Woman Jumps In Well With Them After Fight With Husband

Press Trust of India

**SERAIKELA:** Three children died after their mother jumped into a well taking them along, following a family quarrel in Jharkhand's Seraikela-Kharswan district, police said on Monday.

The woman, identified as Puja Mahato, was rescued by villagers and taken to a community health centre in Kharswan.

Puja, a resident of Lohardaga district, had an altercation with her husband over a visit to her parent's place on Saturday.

The woman taking her three children along jumped into the well when her husband left for Ranchi for some work, Sub-Divisional Police Officer (Seraikela)



Dilip Khalko said.

The three minors, identified as Komal Kumari (9), Ananya Mahato (5) and Aryan Mahato, were killed and Puja was rescued, the SDPO said.

A police team rushed to the spot on receiving the information and recovered the bodies in the evening, he said, adding that the woman was shifted to a nearby hospital.



## Power Outage During 'Fajar' Prayers Becoming Norm In Kashmir

Observer News Service

Srinagar: People from different parts of Srinagar and elsewhere in the Valley have expressed anguish against the power outage during 'Fajar' (pre-dawn) prayers.

According to locals, it has become a routine for the KPDCCL to snap the power supply either before or shortly after the Fajar Azan. They said power outages in Kashmir are rampant and frequent all day but it has now become a new norm for believers to do ablution and offer Fajar prayers in the dark.

"For the past month, I have been witness to the

fact that as soon as a call for prayers is given from our local mosque, electricity disappears. Despite raising the issue with the concerned officials, nothing changed," said a local Abdul Rehman from Bata-maloo area of Srinagar.

The same views were shared by an elderly man from the Mehjoor Nagar area of Srinagar uptown.

A local from the Qamarwari area of Srinagar told the news agency Kashmir News Trust over the phone that the long power cuts have irked the people. "The KPDCCL sucks the blood of poor people, dispatching fatty bills but not offering decent service," he said. KNT



Boatmen racing against the gusty winds to get across Dal Lake amid heavy rainfall in Srinagar on Monday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

## Traffic Restored On Shalimar Road After Two Months

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: Authorities reopened a portion of the road that had been closed to traffic to facilitate the construction of a culvert adjacent to the shrine of Syed Meerakh Shah Kashani (R.A.) at Shalimar area in Srinagar after two months.

The move comes four days following publication of a report by Kashmir Observer detailing the inconveniences that motorists and pilgrims experienced as a result of the executing agency's inordinate delay in completing the project.

The work on the ten-meter-long culvert near the shrine, according to the residents living in the vicinity, began in December of last year, causing immense hardships to motorists and pilgrims alike.

Given the difficulties people might have encountered, the road was reopened for traffic around

### KO IMPACT

Although the department had set a February 25 deadline for the contractor to complete the project, the road was, however, reopened for traffic around ten days prior to its scheduled completion date."

ten days ahead of the project's scheduled completion date, a senior official of the Roads and Bridges Department told Kashmir Observer.

"Although the department had set a February 25 deadline for the contractor to complete the project, the road was, however, reopened for traffic around ten days prior to its scheduled completion date," he added.

He also said the macadamization of the affected portion near the culvert will be done in May because the current weather does not allow for it to happen sooner.

Meanwhile the residents of Shalimar and its surrounding areas, expressed gratitude to the administration for reopening the road for traffic again, saying the pilgrims were unable to visit the shrine and that motorists were using alternative routes to get to Lal Chowk and other locations.

They also asserted that the closure of the road for around two months negatively impacted local business as well.

## Kashmiri Sand Artists Seeks Govt Support To Preserve Traditional Art

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Sahil Manzoor, 28, a passionate sand artist from Srinagar has sought an administrative intervention to preserve and promote the fading artistry in Kashmir. He is currently teaching his skills to nearly 200 students and believes that administrative attention is crucial to safeguard this traditional art form.

Sahil said he is deeply connected to artisanal work, which he inherited from his family.

Sahil said his journey into sand artistry began at a young age, inspired by his

mother's aari work and his father's craftsmanship. He recalled crafting a model of a Shikara (a rowing boat in Dal Lake) in 6th grade, which earned him his first position in school.

His passion for sand art was further fuelled when he came across the work of Persian sand artist Fatmir in 2010. "Since then, I have showcased my talent on various platforms, including the pillars of Lal Chowk and even in the Parliament of India," he said, adding that collaborations with Bollywood stars like Adnan Sami and appearances on Sony TV have contributed to his growing career.

## Awareness Camp On HADP, eNAM, PMFME Scheme & CSSs Held At Fruit Mandi

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A one-day awareness program on Holistic Agricultural Development Program (HADP), Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME), eNAM and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) was today held at Fruit Mandi Parimpora, Srinagar.

The camp, organized by Area Marketing office Horticulture Planning & Marketing Parimpora Srinagar was attended by Farmers, Traders, PRIs, multiple Business Unit Holders of the area interested in upgrading their existing units/setting up of new units etc.

Besides, Officers of Horticulture Production Department, Agriculture Department, Manager J&K Bank Parimpora, District Resource Person etc were also present at the event.

The experts from different allied departments deliberated on the schemes pertaining to the Horticulture Sector in detail.

Area Marketing Officer Srinagar, Shamma Manzoor in her speech apprised the participants about the Departmental Activities.

Marketing Inspector, Shabir Mufti apprised the audience about HADP, PMFME, eNAM and other CSSs pertaining to Food Processing Sector in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir and need to integrate the existing unorganized Micro-food Processing Units of the district.

In order to accomplish the objective of self-reliant India (AatmaNir-

The experts from different allied departments deliberated on the schemes pertaining to the Horticulture Sector in detail.

bar Bharat), the Officer apprised that the Govt. is providing 50% subsidy under HADP program and the Ministry of Food Processing Industries provides financial, technical and marketing support to upgrade the existing micro-food processing units/establish new units under PMFME thereby integrating around two lac micro-food processing enterprises in the unorganized sector with formal supply chain.

The Manager J&K Bank Branch Fruit Mandi Parimpora, Nisar Ahmad Shah explained to the participants about the financial assistance and sub-

sidy disbursement process at Bank level.

The District Resource Person, PMFME, Wali Mohammad apprised the participants about different requirements/formalities of the project under the said scheme like financial assistance, technical knowledge and preparation of DPRs were discussed threadbare with the participants.

The educated unemployed youth were urged to set up their own micro-food processing units and avail credit linked subsidy of 35% of the eligible project cost with a maximum ceiling of Rs 10.00 lac per unit and interest subvention of 3% available under the scheme.

He requested the interested applicants to contact him for assistance in the submission of application, DPR preparation, follow up of cases at bank level etc.

In the end on spot assistance was provided to the beneficiaries to register them under the different schemes.

### Government of Jammu & Kashmir (U T) Office Of The Executive Engineer Machinery Division Srinagar, M&He Department, Kashmir.

Fax No: 0194-2497093 email: xenmds@gmail.com website: www.medkashmir.org

#### Corrigendum 02 For Date Extension

**Name of work:** Repairs/Cleaning to the fountains, Dismantling and refitting of curtains at Machinery Division and other allied items required for different office buildings of M&HE Department Shalteng Srinagar.

**References:** - 1. This office e-NIT No.: MDSK/TS /2023-24/26 Date:27-01-2024 (Tender ID: 2023\_PWDJK\_243742\_2)  
2. This office corrigendum No. 01 issued vide No. MDSK/TS/3656-60 Dt. 12/02/2024

Due to no-response, the above referred e-NIT is extended again with the critical dates as under: -

S.No.	Description	New Dates
01.	Last date of downloading/ submission of bids	24-02-2024 upto 06:00 PM
02.	Date of opening of bids online	26-02-2024 at 02:00 PM

All other terms, conditions and specifications of the NIT shall remain unchanged.

No: MDSK/TS/3862-65 DIPK-16659/23 Date: 19-02-2024

Sd/  
Executive Engineer  
Machinery Division,  
Srinagar

### Government of Jammu and Kashmir Department of Floriculture, Gardens & Parks Civil Secretariat, J&K.

Subject: Tentative Seniority list of Joint Directors of Department of Floriculture, Parks & Gardens as on 01-01-2024.

Government Order No. 02 -JK(Flori) of 2024  
Dated: 12-02-2024.

Whereas, vide Government Order No.34-Flori/G&P of 2019 dated 01.04.2019 and Government Order No.13-JK(Flori) of 2023 dated 19.05.2023 following officers of the Department of Floriculture, Gardens & Parks were regularized as Joint Directors on the recommendations of the DPC/JKPS, and

S.No	Name of the Officer	Date of regularization as joint Director	Vide Government Order No. & dated
1.	Ab. Ahad	27.12.1989	34-Flori/G&P of 2019 dated 01.04.2019
2.	Tirath Singh	27.12.1989	
3.	J. K. Gandotra	01.01.1995	13-JK(Flori) of 2023 dated 19.05.2023
4.	A. K. Koul	01.02.1999	

Whereas, after the regularization of the above officers as Joint Directors, it is necessitating to issue fresh tentative seniority to process their case for the regularization as Director; and  
Whereas, a tentative seniority list of the following Joint Directors is hereby issued for inviting objections, if any, from the members of the service within a period of 15 days from the day of issuance/publication of this order:-

S.No	Name of the Officer	Date of Birth	Date of regularization as Joint Director
1.	Ab. Ahad	21.03.1938	27.12.1989
2.	Tirath Singh	23.08.1932	27.12.1989
3.	J. K. Gandotra	27.01.1941	01.01.1995
4.	A. K. Koul	16.05.1941	01.02.1999

Any Officer aggrieved with the position assigned to him, may represent the Department of Floriculture, Parks & Gardens, Civil Secretariat, J&K through proper channel i.e. Central Registry Unit (CRU) Jammu/Srinagar. The date of birth recorded in the seniority list shall not be taken as authentic but shall be subject to verification from service book/matriculation certificate of the concerned officers. However, the D.O.B mentioned in the seniority list is taken for all practical purpose, so any rectification in the same be also informed to the Department.  
In case no objection is received in the department within the stipulated time period, the seniority position assigned to these Officers shall be treated as final.

By order of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

(Sheikh Fayaz Ahmad) JKAS  
Commissioner/Secretary to the Government

No.FLORI-Genl/59/2021-09-Part-2(7050122)  
DIPK-16666/23 Dated: 19.02.2024

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092, 2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488, 2452222, 2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

**AIRPORTS**  
SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

**RAILWAYS**

- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJBERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

- Sgr-Jammu highway - ( Closed )
- Mughal Road - ( Closed )
- Srinagar- Leh - ( Open )

**HIJRI  
CALENDAR**  
09 Shaban  
1445

**PRAYERS**

FAJR	5: 55
ZUHR	12: 45
ASR	4: 39
Magrib	6: 21
ISHA	7: 43

### This Day In History

- 1280- Japanese Imperial Court orders all temples and shrines to pray for victory in the impending second Mongol invasion 1525- Swiss and German mercenaries desert the army of French King Francis I 1547- King Edward VI of England crowned following the death of his father Henry VIII 1613- Gerard Reynst appointed Governor-General of Dutch East Indies 1619- Trial against Johan van Oldenbarnevelt begins in The Hague for alleged crimes against the federal government 1653- Defeat of Dutch fleet under Adm Van Tromp by Admiral Blake off Portsmouth 1710- Prince John William Friso becomes Stadtholder of Groningen, Netherlands 1732- Estates of Holland ratifies Treaty of Vienna 1745- Jacobite troops occupy Fort Augustus, Scotland 1768- 1st American chartered fire insurance company opens in Pennsylvania 1798- French General Louis Alexandre Berthier forcibly removes Pope Pius VI from Rome during French occupation of Rome (Pope later dies a prisoner in Valence) 1810- Andreas Hofer, Tyrolean patriot and leader of rebellion against Napoleon's forces, executed.
- 1864 Civil War battle of Olustee, Florida
- 1921 - Riza Khan Pahlevi seizes control of Iran
- 1922 - Vilnius, Lithuania, agrees to separate from Poland
- 1932 - Japanese troops occupy Tunhua China
- 1938 - UK Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden resigns stating Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain has appeased Nazi Germany
- 1938 - Adolf Hitler announces his support for Japan during the Sino-Japanese War
- 1941 - Nazi Germany orders Polish Jews barred from using public transportation
- 1952 - Britain's Jeannette Altwegg wins the Olympic women's figure skating gold medal at the Oslo Winter Games ahead of American Tenley Albright, who goes on to win in Cortina d'Ampezzo (1956)
- 1952 - American alpine skier Andrea Mead-Lawrence is only multi-gold medalist at the Oslo Winter Olympics when she wins the slalom, after taking out the inaugural giant slalom
- 1953 - US Court of Appeals rules that Organized Baseball is a sport & not a business, affirming the 25-year-old Supreme Court ruling
- 1954 - General Zahedi wins election in Persia
- 1962 - John Glenn becomes the 1st American to orbit the Earth, aboard Friendship 7
- 1965 - Ranger 8 makes hard landing on the Moon, returns photos, other data
- 1965 - Turkish government of Uerugplu forms
- 1966 - Author Valery Tarsis banished in USSR
- 1975 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalinsk USSR
- 1975 - A feud begins between the official Irish Republican Army and the Irish National Liberation Army; the two groups assassinate a number of each other's volunteers until the feud ends in June 1975
- 1978 - Egypt announces it is pulling its diplomats out of Cyprus
- 1983 - Japan launches Tenma satellite to study x-rays (450/570 km)
- 1989 - An IRA bomb destroys a section of a British Army barracks in Ternhill, England
- 1998 - UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan lands in Baghdad, for peace negotiations
- 2001 - The United States Supreme Court declines to consider an appeal by five major oil companies against Unocal's patent on production of cleaner "reformulated" gasoline sold in California
- 2003 - During a Great White concert in West Warwick, Rhode Island, a pyrotechnics display sets the club ablaze, killing 100 and injuring over 300 others.
- 2005 - Spain becomes the first country to vote in a referendum on ratification of the proposed Constitution of the European Union, passing it by a substantial margin, but on a low turnout.
- 2012 - South Korea angers North Korea as it proceeds with live fire drills in disputed Korean sea borders
- 2012 - Scientists successfully regenerate the flowering plant, Silene stenophylla from a 31,800 year

### Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir Health Secretariat, Near Hajj House, Bemina By-pass, Srinagar – 190018

Subject: Extension of last date for submission of applications for various post under Addiction Treatment facilities(ATF)

#### NOTIFICATION

In view of inclement weather forecast, it is notified for the information of all concerned that the last date for submission of applications for various posts in Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATF) advertised vide notice No. 01/ATF/DHSK/2024 dated 01.02.2024 is hereby extended upto 23/02/2024.

However all other terms and conditions including eligibility criteria will remain unchanged

Sd/  
Director Health Services,  
Kashmir.

No.DHSK/ATF/2023-24/  
DIPK-16630/23 Dated:19/02/2024



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Tuesday | 20-02-2024

## Snowfall Draws Tourists

The picturesque Gulmarg resort in the Baramulla district of Kashmir has been transformed into a pristine winter wonderland with around 1.5 feet of fresh snowfall in the past 24 hours. This natural spectacle couldn't have come at a more opportune time, as Gulmarg is gearing up to host the fourth Khelo India Winter Games from February 21. The recent snowfall, coupled with rains in the plains of Kashmir, has not only enhanced the region's scenic beauty but also holds promising prospects for the tourism industry.

The Gulmarg skiing resort, a renowned destination for winter sports enthusiasts, now boasts a thick layer of fresh snow, creating ideal conditions for skiing and other winter activities. The abundance of snowfall has not only delighted the locals but has also generated excitement among tourists and participants gearing up for the upcoming Winter Games.

Beyond Gulmarg, the entire valley, including areas like Kupwara, Handwara, and Sonamarg, has witnessed a white blanket of snow, while the plains, including Srinagar city, have experienced moderate to heavy rains. The meteorological forecast suggests that this precipitation is likely to persist until February 20, further enhancing the region's winter charm.

The recent weather conditions also bring significant benefits to the tourism sector. The Indian Railways' Vistadome coach, with its all-weather glass-ceiling and 360-degree views, is becoming a sought-after experience for tourists. The train journey from Baramulla to Banihal offers a mesmerizing vista of the snow-covered Kashmir Valley, providing visitors with an unparalleled experience akin to the scenic beauty of Switzerland.

In addition to the current winter magic, the Jammu and Kashmir Department of Tourism is looking to diversify its offerings by promoting off-beat destinations across the union territory. The upcoming tour of these off-beat locations and collaboration with travel bloggers aim to showcase the unique charm of these places.

Among the identified off-beat destinations are the Bangus Valley in Kupwara and the Gurez Valley in Bandipora district, both known for their untapped potential. The tourism department plans to organize events in these locations, bringing them to the forefront and ensuring their inclusion on the global tourist map. The locals welcome the attention these areas are receiving and anticipate increased tourism activities with the proposed development plans.

The snowfall in Gulmarg and other parts of Kashmir, along with the proactive efforts of the tourism department to promote off-beat destinations, signals a promising boost for the tourism industry in the region. The enchanting winter landscape, coupled with strategic initiatives, is set to make Jammu and Kashmir an even more enticing destination for travelers seeking unique and memorable experiences. If all goes according to the plan, one expects the tourist numbers this year to beat even the previous two.

OTHER OPINION

## Ties Across The Sea

At first glance, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's UAE visit last week, might have seemed like any other bilateral visit he has undertaken. But this visit, Mr. Modi's seventh to the UAE since 2014 indicates the government's desire to signal more about the salience and prominence of the Emirates, than it has with any of the other country in the Gulf region. The timing may have been related to an invitation to address the 'World Governments Summit' in Dubai and to inaugurate Abu Dhabi's first Hindu temple, but the 10 bilateral agreements signed need a closer look. The speed with which India and the UAE concluded the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in 2022 has been matched by last week's Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT). This makes the UAE not only the first country the Modi government has signed these agreements with but also the only country that India has both a trade and an investment agreement with. The UAE is now India's third largest trading partner, India's second largest export destination, and fourth largest source of FDI. The inauguration of the Bharat Mart for Indian MSMEs is also expected to strengthen trade ties. A second raft of agreements dealt with technological ties including building digital infrastructure; R&D for energy security and trade focusing on green hydrogen and energy storage, and digital cross-payments. Third, the Agreement for an Intergovernmental Framework on the India-Middle East Economic Corridor paves the way for multilateral cooperation between the two countries, that also coordinate over the I2U2 initiative with the U.S. and Israel, and, from 2024, will cooperate within the BRICS framework, as the UAE is now a member. Finally, the discussions on the Israel-Gaza operations and the Red Sea attacks, indicate that in a region roiled by conflict, India considers the UAE to be a stable interlocutor.

India-UAE ties are also built on a bedrock of history and cultural engagement that includes centuries-old maritime trade and a diaspora contributing about 18% of India's global remittances. While India's technological prowess and the UAE's positioning as a trade and industry hub bring complementarities, the changes in their polity and societies bring possible friction points. As the UAE, a theocratic monarchy, seeks to democratise its governance and have a more pluralistic system, such as the decision on the temple in Abu Dhabi, it has expressed concern over the rise of majoritarian and sectarian forces in India. To that end, Mr. Modi's words in Abu Dhabi, where he rejoiced in the mutual values of tolerance and pluralism, and "shared heritage of humanity" may be the most significant bonds between the two countries separated by the Arabian Sea.

The Hindu

# Global Leaders Assemble for the Munich Security Conference

The Munich Security Conference (MSC) 2024 was underway in the background of the continued war in Palestine. Significantly, India's external affairs minister made India's position on Palestinian statehood clearer at the conference, besides holding talks with other global leaders



Union External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar at a meeting with the Munich Young Leaders for 2024 on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference (MSC) 2024. | Photo Credit: PTI

Asad Mirza

“  
If however, India and Saudi Arabia share the same page on the Palestinian issue, then it seems plausible that the war may end soon in Palestine. As Saudi is one of the prominent Middle Eastern nations, who are pursuing diplomatic efforts to get the conflict, ended as soon as possible

Indian External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar has called for a 'permanent fix' to the Israel-Palestine conflict. In his speech at the Munich Security Conference (MSC) 2024, Jaishankar stated that a large number of nations, particularly those in the Global South, believe that terrorism shouldn't be justified.

Though calling Hamas' attack on Israel on 7 October, an act of terrorism, EAM Jaishankar said that Israel should have been "very mindful" of civilian casualties in its response and emphasised its "obligation to observe international humanitarian law."

He also outlined key dimensions of the Israel-Palestine conflict so as to have a long term and a permanent solution to the issue.

Jaishankar's latest speech stresses two points that India, as the PM noted in his first reaction, after the 7 October attacks, emphasises that the Hamas' attacks were a "terrorist attack", yet it has further reiterated its age-old stand that the solution to the Palestinian issue, could be found only through a two stage solution.

However, the outlines of any such "two state solution" is yet to be defined and by the time the international comity agrees to those parameters, a lot of innocent Palestinians would have been killed in the on-going Israeli attacks.

What is of paramount importance here is an immediate cessation of hostilities by the IDF, and an ensured flow of humanitarian aid to the besieged Palestinians.

In his speech EAM, also praised the efforts by the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, but Blinken on his part said that the US is committed to Israel's security and supports the proposition that Israel has to find ways to ensure that whatever happened on 7 October "never happens again." This underlies the continued American support to the Bibi regime in Israel and till the time this monetary and military support is not halted by the US, signs of the war ending immediately are very slim.

In his speech, Jaishankar also stated that a large number of nations, particularly those in the Global South, believe that terrorism shouldn't be justified. He said that these nations believe a two-state solution should not be delayed.

"I think a very large number of countries, especially those in the Global South, believe that terrorism shouldn't be countenanced or justified. But they equally strongly believe that a two-state solution should not be delayed. These are not choices. These are both musts. And unless we are able to address both these issues, we are not going to really solve the problem," EAM said.

At the conference, Jaishankar also met with his Saudi Arabian counterpart Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud and discussed the West Asia situation and the strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia.

Notably, India and Saudi Arabia share centuries old economic and socio-cultural ties. Economic ties are an important aspect of the bilateral strategic partnership between two nations, according to the Indian Embassy in Saudi Arabia.

If however, India and Saudi Arabia share the same page on the Palestinian issue, then it seems plausible that the war may end soon in Palestine. As Saudi is one of the prominent Middle Eastern nations, who are pursuing diplomatic efforts to get the conflict, ended as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, there are reports that Russia has invited various Palestinian factions to meet in Moscow on 26 February, the Palestinian Authority prime minister said on Sunday, adding that the PA was ready to engage with Hamas.

"Russia has invited all Palestinian factions who will be meeting on the 26 of this month in Moscow. We will see if Hamas is ready to come to the ground with us" Mohammad Shtayyeh told the Munich Security Conference.

"We are ready to engage. If Hamas is not then that's a different story. We need Palestinian unity," he said, adding that to be part of that unity Hamas needed to meet certain prerequisites.

The Russian initiative has come rather as a surprise to the western world, but it should not be marred by any indifference. As far as the question of Hamas participating at the 26 February meeting is considered, Russia may take help of its crucial ally Iran to influence the Hamas leadership to sit at the same table as other Palestinian factions and hammer out a long-term stand and policy for an earliest solution to the long running conflict.

At an interactive session at the security conference with the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, Jaishankar also delved on the question of India's alignment on non-alignment with Russia and the US.

When asked about the country's foreign policy priorities in the backdrop of observations that it is traversing from "non-alignment to all alignment" and its continued procurement of crude oil from Russia notwithstanding Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, Jaishankar asserted that India should not be criticised for having multiple options.

"Why should it be a problem? I am smart enough to have multiple options. You should be admiring and not criticising. Is it a problem for others? I do not think so," he said.

This is not the first time that the EAM has forcefully put across India's stand on its continued economic ties with Russia and the two state solution to the Palestinian issue. Rather it should be seen in the new paradigm shift of the global geopolitics, where India, once being a champion of non-alignment has been able to maintain ties with different ideologies based on its own interpretation and understanding of the issues, rather than being tutored by either super power.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer  
Asad Mirza is a Delhi-based senior political and international affairs commentator



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## Pulsating Pakistan Peril

It was quite obvious that Imran Khan's inswingers and outswingers may not work wonders in the political field. The power of balance in Pakistan is poised on a fragile platform. Sharif, Zardari and

Khan constitute a lopsided triangle. All three are high-stakes gamblers in the no limits political casino. The croupier owner is the army. All three know that this is their last throw of dice. The 2024 Pakistan elections will

be remembered as one in which leaders fought to stay out of power, after the results came in. The Sharifs and Bhutto's have turned the "etiquette" into a strained joke. Who is the first - is a question mark. Nawaz Sharif

has stepped aside for his brother Shehbaz to become Prime Minister. He is still hoping to be promoted to saviour when history summons. The Pakistani people suffer forever.

C.K. Subramaniam



## TRANSFORMING LIVES

# Women Empowerment Initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir

*Empowering Women, Enriching Communities: A Journey of Progress and Equality*

By Arrangement

In recent years, concerted efforts by the Modi government have sparked a transformative wave of women empowerment in the beautiful region of Jammu and Kashmir. Through a multi-faceted approach encompassing economic opportunities, social support, and legislative reforms, the lives of women in J&K are witnessing unprecedented positive changes.

One of the cornerstones of this empowerment drive is the establishment of self-help groups (SHGs), which have provided over seven lakh women with a platform to harness their entrepreneurial skills and financial independence. These SHGs serve as vibrant hubs of economic activity, enabling women to collectively engage in various income-generating activities and access financial resources for their ventures.

Furthermore, the provision of training to around three lakh women farmers has not only enhanced agricultural productivity but has also empowered women to play a more active role in the agricultural sector. With the support of approximately 3,000 agriculture and animal husbandry assistants, women farmers are receiving last-mile assistance, thus ensuring their sustained success in farming endeavors.

A notable initiative is the establishment of nearly two lakh agriculture nutrition gardens by women farmers, aimed at meeting the nutritional needs of their families. This grassroots-level intervention not only promotes food security but also empowers women to take charge of their family's health and well-being.



The Rural Livelihood Mission's endeavor to initiate 10,000 micro-startups in the past year has further bolstered women's economic empowerment. By fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and providing advanced training

to 5,000 women entrepreneurs, the mission is enabling women to scale up their businesses and contribute significantly to the local economy.

In collaboration with the National Commission for Women

(NCW) and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (Mumbai), the Government of J&K has taken proactive steps to address gender-based violence through the establishment of Special Cells for Women in each district. These cells serve as

safe spaces for women victims to receive professional support and assistance, marking a significant stride towards creating violence-free homes and communities.

Moreover, the introduction of horizontal reservation of 15%

for women candidates in non-gazetted ranks in the J&K Police Services underscores the government's commitment to gender inclusivity and representation in public institutions. The creation of two exclusive women battalions within the Jammu & Kashmir Police, comprising a total of 2014 new posts, further amplifies women's participation and leadership in law enforcement agencies.

The abolition of discriminatory laws under Article 370 has been a pivotal moment for women in Jammu and Kashmir, granting them equal rights to inherit property irrespective of their marital status or spouse's residency. This landmark reform has not only symbolized gender equality but has also empowered women to assert their rights and shape their destinies on equal footing with men.

As we embark on the journey of women empowerment in Jammu and Kashmir, it is evident that these initiatives are not just about uplifting individual women but are about transforming entire communities and societies. Through economic empowerment, social support, and legislative reforms, women in J&K are reclaiming their rightful place as agents of change and progress. With each milestone achieved, the region moves closer to realizing its full potential, where women's empowerment is not just a goal but a lived reality, enriching the lives of all its inhabitants.

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

## Transforming Jammu and Kashmir A Saga of Development and Progress

*Nurturing Growth, Empowering Lives: Jammu and Kashmir's Journey Towards Prosperity*



By Arrangement

In the heart of the Himalayas, amidst breathtaking landscapes and rich cultural heritage, lies the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), witnessing a remarkable era of development and progress under the visionary leadership of the Modi government. Through a combination of innovative policies, targeted interventions, and relentless efforts, J&K is charting a path towards inclusive growth and prosperity, transforming the lives of its people and shaping a brighter future for generations to come.

One of the key pillars of this transformation is the adoption of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mechanisms, leveraging Aadhaar seeding to ensure efficient and transparent disbursement of government benefits. With over 65 lakh beneficiaries receiving ₹2.754 crore during the current financial year alone, J&K has emerged as a trailblazer in leveraging technology for welfare delivery. Moreover, the end-to-end digitization has helped in eliminating ghost beneficiaries, resulting in significant savings of ₹16 crores for the exchequer. Achieving a staggering 97.34% Aadhaar seed-

ing in DBT-oriented schemes underscores the UT's commitment to ensuring that the benefits reach those who need them the most.

Ensuring food security for every household is another milestone achieved by the Modi government through initiatives like the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme. With the implementation of ONORC, J&K has facilitated 79,530 inter-state and 2,108,150 intra-state transactions, making it a frontrunner in the country in terms of the highest number of ONORC transactions. This groundbreaking initiative

not only enhances access to food grains but also promotes seamless mobility and integration across state borders, fostering national unity and cohesion.

Furthermore, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has been instrumental in improving rural connectivity and infrastructure in J&K. Despite challenges posed by limited working seasons, the UT has consecutively ranked 3rd at the national level in terms of road length constructed under the programme during 2020-21 and 2021-22. Achieving 99% of the sanctioned programme

highlights the government's unwavering commitment to enhancing accessibility and connectivity in rural areas, laying the foundation for socio-economic development and empowerment.

In the realm of housing, the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMAY) has made significant strides in providing affordable housing to the marginalized sections of society in J&K. Against a target of 3.41 lakh houses assigned under the PMAY-G scheme, 3.37 lakh cases have been sanctioned, and 1.73 lakh houses have been completed. The successful saturation of the

Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011 data and the disbursement of ₹1072.86 crores through DBT to PMAY-G beneficiaries underscore the government's commitment to ensuring housing for all. Moreover, the allocation of land to landless beneficiaries further exemplifies the inclusive and equitable approach towards housing development in the UT.

In conclusion, the development narrative of Jammu and Kashmir is one of resilience, determination, and progress. Through strategic interventions in areas such as welfare delivery, food security, rural

connectivity, and housing, the Modi government has laid the groundwork for a more inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous future for the people of J&K. As the UT continues on its journey of transformation, guided by the principles of equity, empowerment, and innovation, it stands poised to realize its full potential as a beacon of progress and prosperity in the Himalayan landscape.

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



## Houthi Attacks Cut Suez Canal Revenue By 40-50%: Egypt President

Agencies

Cairo- Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said Monday that revenues from the Suez Canal had "decreased by 40 to 50 percent" so far this year due to attacks on shipping by Yemen's Houthi rebels.

The canal is one of the main sources of foreign currency for Egypt which is gripped by a severe financial crisis.

Since November, the Iran-backed Huthis have launched numerous attacks on vessels in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, which the group says are aimed at ships with links to Israel in solidarity with the Palestinians in the war-torn Gaza Strip.

The attacks have caused several major shipping firms to suspend passage through the Red Sea, which usually carries around 12 percent of global trade, and divert vessels thousands of miles around Africa.

"See what is happening at our borders... with Gaza, you see the Suez Canal, which used to bring Egypt

nearly \$10 billion per year, (these revenues) have decreased by 40 to 50 percent and Egypt must continue to pay companies and partners," Sisi said during a conference with oil companies.

The United Nations said in late January that the overall number of ships passing through the Suez Canal, which links the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, had fallen 42 percent in the previous two months.

The number of weekly container ship transits through the Suez fell by 67 percent year-on-year, according to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), while tanker traffic dropped 18 percent, the transit of bulk cargo ships carrying grain and coal was down six percent and gas transport at a standstill.

The engineering landmark, which opened in 1869, raised around \$8.6 billion for Egypt in the 2022-23 fiscal year, a vital source of foreign currency, alongside tourism and remittances, in a country where importers and money changers struggle to source dollars. (AFP)

## Israel Records 20% Drop In GDP, War In Gaza Is The Reason

Agencies

Jerusalem- Israel's GDP shrunk by almost one-fifth in the final quarter of 2023, compared to the three months prior, according to official figures published on Monday.

The 19.4-per cent fall in

terminating flights and international shipping avoiding the Red Sea after Houthi rebels began attacking ships over Israel's war against Hamas.

Hamas's October 7 attack on southern Israel resulted in the deaths of about 1,160 people in Israel, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of



the final quarter was attributed to the scale of the ongoing Gaza war's effect on the high-tech nation's economy.

Overall, Israel's GDP grew by 2.0 per cent in 2023, short of the 2.3 per cent projection made by the Bank of Israel after the war's outbreak in October, the Central Bureau of Statistics figures showed.

It was the single worst quarter for the Israeli economy in terms of GDP per capita since the opening quarter of the Covid pandemic in early 2020.

Exports fell by 18.3 per cent and imports by 42.4 per cent, fuelled in part by airlines

Israeli official figures.

Israel's assault on Gaza has killed over 29,000 people, mostly women and children, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.

The country has seen massive labour shortages and the collapse of the tourism industry since the outbreak of war.

The Israeli military called up over 300,000 reservists in the days following October 7, and the government immediately barred the entry of at least 160,000 Palestinian labourers who made up a considerable portion of the construction and agriculture workforce. (AFP)

## CBDT Sets Rs 1 Lakh Threshold Per Assessee For Withdrawal Of Old Tax Demands

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- The Income Tax department has prescribed a ceiling of Rs 1 lakh per assessee for withdrawal of small tax demands till Assessment Year 2015-16, in accordance with a scheme announced in Budget.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has issued an order giving effect to the 2024-25 Budget announcement by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

The Budget had announced that tax demands for AY 2010-11 of up to Rs 25,000 and for AY 2011-12 to 2015-16 of up to Rs 10,000 will be withdrawn. Tax demands totalling about Rs 3,500 crore will be withdrawn following the announcement.

The CBDT order said that such outstanding tax demands pertaining to income tax, wealth tax and gift tax as on January 31, 2024, shall be remitted and extinguished "subject to the maximum ceiling of Rs 1 lakh for any specific taxpayer/assessee".

The limit of Rs 1 lakh would include principal

component of tax demand, interest, penalty or fee, cess, surcharge.

However, the remission shall not be applicable on the demands raised against the tax deductors or tax collectors under TDS or TCS provisions of the I-T Act.

Nangia Andersen In-

ence any ongoing, planned, or potential criminal legal proceedings against the taxpayer and does not grant any immunity under any legislation.

"Taxpayers are advised to access their online accounts and navigate to Pending Action > Response to Outstanding Demand to



dia Partner Maneesh Bawa said the directive further specifies that this waiver or cancellation does not entitle taxpayers to any claims for credit or refunds.

Additionally, the waiver or cancellation will not influ-

verify the status of 'Extinguished Demands' related to them," Bawa said.

Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra had earlier this month said that there are about 1.11 crore such disputed tax demands.

## NITI Aayog Pitches For Tax Reforms For Elderly

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- Government think tank NITI Aayog has pitched for tax reforms, mandatory saving plan, and housing plan for elderly in India, as the population of senior citizens is projected to reach 19.5 per cent of the total population by 2050.

The report also suggested that the government should reassess the reverse mortgage mechanism to increase liquidity for seniors and by making necessary amendments to the current reverse mortgage rules.

"Tax and GST reforms, etc, on senior care products (needed) to increase the ease of adoption and safeguard the elderly population from the financial burden," the Aayog said.

Population ageing is a global phenomenon, and the number of people over 60 years of age has been rising rapidly across the world.

India, too, is witnessing an exponential growth in the number and proportion of elderly people, coupled with decreasing fertility rate (less than 2.0) and increasing life expectancy (more than 70 years).

The report also called for earmarking CSR funds as a contribution to national funds for care provided to the



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non-affording category of the elderly in their facilities.

It also stressed on developing partnerships with the private sector through various PPP models to encourage private medical care at discounted prices to senior persons across the medical care cycle, from consultation to diagnostics to treatment.

Noting that catering to the needs of the elderly population of this size is challenging, the report said it also presents an opportunity for the growth of the senior care industry, which is estimated at USD 7 billion (Rs 57,881 crore).

More than 75 per cent of elderly people in India suffer from chronic diseases and these figures indicate the potential of the home-based care market in India.

As per the report, the size of the home healthcare market in India was estimated at USD 6.2 billion (Rs 50,840 crore) in 2020 and it is projected to reach USD 21.3 billion (Rs 1.74 lakh crore) by 2027.

The home healthcare market can lead to a 15-30 per cent reduction in infrastructure and operational costs compared to hospital costs for the same treatment, ita added.

## Mcap Of BSE-Listed Firms Hits New Peak At Rs 3.91 Lakh Cr; Investors Add Rs 2.20 Lakh Cr

Press Trust Of India

Mumbai- Investors became richer by Rs 2.20 lakh crore on Monday and the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms reached an all-time high of Rs 3.91 lakh crore as buoyant sentiment sustained the stock market rally for the fifth straight session.

The 30-share BSE Sensex benchmark climbed 281.52 points or 0.39 per cent to close at 72,708.16, while NSE Nifty ended at its all-time high of 22,122.25 points, up 81.55 points or 0.37 per cent from the previous close.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of BSE-listed companies went up Rs 2,19,581.56 crore to reach its all-time high of Rs 3,91,69,087.01 crore.

"BSE market cap touching a record high of around USD 4.7 trillion reflects the strength of the ongoing bull run and the momentum in the market.

"The fact that the crucial Buffet Ratio (market cap to GDP) is signalling very high valuation at above 120 per cent is a matter of concern. But this is unlikely to halt the bull run in the near-term since flows

into the market from domestic individual investors and DIIs continue to be strong," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Among Sensex shares, Bajaj Finserv, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finance, Sun Pharma, Maruti Suzuki, ITC, and Nestle were the lead gainers. On the other hand, L&T Wipro, IndusInd Bank and TCS and Tata Motors were the lead losers.

In the broader market, the BSE Midcap rose by 0.29 per cent while BSE SmallCap gained 0.77 per cent, beating bigger peers. The BSE large-cap was up 0.35 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Telecom rose by 1.52 per cent, BSE Utilities by 1.29 per cent, BSE Consumer Durables by 1.76 per cent, BSE Services by 1.22 per cent, and FMCG by 0.84 per cent. Among losers, BSE Metal dropped 0.87 per cent, Realty by 0.63 per cent, Capital Goods by 0.62 per cent, and IT by 0.26 per cent.

Key benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed in the green for the fifth straight session on Monday, gaining around 2.3 per cent.

## India Tops List For Highest Number Of Passengers At Dubai Airport



Press Trust Of India

Dubai- India emerged at the top spot for the highest number of passengers flying through the Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest for international travel, with traffic totalling 11.9 million guests, the airport announced on Monday.

According to a statement, the Dubai airport, known as DXB, surpassed not only its own yearly forecast but also pre-pandemic levels of traffic.

In 2023, DXB witnessed a surge in passenger numbers, reaching 86.9 million passengers (86,994,365), an impressive year-on-year increase of 31.7 per cent.

It was just under a per cent higher than the passenger numbers recorded in 2019 (86.4 million), the numbers were driven by robust growth in the second half of the year during which the airport recorded a total of 45.4 million guests.

With 7.8 million guests, December was the busiest month in the fourth quarter during which the airport welcomed a total of 22.4 million guests, a year-on-year growth of 13.8 per cent compared to Q4 of last year. Q3 remained the quarter with the highest traffic since 2019 with 23 million guests while August, with 7.9 million guests, was the month with the highest traffic.

DXB is currently connected to 262 destinations across 104 countries through 102 international carriers, according to data for 2023.

India claimed the top spot among destination countries with traffic totalling 11.9 million guests, followed by Saudi Arabia with 6.7 million guests and the UK with 5.9 million guests. Other country markets of note include Pakistan (4.2 million), the US (3.6 million), Russia (2.5 million), and Germany (2.5 million).

### NEWS MAKERS

## Samsung Retains Top Spot In Global TV Market For 18 Straight Years

New Delhi- Samsung Electronics said on Monday that it has retained its position as the top player in the global television market for the 18th consecutive year.

The South Korean tech giant took up 30.1 per cent of the world TV market in terms of revenue last year, remaining at the top since 2006, according to Samsung Electronics, citing the market research firm Omdia.

Its flagship QLED TVs have contributed to the company's strong performance, with sales reaching 3.31 million units last year, reports Yonhap news agency.

Since the introduction of QLED technology in 2017, Samsung Electronics has



cumulatively sold 44 million units.

In the premium segment for TVs valued at \$2,500 or higher, Samsung had a share of 60.5 per cent in 2023, up from 48.3 per cent the previous year.

The company also main-

tained a strong presence in the market for large TVs, posting a market share of 33.9 per cent last year, driven by robust sales of the company's largest Neo QLED, its 98-inch model.

In the OLED TV segment, Samsung Electronics

accounted for 22.4 per cent of the global market in terms of revenue last year, with sales exceeding 2 million units over the past two years.

Meanwhile, LG Electronics Co said it has maintained its leadership position in the global OLED TV market for 11 years in a row.

The South Korean home appliances maker shipped around 3 million units of OLED TVs last year, accounting for 53 per cent of the world's total shipments.

In the large-sized OLED TV segment, in particular, LG Electronics posted a market share of 60 per cent last year on rising popularity of wireless 97-, 83- and 77-inch models in North America and Europe.

## STD, ICAI Organise Day Long Capacity Building Programme On GST

JAMMU- Jammu and Kashmir State Taxes Department (STD) in collaboration with Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) Monday organised a day long Capacity Building Programme on various provisions of Goods and Service Tax for State Tax Officers (STOs) at Excise and Taxation Complex here.

The programme was inaugurated by Commissioner, STD, Prediman Krishen Bhat in presence of Additional Commissioner (Administration & Enforcement), Jammu, Namrita Dogra and Additional Commissioner, (Administration & Enforcement), Kashmir, Shakeel Maqbool.

Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner said that audit is very important component of taxation system and all the officers should be well versed with accounting principles and other accounting procedures. He remarked that our audit observations should be based on facts, so that they can't be challenged.

Sharing his experience, the commissioner said that tax officers, who conducted audits, should be trained with the process and hoped that the workshop will clear all their doubts and make their understanding about this subject very clear.

The Commissioner highlighted that the session has

been arranged to enhance subject knowledge of officers which will prove fruitful and sharpen their skills to learn new things.

In his address, Namrita Dogra expressed gratitude to ICAI representatives and said that this programme not only enhances the productivity of tax officers of the department but also promotes significant partnership between the Chartered Accountant community for larger economic growth of the nation.

During the programme, resources persons from ICAI delivered interactive and informative lecture for STOs on various provisions of GST and its related aspects.





## KVIB Releases Rs 38.85 Cr For 1606 Units, Employing 12260

KO NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Chairperson, J&K Khadi Village and Industries Board (KVIB), Dr. Hina Shafi Bhat, on Monday convened a performance review meeting of the board at Civil Secretariat here.

Dr Jagdish Chander, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, J&K KVIB, senior officers besides district level officers of the Board of Jammu division attended the meeting.

The meeting was informed that during the current financial year, a margin money of Rs. 38.85 crore has been released by J&K KVIB for establishment of 1606 units thereby creating employment opportunities for 12260 persons. It was further informed that nearly 40% of the total cases settled during the current financial year are of women entrepreneurs.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Hina Shafi Bhat emphasised for streamlining and easing application processing so as to give fillip to entrepreneurship in UT of J&K. Reiterating government's commitment towards provid-

ing employment opportunities to aspirant entrepreneurs/unemployed youth, Dr. Hina Shafi Bhat asked the district officers to undertake awareness and sensitisation campaigns so that more and more aspirants can avail benefits of employment generation programmes being implemented by the Board. She added that employment generation programmes like PMEGP and JKREGP have been devised to encourage entrepreneurship, empowering individuals to start their businesses and contribute towards economic diversification.

Referring to large number of cases pending at financing banks, she exhorted upon the concerned officers to follow up and ensure that the cases are processed as per timelines fixed in the guidelines.

The Chairperson emphasised the need for improved collaboration among bankers and implementing agencies to ensure that the benefits of employment generation programmes viz. PMEGP and JKREGP percolate to the target population.

## Kulgam Gears Up For Mega Aharbal Winter Carnival



KO NEWS SERVICE

**KULGAM:** In order to review the preparations for the upcoming Aharbal Winter Carnival, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan on Monday chaired a meeting of Officers at the mini-secretariat, here.

The event, slated for a two-day extravaganza, is aimed at promoting the picturesqueness of Aharbal and boost tourism in the region.

Various aspects of the carnival, including cultural programmes, transportation, trekking, snow games, and the installation of stalls, etc were meticulously discussed during the meeting.

The DC emphasized the need for fool-proof arrangements to ensure the success and attractiveness of the event.

He instructed officers to ensure that all arrangements are put in place well in advance for seamless and enjoyable experience for all participants and attendees during the festival, as the carnival is expected to draw visitors from far and wide, making it a significant event for the cultural and tourism landscape of Kulgam.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Bashir Ahmad Wani; ADC, Viqar Ahmed Giri; JD-Planning, Zahid Sajad; SDM-Noorabad, Bashir UI Hassan; ACR, ACD, DFO, Exens, and other officers.

## 2-Week CBP For Social Sciences Faculty Begins At CUK



KO NEWS SERVICE

**GANDERBAL:** The two-week Capacity Building Programme (CBP) for the faculty members in Social Sciences, jointly organised by the Departments of Education and Economics, Central University of Kashmir (CU-Kashmir) in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), began at varsity's Tulmulla campus here on Monday.

Addressing the participants during the inaugural session, I/c Vice-Chancellor, and Head Department of Management Studies, Prof. Abdul Gani, said, the research conducted by the faculty members and scholars in the higher educational institutions should be impactful and for the public good.

"The higher educational institutions are recognized as key drivers of societal progress, with their research endeavors serving as powerful engines for the growth and positive change," he said, adding the universities play a key role in creating knowledge that benefits the public and addresses the press-

ing local and global challenges. Prof. Gani said, the universities serve as hubs of innovation, where scholars, researchers, and students collaborate to push the boundaries of knowledge and explore new frontiers.

In his speech, Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Shahid Rasool, said, the universities across the country are poised to play a pivotal role in the transformation and development of the nation, thus contributing to the vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047. "Recognizing the importance of research as a catalyst for the overall progress and development of the country, universities are intensifying their efforts to drive research excellence and innovation across various domains," he said. Prof. Shahid said the recent technological advancements in the country have given a new dimension to the teaching-learning methods and pedagogy. He said the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath, endeavours to foster an ecosystem of innovations in the CUKashmir that will encourage creativity and drive technological advancements.

## Division Bench Fumes Over Power Failure In High Court's Srinagar Wing



M Ahmad

**SRINAGAR:** The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Monday came down heavily on government over power and heating system failure in its Srinagar wing and directed Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir to take measures immediately to get rid of the "pathetic and unbelievable" condition in the highest court which is common to J&K and Ladakh union territories.

"During Court hours, the High Court has suffered a complete power failure. The generator is also not working. There are no lights. The air heating unit (AHU) is also not functional," a Division Bench of Justice Atul Sreedharan and

Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi observed during the hearing of a case.

"It is pathetic and unbelievable that this is the condition of the Srinagar Wing of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh," the Bench said.

The power failure took place at about 09:45 a.m. and was still not restored until about 11:28 a.m. when the court passed the order.

"The matter has gone from bad to worse. There is a permanent solution that is required," the court said, adding, "This Court requests the Chief Secretary of the Union Territory (of J&K) to pass necessary orders to solve this problem forthwith."

The solution, the court said,

may vary from having a separate power line to the High Court which does not experience any downtime and also supported by generators of such capacity which can power the entire High Court and also the air heating unit without interruption in the event of the dedicated power supply to the High Court fails.

The court has listed the matter again on Wednesday "at the top of the list for further orders."

The power and heating supply failure aggravated amid intense wintry conditions prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir. While plains in Kashmir received rains, Kashmir's higher reaches are experiencing snowfall, bringing mercury down.

## PDP Reiterates Commitment To INDIA Unity Amidst Alliance Rumors

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The PDP on Monday rubbished reports about the party considering leaving the opposition INDIA bloc and said it remains committed to the unity of the alliance.

In a post on its official handle on X, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) said, "Disregard the fabricated news about @jkpdp considering breaking ties with the INDIA alliance. We stand firm in our commitment to unity and our alliance.

Don't be misled by this malicious misinformation!"

The party's reaction came after reports in a section of the media claimed that the PDP had left the INDIA bloc and decided to contest the Lok Sabha elections on its own.

A similar controversy broke out last week when National Conference chief Feroq Abdullah said the party would contest the Lok Sabha polls on its own.

However, Omar Abdullah -- Feroq Abdullah's son

and the party vice-president -- hurriedly convened a press conference to dismiss the suggestions, saying the National Conference remained committed to the INDIA bloc.

He, however, ruled out the possibility of seat sharing in Kashmir, where it had won all three Lok Sabha seats in the 2019 elections.

Omar Abdullah said his party was open to an arrangement on the two seats in the Jammu region and one in Ladakh that are currently held by the BJP.

## DC Kupwara Visits Several Areas To Monitor The Situation Post Snowfall

KO NEWS SERVICE

**KUPWARA:** In frontier Kupwara district, hectic efforts were on, to clear the snow from the main roads and restore the essential services despite heavy snowfall which is continuing from yesterday evening.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan visited various areas to monitor snow clearance operations and restoration measures across the district.

The administration has remained steadfast in its commitment to restoring essential services and ensuring the welfare of residents in this border district. All the resources have been mobilized to prioritize the restoration of road connectivity, power supply, water supply and the distribution of essential commodities to affected areas.



Teams have been deployed round the clock to clear snow from roads and ensure safe passage for commuters. Additionally, efforts are underway to address disruptions in power and water supply.

Despite the challenging weather conditions, the District Administration remains resolute in its efforts to mitigate the impact of the snowfall on the residents of Kupwara. Continuous coordination with relevant departments and stakeholders is being maintained to ensure

swift response.

20 Control rooms have been set up across the district and helpline numbers have been published in print and electronic media including social media platforms for the convenience of the people.

The District Administration urges residents to remain cautious, cooperate with the authorities during this time. The residents of higher reaches have been sensitized to restrict outdoor activities due to the looming threat of avalanche.

## KVK Bandipora Empowers Rural Youth with Vermicomposting Training

KO NEWS SERVICE

**BANDIPORA:** In a bid to empower rural youth with sustainable agricultural practices, the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Bandipora successfully concluded a one-week skill training program on vermicomposting.

The training aimed to educate and train young individuals from rural areas on the techniques and benefits of vermicomposting, fostering entrepreneurship and environmental sustainability.

Throughout the week-long program, participants were immersed in theoretical ses-



sions supplemented by practical demonstrations. They were introduced to the principles of vermicomposting, including the selection of appropriate earthworm species, maintenance of optimal environmental conditions, and the management of organic waste materials.

Dr. Tariq Sultan, Programme

Coordinator KVK Bandipora-1, expressed his satisfaction with the outcome of the training program, emphasizing its role in equipping rural youth with practical skills that can enhance their livelihoods while contributing positively to the environment.

The successful completion of this training program signifies

## JKTPO Pavilion Attracts Craft Enthusiasts, Generates Rs 1.3 Cr Sales

KO NEWS SERVICE

**FARIDABAD:** Jammu and Kashmir pavilion received overwhelming response at the 37th Surajkund International Mela, held at Faridabad, Haryana while serving as a dazzling canvas displaying the grandeur of J&K's unique art and cultural heritage in various forms.

Under the aegis of Industries and Commerce Department Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) curated a spectacular display with 21 stalls dedicated to exceptional and world famous Handloom and Handicraft products of the UT. These stalls showcased the essence of J&K through major attrac-

Textiles, Culture and External Affairs, the 37th edition had the State of Gujarat as the Theme State. With participation from at least 20 countries and all states of India, the mela celebrated cultural exchange on a grand scale.

Highlighting the importance of preserving heritage crafts, the mela dedicated a special section to showcase traditional skills that are fading away due to machine-made imitations. Renowned national and international folk artists and cultural groups graced the open-air theatres, providing captivating performances throughout the event.

The JKTPO pavilion drew thousands of craft enthusiasts, gener-



tions such as pashmina shawls, Kani shawls and sozni artwork, hand-embroidered garments including pheran, colourful paper mache products, handmade silk carpets adorned with intricate patterns and other unique products. The visitors not only had the chance to witness these exquisite products but also engaged with the artisans themselves.

The JKTPO stalls became a hub of storytelling, where the dedication of craftspeople and the narratives behind each creation were shared with enthusiasm, creating an immersive experience for the attendees.

The Surajkund International Mela is a prestigious event on the international tourist calendar, attracting over a million visitors, including thousands of foreign tourists. It is renowned as the largest crafts fair globally, showcasing the richness and diversity of India's handicrafts, handlooms and cultural fabric.

Organized by the Surajkund Mela Authority and Haryana Tourism, in collaboration with Union Ministries of Tourism,

ating sales worth Rs. 1.3 crore and 450 number of leads. The sales and leads together will facilitate generation of regular and ever expanding annual business for the artisans and entrepreneurs, thus creating a positive impact on the economy of Jammu and Kashmir on a long term basis. Riding on such successes, and recent astounding culmination of Jammu Trade Fair 2024, the JKTPO is gearing up for the mega JK Trade Show 2024, scheduled to take place in Srinagar in the coming months at scenic Government Arts Emporium Garden

JKTPO has been at the forefront of advocating for local products, assisting artisans and nurturing business initiatives in J&K. It has actively participated in 15 exhibitions and trade fairs during the current financial year. Additionally, JKTPO has taken a leading role in arranging Buyer-Seller Meets, Business conclaves, and other initiatives to enhance market connections and opportunities for business entrepreneurs in Jammu and Kashmir.

## DC Shopian Chairs Meeting On Pulse Polio Immunization

KO NEWS SERVICE

**SHOPIAN:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC), Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb today chaired a meeting of District Task Force at Mini-Secretariat, here to review the strategies and execution of initiatives pertaining to the Pulse Polio agenda slated for March 3, 2024, encompassing the entire district.

The meeting deliberated upon the scheduled undertakings for National Immunization Day, with a focal point on propagating the theme 'Vaccines Work for All' for India's National Immunization Day.

Throughout the deliberation, DC directed the health department functionaries to ensure optimal dissemination and consciousness-raising regarding the imminent National Pulse Polio.

He implored the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Zainapora to synchronize efforts with health department personnel to arrange all requisite arrangements for the occasion. He assured full support from the district administration and urged all to coordinate with



health department officials to make all necessary arrangements for the event.

The DC underscored the imperative of instigating targeted publicity forthwith and instructed the Chief Education Officer Shopian to ready the educational faculty and pupils for the impending Pulse Polio commemoration.

The chair was apprised that 241 vaccination booths have been set up across the district, inclusive of 4 transit hubs, 20 places of worship, and 35 remote locales earmarked as centers for the Pulse Polio initiative.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, (ADC) Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; Programme Officer, ICDS; SDM Zainapora, ACR, CMO, District Nodal Officer for Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM), Dy. CMO, District Immunization Officer, BMO and representatives from other departments.

a significant step towards promoting sustainable agriculture and rural entrepreneurship, stated Dr. Tahir Saleem, Scientist KVK Bandipora-1.

Dr. Nazir Ahmad Mir, Scientist at KVK Bandipora said that Vermicomposting not only provides an eco-friendly solution for organic waste management but also presents lucrative opportunities for income generation among rural communities.

Participants hailed from various rural areas in and around Bandipora, representing diverse backgrounds and aspirations. Many expressed their enthusiasm for applying the knowledge

gained during the training to establish their vermicomposting units, thereby creating employment opportunities and mitigating environmental degradation.

The concluding ceremony of the training program witnessed the distribution of participation certificates among the attendees, acknowledging their commitment to learning and adopting innovative agricultural practices.

Additionally, participants were encouraged to serve as ambassadors of vermicomposting in their respective communities, promoting its adoption among fellow farmers and stakeholders.



CONTD. FROM PAGE 3

**PM To Launch**

inaugurate three new IIMs in the country -- IIM Jammu, IIM Bodh Gaya and IIM Visakhapatnam -- besides 20 new buildings for Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) and 13 for new Navodaya Vidyalayas (NVs) buildings across the country.

As part of his government's efforts to provide comprehensive, quality and holistic tertiary-care health services to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, the prime minister will inaugurate the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Vijaypur (Samba), Jammu.

The institute, whose foundation stone was laid by him in February 2019, is being established under the central government scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana'.

Established at a cost of over Rs 1,660 crore and in an area spanning over 227 acres, the hospital is equipped with 720 beds, a medical college with 125 seats, a nursing college with 60 seats, an AYUSH block with 30 beds, residential accommodation for faculty and staff, hostel accommodation for UG and PG students and a shopping complex among other facilities.

Among other projects, Modi will lay the foundation stone for a new terminal building at the Jammu airport.

Spread over 40,000 sqm, the new terminal building will be equipped with modern facilities catering to about 2,000 passengers during peak hours, will be environment friendly and will showcase the local.

During the programme, he will lay the foundation stone of important road projects including two packages (44.22 km) of the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra expressway connecting Jammu to Katra and phase-two for four-laning of the Srinagar Ring road.

The statement said he will lay the foundation stone for a project to develop CUF (Common User Facility) petroleum depot at Jammu as well.

Modi will also inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of several development projects worth more than Rs 3,150 crore for strengthening the civic infrastructure and provisioning of public facilities across Jammu and Kashmir, it said.

**People Of J&K**

arrangements for it," he said.

He said the prime minister will inaugurate projects worth more than Rs 30,000 crore during the programme.

"These projects have been executed by the Union ministries of education, civil aviation, railways and petroleum," he said, reiterating that the prime minister has accorded high priority to the infrastructure development in Jammu and Kashmir.

The minister recalled that the biggest-ever development package for Jammu and Kashmir in the last 70 years was granted by Modi soon after taking over as the prime minister.

The minister said Modi has not only given a huge amount of support to the development of the region but also sought to break away the mental barriers that existed by bringing about the constitutional changes which happened in August, 2019, referring to the abrogation of Article 370.

**Multi-tier Security**

Office (PMO), he will also distribute appointment letters to about 1,500 newly recruited government employees of Jammu and Kashmir and interact with beneficiaries of various schemes as part of the 'Viksit Bharat, Viksit Jammu' programme.

"A multi-tier security setup has been put in place across Jammu for the Prime Minister's visit to the city of temples. The major focus of heightened security arrangements remains the venue of his public meeting and adjoining areas," a senior police officer told PTI.

He said that a high alert had been sounded along the borders, while the border and high-way grids were further strengthened with the officers asked to intensify patrolling and checking of vehicles to keep subversive elements at bay.

The officials said the Maulana Azad Stadium has been taken over by the security agencies who conducted a thorough anti-sabotage check.

On February 17, Jammu District Magistrate Sachin Kumar Vaishya announced a temporary ban on the use of drones, paragliders and remote controlled micro-light aircrafts as a precautionary measure to counter possible activities by the terrorists and anti-national elements.

The order was issued under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code while responding to intelligence reports highlighting potential security threats.

"Effective immediately and continuing until February 20, the order imposes restrictions on the operation of drones, remote-controlled micro-light aircrafts, para-gliders, para-motors, hand gliders and hot air balloons within the (Jammu) district," the order said.

However, the order said exceptions to the ban include aerial surveillance conducted by the security forces during the VVIP visits or with specific written permission from the district magistrate's office.

"Defence and Para Military Forces are exempted from these restrictions. Violation of this order is subject to punitive action under section 188 of the Indian Penal Code," the order read.

Given the prediction of isolated to widespread rains in Jammu for the next 24 hours, a BJP spokesperson said that necessary arrangements, including waterproof tents, have been erected to accommodate one lakh people who are expected to turn up for the rally from across Jammu and Kashmir.

Almost all prominent BJP leaders, including J&K unit president Ravinder Raina, have been making appeals to the people to join the rally, which is seen as a formal launch of the party's campaign for the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Meanwhile, the meteorological department has predicted continuation of wet weather for the next three days.

Meteorological department officer in-charge S C Sharma said did not rule out rain welcoming Prime Minister Modi in Jammu.

"There is prediction of widespread rains at most places in Jammu plains for the next 24 hours followed by isolated rains on February 21 and 22 and February 24 and 25," Sharma told PTI.

Most places in Jammu and Kashmir have presently been experiencing wet weather since February 18.

While the higher reaches are experiencing snowfall, the plains, including Jammu city, were lashed by intermittent rains for the second day on Monday.

A traffic department official said that a dry run was carried out this afternoon from the airport to Maulana Azad road as restrictions and diversions have been placed on the ground to ensure smooth flow of traffic in the city.

The officials said a total of 48 locations have been identified for the parking of the vehicles carrying people from different parts of the Union Territory to the venue of Modi's public rally.

The headquarters central pool security, Jammu, has also issued a detailed advisory for the general public participating in the public rally, asking them not to carry any bag, tiffin boxes, cameras, weapon, ammunition, sharp edged articles, cigarettes, lighters, umbrellas, any objectionable flag or any electronic gadgets among others.

The mobile phones should be kept in switched off or silent mode, the advisory said and asked the participants to ensure their entry in the venue before 9.30 am and cooperate during frisking.

**Centre Agrees**

Ladakh, which no longer has any Assembly constituency, was earlier part of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution, which gave a special status to Jammu and Kashmir, were abrogated on August 5, 2019 and the erstwhile state was bifurcated into the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

According to the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, Jammu and Kashmir has been made a Union Territory with a Legislative Assembly and Ladakh a Union Territory without any Assembly.

There were four representatives from Ladakh in the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir Assembly.

The BJP-led Centre assured the delegation from Ladakh in December last year that it was committed to fast-tracking the development of the Union Territory and meeting the aspirations of the people in the region.

The assurance was given at a meeting held with the HPC for Ladakh.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has formed the HPC for Ladakh under Rai's chairmanship with a mandate to discuss the measures needed to be taken to protect the region's unique culture and language, taking into consideration its geographical location and strategic importance.

The HPC has also been formed for the protection of land and employment, measures for inclusive development and employment generation in the region, measures related to the empowerment of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs) of Leh and Kargil and constitutional safeguards that could be provided to ensure the measures and protection as mentioned above.

Several organisations of Ladakh were demanding a separate Union Territory for the region for decades and the demand was fulfilled on August 5, 2019.

The KDA and the ABL, however, in the recent past protested at different locations, including New Delhi, Jammu and Ladakh, highlighting the four demands.

**CEO Ganderbal**

launch a thorough inquiry into the matter. The directive mandates the submission of a detailed report, along with clear recommendations, within two days.

The complaint underscores the alleged refusal of admission by the two educational institutions and their purported demand for banned admission fees which contravenes orders from government regarding such fees.

DSEK said that section 13 of Right to Education Act 2009 clarifies that no school or person shall, while admitting a child, collect any capitation fee. It also said that any school or person, if in contravention of the provision of sub-section(1), receives a capitation fee, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to ten times the capitation fee charged.

It is pertinent to mention, parents of students in Kashmir's private schools have been raising the voice against the hefty amounts of money charged by many private schools in the name of admission fees.

Despite authorities strict ban on private schools charging admission fees from parents, numerous complaints persist, indicating that many schools continue to impose such fees under various guises like development fees or capitation fees.

This development signals a proactive stance by the government in addressing complaints related to private schools compliance with regulations and ensuring fair practices in the admission process.

In December 2023, the committee for fixation and regulation of fee of private schools (FFRC) warned school administrators not to charge admission fees during the ongoing admission process in Jammu and Kashmir in violation of the established statute.

**Govt Helping**

kalanamak rice and Chandauli's black rice, which are now being exported in significant quantities, and pitched for collective efforts to take Indian food items to people across the world.

The prime minister encouraged

entrepreneurs to form partnerships with farmers, underscoring the government's efforts in empowering small-scale farmers through farmer producer organisations and cooperative societies, which present opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships.

"Benefit to farmers and agriculture is good for your business too," Modi told the investors.

He also referred to the Bharat Ratna award to former prime minister Chaudhary Charan Singh.

"Just a few days ago, our government had the privilege of awarding Bharat Ratna to the messiah of farmers, Chaudhary Charan Singh," he said.

The award to Singh, the son of the soil of Uttar Pradesh, is an honour for crores of labourers and crores of farmers of the country as well, he added.

On Uttar Pradesh's pivotal role in driving the rural economy and agriculture-based economy of India, the prime minister called upon stakeholders to maximize the benefits of this opportunity.

He expressed confidence in the capabilities of the people of Uttar Pradesh and the efforts of the "double-engine government" in laying the foundation for the state's and the nation's progress.

Modi launched 14,000 projects across Uttar Pradesh worth more than Rs 10 lakh crore at the fourth ground-breaking ceremony here on Monday for investment proposals received during the UP Global Investors Summit.

The projects relate to sectors such as manufacturing, renewable energy, food processing, housing and real estate, hospitality and entertainment, and education.

Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, and several industrialists and representatives of top global and Indian companies attended the event.

Modi's remarks on agriculture and rural economy came amid a protest by a section of farmers over their various demands.

Farmers from Punjab began their march to Delhi on February 13 but were stopped by security personnel at Shambhu and Khanauri points on Punjab's border with Haryana.

Thousands of protesting farmers have been camping at the Punjab-Haryana border since as part of their 'Delhi Chalo' march.

Besides a legal guarantee for MSP, the protesting farmers are demanding the implementation of the Swaminathan Commission's recommendations, pension for farmers and farm labourers, farm debt waiver, no hike in electricity tariff, and reinstatement of the Land Acquisition Act of 2013.

**India Bringing**

other, cities are getting hi-tech infrastructure.

The programme was attended by seers and religious leaders from across the country.

"Our ancient idols are being brought back from abroad and we are getting record foreign investment, the circle of time has moved," the prime minister said and highlighted that "Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj had encouraged us to take pride in our identity".

Modi, who was accompanied by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Kalki Dham Peethadheeshwar Acharya Pramod Krishnam, also unveiled a model of the temple.

The Shri Kalki Dham is being constructed by the Shri Kalki Dham Nirman Trust whose chairman is Krishnam.

**Azad Claims**

his Rajya Sabha seat in 2015.

Azad gave an interview to a private television channel and claimed that NC leaders seek time with leaders in Delhi after 11 pm, which raises suspicion in the minds of people.

He also said there was a gossip in Delhi in 2019 that the Abdullaha had prior information that the provisions of Article 370 would be abrogated and that they were detained in accordance with their own wish.

Azad also accused Farooq Abdullah of playing the religion card to woo Hindu votes by visiting temples and singing 'bhajans'.

The interview was aired on Monday.

Farooq Abdullah asserted that the NC has stood and will always stand for secularism and said it was time Azad explained the real reason for breaking away from the Congress and forming his own party in Jammu and Kashmir.

"He has to clarify actually which side of the fence he was on. He has been enjoying every perk even after ceasing to be a member of the Rajya Sabha. The question is, how?" the NC leader asked.

The former Union minister said he, along with several other leaders, held a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of the Centre's August 5, 2019 decision to revoke Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

"Whatever we have to do, we do it in broad daylight. Why should one ask for time at night...?" Abdullah asked and described Azad's statement as childish and laughable.

Taking to X, former Jammu and Kashmir chief Minister Omar Abdullah said: "Wah bhai wah Gulam Nabi Azad, so much bile today. Where is the Gulam that was begging us for Rajya Sabha seats in J&K as recently as 2015?"

"Abdullaha knew about 370' yet we were detained for more than 8 months including under PSA and you were free, the only ex CM in J&K free after 5th Aug," he said in a post on X.

The NC vice-president chided the former Congress leader, pointing out that his father, Farooq Abdullah, was evacuated from a government bungalow when he was not an MP.

"Abdullaha meet secretly' yet my father is the one thrown out of his government house when he wasn't MP and you are allowed to keep your ministerial bungalow?"

"Abdullaha say one thing in Kashmir and another in Delhi' yet PM cries for you in Rajya Sabha and criticises us in every speech. Let's not forget the Padma award for which you agreed to leave Congress and help BJP in

Chenab valley. Who is azad and who is gulam, time will tell and people will decide," he said.

Reacting to Omar Abdullah's post on X and taking a jibe at Azad, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said: "Did you seriously expect anything else from him? He is an absolute disgrace -- actually, always has been!"

On August 5, 2019, the BJP-led Centre abrogated the provisions of Article 370, which gave a special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and bifurcated the erstwhile state into the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

**Crime Branch**

alleging that his sanctioned General Provident Fund (GPF) had been released but he had not received them, instead the money was credited in the account of the DDO.

The then director constituted a high-level enquiry committee which revealed that a serious financial embezzlement to the tune of over Rs 33 lakhs pertaining to GPF and 7th pay commission arrears of several employees had been committed by the then DDO and cashier, the spokesperson said.

He said the report of inquiry committee along with relevant documents was subsequently forwarded to Crime Branch, Jammu for action under law, and a case was registered under various sections of Indian Penal Code and Prevention of Corruption Act against the accused and his cashier for criminal breach of trust, criminal conspiracy and fraud for in-depth investigation.

The investigation has been completed and the offences against the accused proved, leading to the filing of the chargesheet, the spokesperson said.

**Fresh Snow**

Doda district, the officials said.

A traffic department official said the traffic on Jammu-Srinagar national highway was suspended around 9.30 am following landslides triggered by heavy rains in Dalwas, Mehad-Cafeteria, Chamalwas, Shalgadi and Gangroo.

Shooting stones from the hillocks were also reported from Panthiyal, Jaiswal bridge, Marog and a few other places during the day, the official said, adding, the highway was still closed for vehicular traffic when last reports were received.

Hundreds of passengers were left stranded due to the sudden closure of the arterial road.

Despite incessant rains, authorities mobilised men and machines to clear the road of the debris to make it navigable, they said.

Authorities have advised people to avoid journeys on the highway till the road is cleared and weather improves.

Bhaderwah Superintendent of Police Vinod Sharma said the vehicular movement on Bhaderwah-Pathankot and Bhaderwah-Chamba-Himachal interstate highways was also suspended due to heavy snow accumulation at Padri-Galli, Guldanda, and Chattergalla pass in Bhaderwah.

While intermittent to moderate rains lashed the plains, including the twin capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar, most of the upper reaches across Jammu and Kashmir got a fresh snowfall.

Following a heavy snowfall, particularly on the 30 km-stretch from Thanala to Khundi Maral on Bhaderwah-Chamba road, and 25 km-stretch from Thantera to Chatter Galla pass on Bhaderwah-Pathankot National Highway, Doda district administration suspended all kind of traffic on both roads.

"It is snowing heavily and the hilly roads have become very slippery with apprehension of avalanches," Sharma said.

He appealed to all the tour operators and hoteliers not to guide any tourists to venture on these roads.

A couple of tourist vehicles got stuck in a snow storm in the Guldanda area and the travellers were rescued after hectic efforts by Border Roads Organisation and Police late Sunday night.

Officer In-charge, Meteorological department, Jammu, S C Sharma has predicted wet weather till February 25 - except February 23- with widespread rain in the plains and snowfall in high altitude areas in the next 24 hours.

Avalanche Warning Issued

The authorities on Monday issued an avalanche warning in the higher reaches of ten districts of Jammu and Kashmir during the next 24 hours, officials said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) said a "low danger" level avalanche is likely to occur at 2500 metres above sea level in the higher reaches of Anantnag and Kulgam districts of south Kashmir in the next 24 hours.

Avalanche with "medium danger" level is likely to occur above 2200 metres over Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, and Ramban districts in Jammu division and Bandipora and Baramulla districts of Kashmir valley during the next 24 hours.

Similarly, an avalanche with "high danger" level is likely to occur above 2200 metres over Kupwara in north Kashmir and Ganderbal in central Kashmir in the next 24 hours.

People living in these areas have been advised to take precautions and avoid venturing in the avalanche prone areas till further orders.Upper reaches of the Jammu and Kashmir experiencing a fresh snowfall for the past two days prompting authorities to issue a fresh avalanche warning as a precautionary measure for the people today.

The authorities have also asked the people living in these districts to dial 112 for help in case of any emergency.

Residential Houses Damaged  
Gusty winds on Monday damaged several residential structures in the valley. In Srinagar, two residential houses were damaged in the Rainawari area while one was damaged in Harwan area.

Sources said that the rooftop of two residential houses belonging to Firdous Ahmad, Inayat Ahmad, and Manzoor Ahmad Sofi were damaged in Rainawari. They further

added that one residential house belonging to Mohammad Aslam of Faqeer Gujree Harwan was also damaged after gusty winds struck the area.

However, no loss of life or injury was reported in the incidents.

In another such incident, a residential house was damaged due to heavy rainfall in Kulgam district on Monday, official sources said.

The house belonging to Hashmat Ali Khatana of Pranhall was damaged after heavy Rainfall in the area.

Meanwhile, an official told News Agency Kashmir Scroll that soon after the incident the family was rescued and later a relief was also provided to them. The official said that all are safe. He said that further assistance will be decided after proper assessment.

They said no loss of life or injury was reported in the incident.

Exams Postponed

The University of Kashmir has postponed all the examinations scheduled for (Monday) 19th and (Tuesday) 20th of Feb. 2024 in view of inclement weather conditions.

According to the KU spokesperson, the fresh dates for the conduct of postponed papers shall be communicated separately.

J&K Board of Technical Education has postponed exams scheduled for Tuesday.

As per the notice issued, a copy of which lies with News Agency Kashmir Scroll, revised date of the examination is 23 February.

"It is notified for information of all the Principals of Polytechnics of Jammu /Kashmir Divisions and the concerned students that due to unavoidable circumstances the theory papers of 1st semester( new Scheme) / 3rd Semester (NEP Scheme) for the examination session Nov-Dec- 2023 scheduled on 20-02-2024 are hereby POSTPONED and will now be held on 23 February for both for 1st Sem New Scheme and 3rd Sem NEP," reads the notice.

"The venue of the examination will remain the same and the timing will be 10:30 AM." It reads further.(KS)

Tourists Rescued

Officials in the Jammu & Kashmir State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) informed that dozens of tourists mostly in Dal Lake areas were rescued on Monday during the gusty winds amidst the rains.

Several Feeders Down

Following the downpour and snowfall across Kashmir valley, several 33 and 11 Kilowatts (KV) feeders have gone down-affecting electricity supply in several areas of the region.

According to the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO) Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDC) on the microblogging site X (formerly Twitter) said, "05 (Five) 33kV feeders out of 120 and 110 out of 1118 11 kV feeders DOWN in Kashmir Division. Efforts on to restore feeders under fault." (SIC) KPDC also said that a load of 1450 Megawatts (MW) were recorded on February-19.

It also said that the status of feeders can change due to the dynamics of the system and inclement weather.

Meanwhile, Chief Engineer distribution KPDC Sandeep Seth told KNO that the department was working round the clock to restore the electricity in the affected areas. "Our employees are c

**Snowfall Brings**

in the third trimester of her pregnancy and needed to be shifted to a maternity hospital immediately. However the road was completely blocked due to heavy snowfall," Gagi said.

According to a statement, the army, recognizing the urgency of the situation, promptly mobilized a rescue team and medics from Army Camp Kakrosa. They hiked for 7-8 km through 2 to 3 feet of snow in the middle of the night to evacuate the woman in need of medical assistance.

"In spite of heavy snow on the road, the rescue team reached the location in time and the patient was carefully and safely evacuated to PHC Vilgam where a team of doctors attended the lady immediately to ensure her safety," the army said.

During winters, accessing nearby hospitals from remote areas of Kashmir becomes increasingly difficult, adding to the hardships and difficulties faced by those in need of urgent medical attention. Local residents expressed concerns about the authorities' lack of attention to de-icing roads and inadequate healthcare facilities in rural areas.

"The snowfall brings misery for the people living in far flung and border areas," said Gulam Mohamad Najjar, a resident of Gurez valley.

Najjar says that even if the administration is quick to clear the snow in plain areas, the same becomes difficult for those who are living in hilly areas and where road connectivity is still a distant dream.

Ahead of fresh snowfall, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri convened a meeting of Deputy Commissioners & Head of Civil Departments wherein he directed all the departments to keep men, material and machinery ready to tackle any exigency that may emerge from the expected snowfall.

However, even though the admin was quick to clear the snow in many rural areas of the valley, the concerned department fails to provide any relief to the people living in hilly areas.

"We have been very prompt to clear the snow in all areas of the valley, however it's difficult to clear the snow where there is no road," said an official of the mechanical engineering department.

A health official told Kashmir Observer that they already advised residents of mountainous and isolated villages to relocate patients to areas with readily accessible hospitals.

While individuals like Malik and Gagi managed to save their wives and babies, there are many others enduring distressing lives in the remote and mountainous regions of Kashmir when snowfall occurs.



# Gulmarg All Set To Host Winter Games From Wednesday

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The famous Ski-resort and winter destination of Gulmarg is yet again all set to host the second leg of the 4th edition of Khelo India Winter Games from February 21.

Around a thousand athletes, officials and support staff will participate in various winter sporting events including Snowboarding, Alpine Ski, Nordic Ski and Snow Mountaineering. Twenty states and UTs are competing in the Alpine Ski, Nordic Ski and Snowboarding, while ten states are competing in the Ski Mountaineering competitions.

The event, which is being organized by Department of Youth Services & Sports & J&K Sports Council in collaboration with Tourism Department, Gulmarg Development Authority and other stakeholder departments, will kick-start with the launch of the mascot while the anthem and the customised apparels for the 2024 Khelo India Winter Games will be on the similar lines of the Khelo India Games held in the other parts of the country.

Meanwhile, all logistic arrangements like accommodation, transport, etc for the ath-



letes and officials have been worked out by the organizers and final touches are being given on the spot.

Secretary, Youth Services & Sports, Sarmad Hafeez held a series of meetings in this regard in the past few days with representatives of line Departments while Secretary, J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gull has been overseeing

the finalization of arrangements at the spot.

Cricketing legend Sachin Tendulkar who was on a visit to Kashmir conveyed his best wishes to J&K Sports Council for organizing the sporting event. In his message, he advised the participant athletes to enjoy the game and make their stay here memorable.

The inaugural and closing ceremonies will be marked by scintillating cultural performances by local artists depicting the cultural tapestry of the region. On February 20, a special cultural evening has been planned which shall be attended by the participating athletes and officials and visiting tourists besides local people.

# 8th National Snowshoe Championship Concludes In Sonamarg



Observer News Service

**SONAMARG:** The inaugural 8th National Snowshoe Championship concluded in Sonamarg on Monday.

Sonamarg Development Authority CEO Farooq Ahmad Baba and General Secretary of J&K Snowshoe Association, distributed Gold, Silver and Bronze medals and mementoes among the first, second and third position holders, as well as other participants, including Hoteliers Association Sonamarg and local residents who contributed to the success of the event.

The championship witnessed fierce competition among participants from various states, showcasing their skills and endurance in the challenging snowy

terrain of Sonamarg.

The winners of the championship were felicitated with trophies and cash prizes, motivating them to continue their dedication towards snowshoeing.

The event besides providing a platform for athletes to showcase their talent, also promoted tourism in the region, highlighting the natural beauty and adventure opportunities that Sonamarg has to offer.

The Hoteliers Association Sonamarg played a crucial role in providing accommodation and hospitality to the participants and spectators, ensuring their comfort throughout the championship.

Their support and co-operation were acknowledged and appreciated by

the organizers and participants alike. The success of the 8th National Snowshoe Championship in Sonamarg has paved the way for future editions of the event, attracting more participants and spectators from across the country.

This event has brought Sonamarg on the map as a prime destination for snowshoeing, and has also boosted the local economy and tourism industry.

The organizers expressed their gratitude to all the participants, sponsors, and volunteers who contributed to the smooth execution of the championship. They also extended their thanks to the local administration for their support in ensuring the safety and security of everyone involved.

# Ranchi Test: Bumrah Likely To Be Rested; Fit-Again Rahul Back

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Lead India pacer Jasprit Bumrah is likely to be rested, while batter K L Rahul is expected to come back after recovering from a quadriceps injury, in the fourth Test against England beginning February 23 in Ranchi.

Bumrah is the leading wicket-taker in the five-match series with 17 scalps and singlehandedly bowled India to victory in the second Test. The hosts lead 2-1 in the five-match rubber.

"The team will travel to Ranchi tomorrow and Bumrah is likely to be given rest," said a BCCI source while also informing that Rahul is nearing full fitness and should be a part of the squad.

The decision to rest Bumrah doesn't come as a surprise con-

he returned to play a part in India's record 434-run win over the visitors in Rajkot on Sunday.

India are well-placed to seal the series but if they are not able to, the home team will desperately need the services of Bumrah for the fifth and final Test in Dharamsala beginning March 7.

Rahul, who missed the second and third Test after complaining of pain in his right quadriceps, had reached 90 per cent fitness last week, according to an insider.

"He is reaching his match fitness and should be available for Ranchi Test," the source added.

Rahul was among India's best batters in the opening Test in Hyderabad before going down with the same injury that he suffered during the IPL last year. Since his comeback after four



sidering he bowled 80.5 overs in the first three Tests.

As part of workload management, India had also rested Mohammed Siraj from the second Test in Visakhapatnam before

months on the sidelines, the batter has delivered for India across formats.

He was the only centurion for India in the drawn two-Test series in South Africa in December.

# How Sarfaraz Mastered Spin: 500 Balls Per Day In Nets & ...



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Sarfaraz Khan's dominating performance against England's spinners in just his debut Test was no fluke. It was the culmination of over 15 years of hard work that involved playing 500 deliveries everyday under the watchful eyes of his zealous father Nausad Khan.

With two confident half centuries in his debut Test in Rajkot, Sarfaraz has shown that he is here to stay in the Indian team. The 26-year-old got his Test cap after years of toiling in the domestic circuit and also honing his skills at his father's 'Macho Cricket Club'.

The hard work and systematic planning of the past few years, especially during the two COVID-19 lockdowns, paid off against the likes of Tom Hartley, Joe Root and Rehan Ahmed in Rajkot.

"It has taken playing 500 deliveries per day from off, leg and left-arm spinners across Oval, Cross and Azad Maidans in Mumbai," said a coach who has seen the Mumbai's growth from close quarters.

"...during (COVID) lockdown, he undertook a car journey covering 1600km. From Mumbai to Amroha, Moradabad, Meerut, Kanpur, Mathura and Dehradun, he travelled and played

on proverbial 'akhadas' where the ball turns square with one shooting up and few staying down," he added.

The Sarfaraz that was manoeuvring the spinners with ease, honed his skills the tough way. The credit for the final product lies not just with Nausad though.

They all arranged for Sarfaraz's net sessions against spinners, especially during the COVID lockdown.

Another coach who has seen Nausad train his sons — Sarfaraz and India U-19 star Mushaeer — spoke about the gruelling training regimen that the two players endured even on non-match days.

# 5 Domestic Stalwarts Bring Curtains To Ranji Careers

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The ongoing Ranji Trophy season marks the end of an era in domestic cricket with five heavyweights bidding adieu to the game, leaving a huge void to fill.

Bengal legend Manoj Tiwary, Jharkhand duo of big-hitting Saurabh Tiwary and express pacer Varun Aaron, Mumbai stalwart Dhawal Kulkarni and Vidrabha's Ranji Trophy-winning captain Faiz Fazal have decided to bring curtains to their illustrious domestic careers.

The reasons for their retirement are varied, ranging from

ing Bengal become a force to reckon with.

The absence of the supremely experienced duo Aaron and swashbuckling Saurabh Tiwary will be a big void Jharkhand will have to fill.

Tiwary, the Jharkhand captain became a prolific run-getter in domestic cricket, playing 115 first-class matches amassing 8030 runs in 189 innings at an average of 47.51 including 22 hundreds and 34 fifties.

One of the country's fastest bowlers, Aaron has been unable to realise his potential due to persistent injuries that included a series of stress frac-



not having anything to play for (IPL contract or national call-up), to embarking on new adventures or focussing on politics.

One of the doyens of domestic cricket, Bengal's Manoj Tiwary said goodbye to his "beloved 22 yards" after leading his state to a comprehensive win over Bihar on Monday.

An aggressive batter, he has over 10,000 first class run in his kitty. As a captain, he always led from the front, help-

ing him to lead from the front, help-

Fazal hangs his boots after 21 years' service to Vidarbha, having contributed immensely to their legacy. The elegant opener famously led them to their maiden Ranji Trophy title in 2018. He was the side's leading run getter that season.

He collected 9183 runs in first class cricket, 3641 runs in List A games and 1273 in T20s and retires as Vidarbha's leading run-getter in both List A cricket and first-class cricket.

# Bayern Munich's 11-Year Era Of Domestic Dominance Nearing Its End After New Stumble

Agencies

**BERLIN:** It feels like the beginning of the end of an era for Bayern Munich.

The Bavarian powerhouse lost again Sunday, and its chances of securing a record-extending 12th consecutive Bundesliga title look slim as league leader Bayer Leverkusen pulled eight points clear with 12 rounds remaining.

It was Bayern's third defeat in eight days, a run that started with a chastening 3-0 loss at Leverkusen, then a 1-0 defeat at Lazio in the Champions League, before Bochum came from behind to win 3-2 in the Bundesliga on Sunday.

"It feels like a horror film that just doesn't end," Bayern midfielder Leon Goretzka said.

Bayern hadn't lost three games in a row since May 2015, when the team coached by Pep Guardiola had already clinched the Bundesliga title and was focused on the Champions

League.

The situation is vastly different now as Bayern can't afford any more slip-ups either domestically or in the Champions League, with Lazio visiting for the second leg of their round-of-16 match on March 5.

Even if Bayern does manage to advance, Thomas Tuchel's team does not look capable of upsetting tournament favorites like Manchester City or Real Madrid.

Of greatest concern for Bayern, however, is the disappearance of its aura of domestic superiority — Bayern is not the best team in Germany anymore as Leverkusen clearly demonstrated in its win over the defending champion.

Tuchel's team was already knocked out of the German Cup by third-division Saarbrücken in the second round.

And Bayern only won the Bundesliga title last year because Borussia Dortmund squandered its chance on the



final day.

Rivals no longer fear the Bavarian powerhouse. Bochum — a team that Bayern defeated 7-0 in Munich earlier this season — fought hard and took its chances. It also needed veteran goalkeeper Manuel Riemann at

his best to deny Leroy Sané late on as Bayern had 27 shots compared to Bochum's 13.

Tuchel blamed bad luck for the defeat, but Bochum displayed more commitment than his players. Bayern was at its best when Tuchel sent on the

18-year-old French forward Mathys Tel, who perhaps should have started.

Bayern midfielder Joshua Kimmich clashed with assistant coach Zoltan Lőw after the match, suggesting tensions between players and the coaching staff.

Tuchel himself stayed in the dugout for most of the second half while Bochum counterpart Thomas Letsch had the sideline to himself to urge on his players.

Bayern chief executive Jan-Christian Dreesen said Tuchel will remain in charge for Bayern's next match against visiting Leipzig on Saturday, but he didn't rule out making a change at a later stage.

Bayern's struggles have come despite summer signing Harry Kane scoring 25 goals in 22 games so far, topping the Bundesliga scoring chart by a wide margin. But much has been made in the German press of Bayern's other highly paid stars — Kimmich, Goretzka, Sané, Serge Gnabry and Matthijs de Ligt — and their failure to meet expectations.

Tuchel, who took over from the fired Julian Nagelsmann less than a year ago, is encountering the same problems as his predecessor, who had taken over from Hansi Flick in 2021.

Oliver Kahn, who was Bayern CEO at the time, said Bayern wasn't showing its true potential under Nagelsmann.

But Kahn is gone now, too, fired along with sporting director Hasan Salihamidžić at the end of last season just hours after Bayern's title win.

It continued the boardroom upheaval that started when former club president Uli Hoenes stepped down in 2019 and former CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge followed in 2021. Both Hoenes and Rummenigge are on Bayern's supervisory board.

Kahn replaced Rummenigge as CEO. Dreesen, who replaced Kahn, will have to figure out how to get Bayern back on track.

Former Borussia Mönchengladbach and Leipzig sporting director Max Eberl is tipped to join the Bavarian powerhouse as soon as next month.

Whether Tuchel remains or not, a summer of rebuilding awaits. (AP)



## Chronic Pain More Common In Women, Often Disbelieved By Doctors



Agenceis

If you are among the one in five adult Australians experiencing chronic pain, then you are more likely to be female.

Not only that, if you're female you're less likely to be prescribed or recommended medication by your doctor than your male or female.

That's because, as a recent experimental study of simulated and actual chronic pain patients showed, clinicians underestimate pain in female patients.

This is not a uniquely Australian phenomenon: Gender differences in the experiences and treatment of pain holds true across many different age groups, countries, and causes of chronic pain.

This issue is finally starting to get the attention it deserves.

The Australian federal government has recently established a National Women's Health Advisory Council to address systemic challenges that have led to poorer health outcomes for girls and women.

Chronic pain is in the mix here: "Women have told me they're being seen but not believed," Federal MP Ged Kearney said when launching initiative. "They seek help for crippling pelvic pain as teenagers but suffer into adulthood from raging endometriosis." In January, the state of Victoria also announced an Australia-first inquiry into women's pain in an attempt to tackle "pain and stigma" around the issue.

This follows the National Action Plan for Endometriosis, launched in 2018. Researchers are increasingly studying women and their pain, too helping patients give voice to their experiences.

Women living with pain are sending clear messages about what they want from clinicians. These include being listened to,

having their pain accepted as being real, and having their concerns acknowledged and responded to.

The International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) has named 2024 the Global Year about Sex and Gender Disparities in Pain.

Of mice and men (but not women)

The pain is real. Chronic pain that interferes with daily activities can have a profound impact on both quality of, and engagement with life across women's lives. But women's experiences of pain have often been overlooked in both the healthcare system and medical research.

Research gaps are found across the full spectrum of research: from preclinical studies to health services research that is, how women living with pain interact with the health system.

Most animal studies in the pain field have, to date, been conducted in male mice. In general, fewer women are recruited to clinical trials of new drugs and other interventions for pain conditions that are not specific to men or women.

It wasn't until 1994 that, in the US, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Revitalisation Act promoted recruitment of women into NIH-funded studies. In the UK, the National Institute for Health and Care Research issued guidance on sex and gender in 2020.

Progress has been disappointingly slow. This was recently called out as an enduring international scandal by Kamran Abbasi, the editor-in-chief of BMJ, one of the world's leading medical journals.

As Abbasi wrote, "funders, institutions, research ethics committees, medical journals and publishers, individual researchers and clinicians is the case with clinical platform trials can all play a part" in bringing about this change. Consider the overlapping experiences of women's lives

## Risk-Reducing Mastectomy May Lower Breast Cancer Mortality: Study

Agenceis

Risk-reducing mastectomies (RRM) in women with a certain genetic variant may significantly reduce the risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer and lower the probability of death, a study has found.

The research, published in the British Journal of Cancer, examined how RRM -- a surgery to remove a breast -- affects the rate of death of women with a pathogenic variant but no cancer diagnosis.

"The decision to have a risk-reducing mastectomy is often difficult for a woman to make, and the more evidence we are able to provide them with when they are making that decision, the more informed their care plan will be," said Professor Kelly Metcalfe from the University in Toronto, Canada.

Women who have an inherited BRCA1 or BRCA2 variant have an 80 per cent risk of developing breast cancer over the course of their lifetime, the researchers said.

Studies have shown that an RRM reduces the risk of breast cancer by 90 per cent, and in Canada, 30 per cent of women with a pathogenic variant opt for this surgery, they said.

It is one of the most effective ways of preventing breast cancer in women with this risk profile, Metcalfe said.

The researchers followed over 1600 participants from a registry of women with a pathogenic BRCA



1/2 variant from nine different countries over the course of six years, with half of the women having a risk-reducing mastectomy.

At the end of the trial, there were 20 incident breast cancers and two deaths in the group who opted for a RRM, and 100 incident breast cancers and seven deaths in the control group, the researchers said.

RRM reduced the risk of breast cancer by 80 per cent, and the probability of dying of breast cancer 15 years after risk-reducing mastectomy was less than one per cent, they said.

"Although there wasn't a significant difference in deaths between the two groups in this study, we know that a risk-reduc-

ing mastectomy significantly reduces the risk of ever developing breast cancer," said Metcalfe.

Metcalfe noted that following these participants for an extended period would generate more evidence to assess the true mortality risk with precision and highlight the benefits associated with this type of surgery.

"Right now, we have good screening in place for breast cancer, including breast MRI, so surgery is only offered as an option, not a recommendation," Metcalfe said.

"But with more studies being conducted to assess women's trajectory and risk factors following RRM, we will know whether these guidelines need to be changed in the future," she added.

## US Firm Plans City Of 30,000 Monkeys For Medical Research, Locals Outraged

Agenceis

A plan to build a 200-acre mini-city for monkeys in Georgia, in the US, is facing a backlash from local residents and animal rights groups. According to The Guardian, the facility is meant to house 30,000 macaques that will be used for research purposes. It has been planned by Safer Human Medicine, which is spending \$396 million simian metropolis. The plan includes assembling thousands of long-tailed macaques in vast barn-like structures and sending them to universities and pharmaceutical companies for medical re-

search, the outlet further said.

But residents of Bainbridge, which has a population of less than 15,000, are calling on local authorities to block the construction of the proposed city. "They're an invasive species and 30,000 of them, we'd just be overrun with monkeys," Ted Lee, a resident of the city, told The Guardian. "I don't think anybody would want 30,000 monkeys next door," added David Barber, who lives very close to the new facility.

Animal rights groups have also come together to oppose the plan, arguing that breeding primates for medical tests is cruel.

"This move not only further threatens the survival of these primates in the wild, it perpetuates a cycle that we should be breaking away from. We urge local officials to reject the proposal to build this facility and the federal government to prioritise science that will ultimately save both human and animal lives," said Kathleen Conlee, vice-president of animal research issues for the Humane Society.

PETA said on its website that Bainbridge residents have filed a lawsuit against the authorities and its officials who voted to approve a plan to build the monkey-breeding facility.

## Unsubstantiated conspiracy theories continue to attract people

Agenceis

Many people believe at least one conspiracy theory. And that isn't necessarily a bad thing conspiracies do happen.

To take just one example, the CIA really did engage in illegal experiments in the 1950s to identify drugs and procedures that might produce confessions from captured spies.

However, many conspiracy theories are not supported by evidence, yet still attract believers.

For example, in a previous study, we found about seven per cent of New Zealanders and Australians agreed with the theory that visible trails behind aircraft are chemtrails of chemical agents sprayed as part of a secret government program. That's despite the theory being roundly rejected by the scientific community.

The fact that conspiracy theories attract believers despite a lack of credible evidence remains a puzzle for researchers in psychology and other academic disciplines.

Indeed, there has been a great deal of research on conspiracy theories published in the past few years. We now know more about how many people believe them, as well as the psychological and political factors that correlate with that belief.

But we know much less about how often people change their minds. Do they do so frequently, or do they stick tenaciously to their beliefs, regardless of what evidence they come across?

From 9/11 to COVID

We set out to answer this question using a longitudinal survey. We recruited 498 Australians and New Zealanders (using the Prolific website,

which recruits people to take part in paid research).

Each month from March to September 2021, we presented our sample group with a survey, including ten conspiracy theories, and asked them how much they agreed with each one.

All of these theories related to claims about events that are either ongoing, or occurred this millennium: the September 11 attacks, the rollout of 5G telecommunications technology, and COVID-19, among others.

While there were definitely some believers in our sample, most participants disagreed with each of the theories.

The most popular theory was that pharmaceutical companies (Big Pharma) have suppressed a cure for cancer to protect their profits. Some 18 per cent of the sample group agreed when first asked.

The least popular was the theory that COVID-19 vaccines contain microchips to monitor and control people. Only two per cent agreed.

Conspiracy beliefs probably aren't increasing

Despite contemporary concerns about a pandemic of misinformation or infodemic, we found no evidence that individual beliefs in conspiracy theories increased on average over time.

This was despite our data collection happening during the tumultuous second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdowns were still happening occasionally in both Australia and New Zealand, and anti-government sentiment was building.

While we only tracked participants for six months, other studies over much longer time frames have also found little evidence that beliefs in conspiracy theories are increasing over time.



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