

**Shri Manoj Sinha**  
Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, J&K



# J&K Film Conclave

1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 | 10:00 AM | SKICC, Srinagar

## Inaugural Session

- Launch of Single Window Portal for film shooting permission and film subsidy
- Prize Distribution of Naya Jammu Kashmir Short Film Making Competition
- Launch of Frames of Transformation Photography Competition
- Inauguration of J&K Film Screening Series

## Screening of Naya Jammu Kashmir Short Films

MELTING STONES | I AM VALMIKI

UNVEILING STRENGTH  
THE WOMEN ATHLETES OF KASHMIR

## Film Screenings

J L KAUL: A MAN OF ACTION | NOOREH  
SCHIZOPHRENIA | KHATTAY ANGOOR  
UNICORN

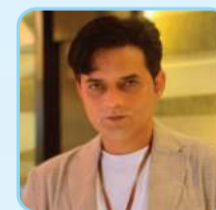
## Panel Discussion

Evolving Film Ecosystem  
in Jammu & Kashmir

*A New Dawn in Cinema*



Madhur  
Bhandarkar



Rahhat Kazmi



Paragg Mehta



Mir Sarwar

## Film Making Workshops

Local Stories,  
Global Audience

Rahhat Kazmi  
Director & Writer

From Auditions to  
Screen: Blueprint for  
Aspiring Actors and  
Filmmakers

Paragg Mehta  
Casting Director  
& Producer

**Premiere Screening**  
*First Time Screening in India!*

**COUNTRY OF BLIND**



## KTMF delegation visits Saida Kadal, expresses grief over fire incident

Srinagar, July 27: Kashmir Traders & Manufacturers Federation (KTMF) today expressed anguish over midnight blaze at Saida Kadal Market that engulfed 2 shops on Tuesday night. A delegation led by KTMF president Mohammad Yaseen Khan visited Saida Kadal to express solidarity with the gutted traders.



Khan said, "It is not just the infrastructure that has been damaged, the merchandise worth lakhs of rupees also got ruined in the unfortunate incident. We stand shoulder to shoulder with the affected traders in their difficult time and hope and pray for their early revival."

Saida Kadal Traders Federation President Ghulam Mohideen Akhoun briefed Khan about the damage caused upon the administration and urged him to impress upon District administration to rehabilitate the affected traders on priority. While speaking with the affected traders, Khan expressed his sympathies to the affected and prayed for the early revival of their business. He impressed upon the administration to award due compensation to the affected following early assessment of the losses incurred by them without delay. Pertinent to mention two showrooms M/s I&I & M/s Hayward International were completely gutted in the unfortunate incident.

WALNUT ADS.

## Medical Advice Viewed As Less Reliable If Chatbot Involved: Study

Press Trust Of India

People rated medical advice as "less reliable and empathetic" when they believed it was provided by AI-chatbots, a new study published in the journal Nature Medicine has found.

Researchers found that this was also the case when patients or medical advice seekers were made to believe that a doctor took the help of artificial intelligence (AI) before sharing his guidance.

As a result, the individuals were also found to be less willing to follow AI recommendations, compared to advice from human doctors provided solely on their

medical expertise, found the study led by the University of Wuerzburg in Germany.

The results suggested that people trust medical guidance less if they suspect AI involvement, even as people around the world are increasingly turning to ChatGPT for health-related information, the researchers said.

With AI acknowledged for its potential in reducing bureaucracy and day-to-day workload for doctors, the authors argued that the findings are important as "trust in medical diagnoses and therapy recommendations" are critical for successful treatment.

The setting of the study is



based on a digital health platform from where information on medical issues can be obtained, the researchers said.

For the study, over 2,000 participants received identical medical advice and were asked to evaluate it for reliability, comprehensibility and empathy.

The participants were divided into three groups. While one group of participants was told that the advice came from a doctor, the second was told that it came from an AI chatbot. The third was led to believe that a doctor provided the medical advice with help from an AI.

The researchers found that advice provided by human doctors also scored higher on empathy, compared to that when AI was involved.

The study represented a starting point for detailed research into the conditions under which AI can be used in diagnostics and therapy without jeopardising patients' trust and cooperation, according to the authors.

**J&K Bank**  
 Serving To Empower  
**Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited**  
 Estates & Engineering Department,  
 Corporate Headquarters, Srinagar,  
 M. A. Road Srinagar, 190 001 J&K

### Online Request for Tender (e-NIT) For

**Comprehensive Maintenance of Central Heating Systems and Hot Air Generators installed at Various Branches/Offices of the Bank in Kashmir & Ladakh Zones for the Winter Season of 2024-25 (tentatively from 15th November, 2024 to 15th of March, 2025 which may vary subject to weather conditions).**

Tender Notice along with Complete Tender document outlining the minimum requirements can be downloaded from and BIDs can be submitted on the Banks' e-Tendering Portal <https://jkbank.abcpurchase.com> w.e.f. August 01, 2024 16.00 Hrs. Tender Document can also be downloaded from Bank's Official Website [www.jkbank.com](http://www.jkbank.com). Last date for submission of Bids is August 23, 2024, 17.00 Hrs.

e-NIT Ref.No. : JKB/E&ED/CAMC-CHS/2024-1155  
 Dated: 29-07-2024

Registered office : Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road, Srinagar 190001, Kashmir, India  
 CIN: L65101JK19385GCO00048; T : +91 (0)194 2481 930-35; F : +91 (0)194 248 1928; E : info@jkbank.com; W : www.jkbank.com  
**DIPK-NB-1115724 dated: 30-07-2024**

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir,  
**Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Lolab**  
 FRESH NIT No.14-Lolab/1280-85of2024-25 e-tendering DATED:- 30-07-2024

For & on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K Union Territory, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the followings works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees)	Earnest Money (In rupees)	Time of Completion in days	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account
01	UPGRADATION OF GUNGBUGH LINKS	14.48	600/-	29,000/-	7 days	07-08-2024	A (With HMP), B, C & D	C&T
02	UPGRADATION OF TANGCHECK KANCHET MOHALLA ROAD	19.41	800/-	39,000/-	7 days	07-08-2024	A (With HMP), B & C	C&T
03	MACDAMISATION OF LINK ROAD FROM FROTI MOHALLA LALPORA AND OTHER LINKS	24.28	800/-	49,000/-	7 days	07-08-2024	A (With HMP), B & C	C&T

Position of funds : Demanded  
 Position of AA : Accorded

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:-

01.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	30-07-2024
02.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 30-07-2024 to 06-08-2024
03.	Bid submission start date	30-07-2024 from (04.00PM)
04.	Bid submission end date	06-08-2024 up to (04.00PM)
05.	Date & time of opening Bids (on line)	07-08-2024 (10:00A.M) in the Office of the Executive Engineer RnB Division Lolab

Terms and Conditions :-

The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploading soft-copy any short fall found in the soft copy tender shall be rejected.

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape Treasury Challan (Under Account Head 0059) (Treasury Challan) must be written the Name of Work Or NIT No. with Sr. No of NIT, Name of Contractor) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Lolab (tender inviting authority) and Earnest money /Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Lolab (CDR/FDR shall be valid from date between the bid submission start date and the Bid Submission End date) . (The 2% CDR Shall be Valid from the Date of Publishing of the NIT 05-Lolab/603-08 of 2024-25 dated 15-06-2024)

2. At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Lolab. Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the total cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.

3. The date and time of bid opening shall be notified on the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and automatically communicated to bidders via an e-mail message sent to their e-mail address. Responsive bidders' bids will be opened online on the same Web Site in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Lolab (tender receiving authority).

4. Bids for the work shall be valid for 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.  
 7 Special Conditions regarding Specifications and Quality control for Machinelaidd B.T. Works:  
 - All work components shall be executed strictly in accordance with the specifications laid out in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways publication "Specifications for Road and Bridge Works" and any amendments made up to the date of issuance of N.I.T.

- A periodic safety analysis of each type of aggregate, as well as a periodic check of aggregate at the gradation control unit, shall be performed to ensure that the specified proportion of aggregates is complied.

- Conducting mandatory quality control tests in the lab and/or field for various components of the advertised work, such as thickness tests, impact value tests, stripping, flakiness, gradation of aggregates, determination of Binder content in bituminous mix, density tests, Viscosity test, and other tests as prescribed in MORTH at the frequency recommended therein, will be the sole responsibility of the contractor, as will the correct execution of the work.

- The location of the Hot mix plant of adequate capacity capable of yielding a mix of proper and uniform quality, from which bituminous macadam is to be transported to the site in clean, tarpaulin covered vehicles/Tippers, and shall be placed in such a way that the manufacturing laying/spreading and rolling temperatures are kept within the specified limits.

No:1280-85  
 DIPK-3816/24 Dated: 30-07-2024

-sd/-  
 Executive Engineer  
 R&B Division Lolab

### Govt. Of Jammu & Kashmir (U.T) Office Of The Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Vailoo

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS  
 NIT No.16/2924-33 of R&B/Vailoo /2024-2025/e-tendering/ DATED:29/07/2024

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory J&K e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works.

S. No	Name of Work	Approved Amount (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. in form of Treasury challan / Receipt (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (2% of Adv.Cost) (in Rs.)	Time of completion	Project Intending Department	Class of Contractor	Major Head of account
1.	Construction of Road from PMGSY to Pindobal Gujerbasti (Balance work)	14.985	600	29970	30 days	PWD	BEE/CEE/DEE Class	UT CAPEX
2.	Construction of road from Kandiwara to Tethan (Balance work)	68.220	1600	136440	60 days	PWD	AAY Class	UT CAPEX
3.	Development of Sericulture Seed Station Achabal Anantnag (by way of) 1) Finishing of gate pillars by tile work and fixing of signboard, development of entry point of sericulture seed station Achabal Anantnag 2) Development of Examination/ Astavation Barak sericulture seed station Achabal Anantnag (Balance work)	3.510	200	7020	15 days	Sericulture	DEE Class	UT CAPEX

Position of AA: Accorded

Position of TS: Accorded

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	29.07.2024
2.	Period of Downloading of bidder documents.	From 29.07.2024 04.00 pm
3.	Bid submission Start Date	From 29.07.2024 04.00 pm
4.	Bid Submission End Date	To 07.08.2024 04.00 pm
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (online)	08.08.2024 at 10.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Vailoo

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Receipt/ challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division vailoo (Head-0059) (tender inviting authority) and Earnest Money for 2% of Advertised Cost in shape of CDR/ FDR only. Pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division vailoo (tender receiving authority) (Name of work or ENIT no. and Item No. to be mentioned on the Treasury receipt/ challan)(Refer Govt. order No. A/ 24(2017)-65 DT: 07.06.2018 & Superintending Engineer R&B Circle Ang/Kul 's No. 3867-70 dated: 04.08.2018 ( The date of Treasury receipt / Challan should be between the date of start of bid end Bid submission end date ) pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Vailoo (Tendering Inviting Authority) . 5% Performance Security of the allotted cost in the shape of CDR/ FDR by the Successful bidder. Minimum of Two bids are necessary to decide L-1 bidder in case of Contractors.

2. The 1st Lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of allotted cost as performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR within 07 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of defective liability period of the work.

3. The EMD of 2% of successful bidders shall be released after receipt of 5% Performance Security.  
 4. Only those contractors are eligible for taking part in the bidding process whose contractor registration card is enrolled online on the JKPWDOMS portal.

5. The Advertised cost is inclusive of GST@18%. The bidder has to quote the rate exclusive of GST.  
 6. Security Deposit shall be deposited by the contractor within 10 days of issuance of LOI, failing which the concerned tender

7. The contractor shall initiate the work within 10 days of entering into the agreement, failing which the undersigned shall terminate the contract and issue a fresh tender after imposing penalties viz forfeit security/LD as per T&C of the Bid document and recommend contractor for blacklisting.  
 8. The work shall be completed by the concerned contractor as per the timeline stipulated in the bid document/agreement, failing which action shall be initiated against contractor by forfeiting EMD and shall be recommended for blacklisting.

9. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division vailoo (tender receiving authority).

10. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids

11. The earnest money shall be forfeited, if-  
 a. Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.  
 b. Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.

c. Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.  
 12. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

11.1 Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) to acquaint bid submission process.  
 11.2 To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get "Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)" as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.

11.3 The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.

11.4 Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.  
 11.5 Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents including earnest money and tender document fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid

The Earnest money in favour of unsuccessful / Non-responsive bidders shall be released only after ensuring submission of Tender document Fee in original,  
 22 The intending bidders should write the name of work / serial No. of NIT and item No. on the Treasury receipt / challan while uploading their bids.

23 All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form)

DIPK-3752/24 dated: 30-07-2024

-sd/-  
 Executive Engineer PWD  
 (R&B) Division Vailoo

Subject:- Grant Of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name & Style "M/S Meet My Holidays" Situated At Beerwah Road Budgam Near Petrol Pump

### Public Notice

Whereas I, Mr. Zubair Ah Shah S/o Mohd Hussain Shah R/o Peth Makhama KASHMIR intend to apply in the Department of Tourism for registration of my proposed travel unit under the name & style of "M/S Meet My Holidays" Situated At Beerwah Road Budgam Near Petrol Pump KASHMIR 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/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration(email id; ddtregl23@gmail.com) within a period of 7days 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.

bmj

### PUBLIC NOTICE

My DOB has been wrong written in my school records as 10-09-2014 while my correct DOB is 10-09-2012 which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Sheikh -Alam Sec School Dobiwan within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Jibran Javed Kachroo  
 S/O Javeed Ahmad Kachroo  
 R/O Dhoiwan Kunzer Bla

BMG

### Before The Hon'ble Court Of Principal District Judge Pulwama

In the case of:

Imtiyaz Ahmad Zargar  
 S/o Late Mohammad Yousuf Zargar  
 R/o Zargar Mohalla Dalipora, Pulwama

(Caveator)

VERSUS  
 Public at large.

(Caveatees)

In the Matter of: Caveat Application.

May it please your Honour,  
 The application is submitted as under

1. That the Caveator is the owner in possession of land measuring 15 Marlas of land situated at Zargar Mohalla, Dalipora, Pulwama wherein the caveator is intending to raise construction of his residential house.

2. That the caveator has apprehensions that his neighbors who are jealous of his development, may file a suit before the Court of law and manage to get an ex-parte order against the interests of the caveator.

3. That in case the Caveatees manage to get an ex-parte order, the same may cause prejudice to the rights and interests of the caveator as the caveator has already dumped construction material worth of Rs. 30-40 lacs.

4. That a copy of this application has been published in the newspaper, the copy of which is enclosed with this application.  
 5. That an affidavit in support of the contentions made in the application is enclosed herewith.

In the premises, it is therefore prayed that in the interests of Justice, the Caveator may be given an opportunity of being heard before any ex-parte injunction/Order is passed by the Hon'ble Court on the presentation of suit/application by the Caveatees against the Caveator.

Caveator

## J&K Govt Grants Land Rights To WP Refugees



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Administrative Council which met here under chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha in a significant decision ended discrimination with the West Pakistan Displaced Persons by granting proprietary rights on State land in favour of such families.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary, Dr Mandeep K Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor were present in the meeting.

This shall significantly empower thousands of families across Jammu region. It is pertinent to mention that post re-organization of year 2019, Domicile rights have been conferred by Government of India to the West Pakistan Displaced Persons.

The decision fulfills demands of all connected families, which have been requesting for ownership rights since past so many decades. Vesting of proprietary rights to West Pakistan Displaced Persons on State land would bring them at par with the Displaced Persons | [More on P10](#)

## Approves Revised Plan For Migrant Employee Transit Housing

The Administrative Council which met here under chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha approved revised administrative approval for construction of six thousand Transit Accommodations in Kashmir Valley for Kashmir Migrant Government Employees engaged | [More on P10](#)

## ED Raids Ex-Manager J&K Grameen Bank, Others

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday said it seized documents and digital devices after it searched multiple premises in Jammu and Kashmir as part of an alleged bank funds fraud case against a former branch manager of Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank and some other persons.

The raids against the former banker -- Istiyaq Ahmad Parry -- and others were launched on Monday and five premises in Srinagar and Pattan were covered.

The money laundering case stems from charge sheets filed by the CBI against Parry, who in "in connivance" with other accused

private persons, like bank correspondent Mohd Maqbool Ganie, Manzoor Ahmad Dar, Mushtaq Hussain Wani, Shabir Ahmad Dar, Shabir Ahmad Bhat, Nissar Ahmad Dar and others "fraudulently" sanctioned the Kisan Cash Credit loans (KCC), car loans, joint liability groups (JLGs), and cash credit limits (CC) to fake or non-existing customers, the agency alleged.

There were a total of 250 "fake" loan accounts, which later turned out to be non-performing assets (NPA). This led to "embezzlement" of Rs 8.36 crore bank funds, the central agency said in a statement.

The loans were sanctioned between 2014 and 2018.

The majority of | [More on P10](#)

## '11 Terror Incidents, 24 Encounters' 28 Killings Reported In J&K This Year: MHA

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) told the Lok Sabha on Tuesday that 28 people, including civilians and security personnel, were killed in 11 terror-initiated incidents and 24 encounters or counter-terror operations up to July 21 this year.

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai submitted a written reply in the Lower House pointing that there is a "decline in the number of terror incidents in Jammu and Kashmir" compared to previous years. Rai was responding to the query of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Pradeep Kumar Singh on behalf of the MHA.

The data shared by Rai states that a total of 14 security personnel and 14 civilians were killed up to July 21 this year, while the number of killings was 44 (30 security personnel and 14 civilians) in 46 terrorist-initiated incidents and 48 encounters or counter-terror operations in the Union



Territory in 2023.

As per the data, 146 people, 91 security personnel and 55 civilians were killed in 228 terrorist-initiated incidents and 189 encounters or counter-terror operations in the erstwhile state in 2018.

Citing the data received from the Jammu and Kashmir government, Rai said there were 1328 organized stone pelting incidents and 52 organized Hartals in 2018.

The minister said the decline in terror incidents in Jammu and Kashmir is due to the "zero tolerance" policy of the central government against terrorism.

"The approach of the Government is to dismantle the terror ecosystem. Security measures are being strengthened to sustain peace and stability in Jammu and Kashmir," Rai further said.

The strategies adopted and | [More on P10](#)

## Rs 12,000 Cr Provided For JKP: FM



"We have provided substantial financial support of Rs 17,000 crore in the Union Budget of UT Jammu and Kashmir this year. It includes Rs 12,000 crore towards financing the cost of Jammu and Kashmir Police," Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Tuesday said in Lok Sabha.

"That's the burden we want to take on our shoulders, so that Jammu and Kashmir has more flexibility to spend money on development activities."

Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday termed misleading claims by opposition leaders that if any state is not named | [More on P10](#)

## LS Approves 48.21 Lakh Cr Union Budget

Agencies

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha approved the Rs 48.21-lakh crore Budget for 2024-25 of the Union Government.

The lower House also approved the budget of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir with a voice vote.

The Union Budget and Budget for J&K was passed by a voice vote by the Lok Sabha. The relevant appropriation bills were also passed by the House.

Replying to the debate, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the fiscal deficit of the central government is proposed to be brought down to 4.9 per cent of the GDP during 2024-25 and further to below 4.5 per cent by 2025-26.

The first day of the first Budget Session of the 18th Lok Sabha kicked off in Parliament on July 22. The session is scheduled to have 16 sittings and is likely to conclude on August 12. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented her seventh straight Budget on July 23 for the fiscal 2024-25, surpassing the record of former Prime Minister Morarji Desai. This was the first Budget by the BJP-led NDA government since it was re-elected in June.

The Congress has alleged discrimination | [More on P10](#)

## J&K LOCAL BODY POLLS

## Govt Forms Panel To Determine OBC Quota In Panchayats, ULBs

Agencies

Srinagar: In a significant move, the Jammu & Kashmir Government on Tuesday appointed Justice (retd.) Janak Raj Kotwal, a former judge of J&K High Court, as head of a panel set-up last month for reservation of other backward classes (OBCs) in local bodies of the Union Territory.

According to an order, the government today appointed Justice Janak Raj Kotwal as head of the Jammu & Kashmir local bodies dedicated backward classes commission while as Raj Kumar Baghat (retired IAS officer) and Prof. (Dr.) Mohinder Singh Bhadwal (former dean SKUAST Jammu) would be its members.

The tenure of chairperson



and members will be co-terminus with the term of the commission.

As per its terms of reference, the Commission is empowered to conduct an empirical study and investigation in the context of the representation of backward classes in all local bodies before the upcoming general elections of the local

bodies. It will submit its recommendations regarding proportional reservation for backward classes, Local Body-wise (Urban & Rural) in accordance with the amendments made in the Union Territory's local bodies last year to facilitate reservation for OBCs in them.

On June 7, 2024, the administrative council headed by LG Manoj Sinha had cleared a proposal for constituting the panel for proposing reservation for OBCs in Panchayats and urban local bodies.

In 2023, the Parliament had made amendments in J&K's reservation law to rechristen "Weak and Under-privileged Classes (Social Castes)" as "Other Backward Classes".

Later, in | [More on P10](#)

## Kashmir Valley Sizzles Again After Brief Respite

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As the thunder-showers at multiple places and heavy rains in some areas brought respite from the scorching heat, the weather conditions have once again recorded an upward trend in terms of temperature as most places across Jammu and Kashmir recorded above normal temperatures on Tuesday.

8 stations out of 11 recorded above 30 degree Celsius temperature today with Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir recording a maximum temperature of 31.7 degree Celsius.

Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded a maximum temperature of 31.9 degree Celsius while Pahalgam,

a famous tourist destination recorded 29.6 degree Celsius.

The mercury settled at 28.7 degree Celsius in Kupwara while in Kokernag and Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, it settled at 31.9 degree Celsius and 21.0 degree Celsius respectively.

The rise in maximum temperatures was recorded amidst the forecast of intermittent rains and thundershowers in Jammu and Kashmir for the next few days.

In Jammu, the mercury settled at 36.4 degree Celsius while in Banihal it settled at 33.6 degree Celsius. It settled at 31.4 degree Celsius in Batote and 33.3 degree Celsius and 33.0 degree Celsius in Katra and Baderwah stations respectively. | [More on P10](#)

## Constitution Of J&K Commission For Protection Of Child Rights

## HC Asks CS To Appear In Person If Status Report Not Filed

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has granted the government two weeks time to file a status report about the progress regarding constitution of J&K Commission for Protection of Child Rights in Jammu and Kashmir.

Hearing a Public Interest Litigation, a division bench of Chief Justice (acting) Tashi Rabstan and Justice Rajnesh Oswal ordered that in case the government failed to file the status report, its Chief Secretary shall be personally present on the next date of hearing on August 14.

As soon as the PIL, filed in 2020, came up for hearing before the Bench, Sr. AAG A.R. Malik sought two weeks' time to file the status report in terms



of order dated 27 March this year. While the court granted the time, it said that the Chief Secretary shall appear in person before it on the next date of hearing on August 14 if the status report was not filed.

On March 27, the court noted that on 7 August 2023, the counsel for the government was directed to apprise it as to the progress of the constitution of J&K Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

Later, the counsel representing authorities informed the court that a Committee was convened on 8 August 2023. However on 4 & 20 December last year, 28 February and 1 March this year, the counsel sought time on behalf of the authorities to apprise the Court about the constitution of the commission and nothing was made known to the court as to the stage of the process of the outcome of such a meeting for appointment of the members of the Commission for Protection of Child Rights. "We are unable to understand as to whether authorities had really taken any concrete steps or not," the court had noted in its order on March 27, adding, "We take this matter with utmost seriousness it deserves in view of the | [More on P10](#)

## Ganderbal DC Accused Of Defying Court Orders, Targeting Judge

KO Correspondent

Srinagar: A court in Ganderbal district has issued show-cause notice to Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir, as to why a reference be not made to High Court of J&K and Ladakh for initiating contempt proceedings against him in terms of Contempt of Courts Act.

The court, Sub-judge Ganderbal, passed the order against the Deputy Commissioner for allegedly not complying with its order in a civil suit and attempting to "personally attack" the judge "by manipulation and fabrication".

"A preliminary enquiry is initiated against the contemnor

Mr Shyambir and in the first instance, it is ordered that a show-cause notice be issued to the contemnor Deputy Commissioner Mr. Shyambir calling upon him to remain present before the court to show-cause as to why a reference be not made to

Hon'ble High Court of J&K and Ladakh for initiating contempt proceedings in terms of Contempt of Courts Act," Fayaz Ahmad Qureshi, the sub-judge said, also accused.

The judge has also accused Shyambir of launching an inquiry into land owned by him as revenge for an earlier order.

The issue pertains to a case regarding land acquisition, in which | [More on P10](#)

## Top Cola, Snack Makers To Set Up Plants In J&K

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Leading food and beverage companies, including Varun Beverages, Haldiram's, Kandhari Beverages (maker of Thumbs Up), and Mutiah Muralitharan's Ceylon Beverages, are preparing to establish their first manufacturing units in Jammu & Kashmir.

Economic Times reported that Varun Beverages is currently awaiting land allotment, while Haldiram's Snacks Manufacturing, Ceylon Beverages, and Kandhari Beverages have already received government approvals under the New Central Sector Scheme for Industrial Development of Jammu and Kashmir, 2021.

According to data on the J&K government portal, Varun Beverages has proposed one of the highest investments at Rs 3,394 crore for a manufacturing unit on an 87.5-acre plot,

pending land allotment.

Ceylon Beverages is set to invest Rs 1,600 crore in a 25.75-acre can-manufacturing plant, while Kandhari Beverages has outlined a Rs 1,100 crore investment to build a PET bottling facility on 36 acres. "Haldiram's plans to invest Rs 605 crore in a production unit for snacks and namkeen," ET reported.

These units can result in a tentative investment of over Rs 20,000 crore, another senior official told the news portal.

Under the industrial development policy for J&K, a company setting up its manufacturing unit in the union territory will receive an incentive equal to 30% of the investment in plant and machinery, with an upper limit of Rs 5 crore. The scheme also offers an interest incentive on working capital credit for five years and a reimbursement of 100% premium | [More on P10](#)

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## Pezeshkian Takes Oath Of Office Before Parliament As Iran's 9th President

**Agencies**  
 Tehran: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian takes the oath of office before Parliament, with dignitaries from more than 80 countries attending the inauguration ceremony.  
 Before the Holy Quran, Pezeshkian swore to safeguard the official religion of the country, Islam, and the Islamic Republic and the Constitution.  
 "As president, in the presence of the Holy Quran and before the Iranian nation, I swear to Almighty God that I will safeguard the official religion, the system of the Islamic Republic, and the Constitu-

tion of the country," he stated.  
 "I will dedicate all my abilities and qualifications to fulfill the responsibilities entrusted to me, and I will devote myself to serving the people and elevating the nation, promoting religion and ethics, supporting righteousness, and expanding justice," Pezeshkian added.  
 As stipulated in Article 121 of the Iranian Constitution, the presidential oath must be administered in Parliament, where the president takes the oath of office in the presence of legislators and members of the Constitutional Council alongside the Judiciary chief.  
 The inauguration ceremony was attended by senior Iranian politicians, military officials, and members of Parliament as well as dignitaries from 88 countries.  
 Pezeshkian formally started his four-year term on Sunday when Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali



Khamenei endorsed him as president following his victory in the July 5 runoff election.  
 Pezeshkian takes over from his predecessor, the late President Ebrahim Raisi, whose death in a May helicopter crash sparked the early election.  
 After the inauguration, the president is required by law to submit the final list of his cabinet to Parliament for approval within two weeks.  
**'Unparalleled opportunity' for world**  
 In his first speech after taking the oath of office, Pezeshkian urged the world to seize "this unparalleled opportunity" to work with Iran in tackling both regional and global challenges.  
 "The world needs to seize this unparalleled opportunity to address regional and international issues through the collaboration of a powerful, peace-seeking, and dignified Iran," he said.  
 The president promised to uphold Iran's dignity and interests in the world, describing "dignity, wisdom, and expediency" as the three pillars of his foreign policy approach.  
 He affirmed that constructive engagement with the world would be the cornerstone of his administration's foreign relations.  
 "In our vision," Pezeshkian said, Iran "engages constructively and effectively in international relations while emphasizing religious democracy, social justice, legitimate freedoms, the preservation of human dignity and rights, and social and judicial security."

## Aviation Ministry Told To Consider Making Tamil Mandatory In Flights

**Agencies**  
 Chennai: The Madras High Court today directed the Ministry of Civil Aviation to make announcements in Tamil mandatory in all domestic flights operating to and from the airports in Tamil Nadu.  
 The court directive came following a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by a person, C Kanagaraj, the World Tamil Research Trust President, who urged the court to make announcements in Tamil mandatory in all flights operating from the airports in the state.  
 Acting Chief Justice D Krishnakumar and Justice K Kumaresh Babu said that courts could not issue a positive direc-

tion as sought in the PIL.  
 The division bench said that the Central government could be directed only to consider a representation made by the litigant within a period of 12 weeks.  
 The first division bench issued such a direction and disposed of the PIL petition pending since 2021.  
 The petitioner had contended that announcements in Tamil were being made even in foreign countries such as Singapore, Malaysia and Sri Lanka.  
 In the submission before the Madras High Court, he asked why should such announcements could not be made mandatory in all domestic flights operated to and from Tamil Nadu.



## Israeli Killed By Rocket From Lebanon, Austin Believes Conflict Not Inevitable

**Agencies**  
 JERUSALEM/BEIRUT/MANILA: Rocket fire from Lebanon killed an Israeli civilian on Tuesday, medics said, adding to tensions at the frontier as Lebanon braced for Israeli retaliation against Hezbollah after a deadly missile strike in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.  
 Tensions have spiked since Saturday when the rocket killed 12 children and teenagers at a football pitch in a Druze village. Israel accused the Iran-backed Hezbollah and vowed a harsh response. Hezbollah has denied involvement.  
 As diplomats sought to contain the fallout, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said he did not believe a fight was inevitable between Hezbollah and Israel, though he remained concerned about the potential for escalation.  
 Hezbollah and Israel, which last fought each other in a major war in 2006, have been trading fire since the eruption of the Gaza war in October, after Hezbollah began attacking Israeli territory in what it says is solidarity with the Palestinians.  
 The hostilities have mostly been contained to the frontier region and both sides have previously indicated they do not seek a wider confrontation even as the conflict has prompted worry about the risk of a slide toward war.  
 In the latest exchanges of fire on Tuesday, the Israeli military said 10 rockets had been fired from Lebanon and one hit Kibbutz Hagoshrim, causing one casualty. Israel's ambulance service said the 30-year-old male died of shrapnel wounds.  
 Israel said it hit some 10 Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon

**“** While we've seen a lot of activity on Israel's northern border, we remain concerned about the potential of this escalating into a full-blown fight. And I don't believe that a fight is inevitable

overnight and killed one Hezbollah fighter — attacks which appeared to be in keeping with the pattern of the last nine months. Hezbollah confirmed one of its fighters was killed.  
 Hezbollah, one of the world's most heavily armed non-state groups, said its air defense unit had fired at Israeli warplanes which broke the sound barrier over Lebanon, forcing them to retreat.  
 A spokesperson for the Israeli military said it was unfamiliar with any such incident.  
 The United States has been leading a diplomatic effort to deter Israel from striking Lebanon's capital Beirut or major civil infrastructure in response to Saturday's attack, five people with knowledge of the drive told Reuters on Monday.  
 "While we've seen a lot of activity on Israel's northern border, we remain concerned about the potential of this escalating into a full-blown fight. And I don't believe that a fight is inevitable," US Defense Secretary Austin said during a visit to Manila.  
 "We'd like to see things resolved in a diplomatic fashion," he added in a joint news conference following security talks between himself, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and their respective Philippine counterparts.  
 Two Israeli officials said on Monday that Israel wanted to hurt Hezbollah but not drag the Middle East into all-out war.  
 Some flights at Beirut's international airport have been canceled or delayed this week due to the heightened tensions.  
 Hezbollah has denied firing the rocket that hit the village of Majdal Shams on Saturday. It said it had fired a missile against a military target on the Golan, a border region Israel seized from Syria in 1967.  
 Tens of thousands of people have fled or been evacuated from towns and villages on both sides of the frontier since the cross border firing began in October.  
 Israeli strikes have killed around 350 Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon and more than 100 civilians, according to security and medical sources and a Reuters tally of Hezbollah death notifications.  
 Twenty-four civilians, including one on Tuesday and 12 on Saturday, have been killed in Hezbollah attacks since October, along with at least 17 soldiers, according to Israeli tallies.

## Gaza Official Says 300 killed in Khan Yunis As Army Ends Assault

**Agencies**  
 GAZA STRIP, Palestinian Territories: Gaza's civil defense agency said Tuesday that an Israeli operation in and around the territory's second city of Khan Yunis killed about 300 people since it began last week, while the army said it had "eliminated 150 terrorists."  
 "Since the beginning of the Israeli ground invasion of the eastern part of Khan Yunis

province, the civil defense and medical teams have recovered approximately 300 bodies of martyrs, many of them decomposed," agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP.  
 The Israeli military launched the assault on July 22 to halt rocket fire from the area, which already saw heavy fighting earlier this year.  
 Last week, it said troops had retrieved the bodies of five Israelis from the area.  
 They had been killed during the Hamas attacks of October 7 and their bodies taken back to Gaza, the military said.  
 On Tuesday, the military said it had completed the operation in the area of Khan Yunis and had killed "over 150 terrorists."  
 It said troops also "dismantled terrorist tunnels, weapons storage facilities, and terrorist infrastructure and located weapons."

## Suicides Among Higher Education Students Alarming, Action Needed: High Court

**Press Trust Of India**  
 Mumbai: Noting that the rise in instances of suicide among students pursuing higher education is "alarming", the Bombay High Court today called for immediate measures by authorities.  
 A division bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar also stated that mental and physical well-being was an integral part of a student.  
 The high court was hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by child rights activist Shobha Panchmukh who raised concerns over the increase in suicide among students.  
 The plea urged the high court to direct the Mumbai University (MU) to issue a circular to all affiliated/associated colleges to rope in counsellors for dealing with the mental health of students.  
 The PIL highlighted inadequate measures for curbing suicidal tendencies among students of higher education.  
 "Such a situation is alarming and calls for immediate measures by all concerned," the bench said.  
 The bench further said universities are legally obliged to promote a healthy atmosphere and ensure welfare of students at colleges,

universities and institutions under the Maharashtra Universities Act.  
 "What Kind Of Democracy? Court Raps Cops For Seeking Action On Professor"  
 "What Kind Of Democracy? Court Raps Cops For Seeking Action On Professor"  
 "The university, in our opinion, is duty bound to take measures to create an atmosphere in college and institutions where instances of suicide do not take place," it said.  
 The bench directed the petitioner to implead the University Grants Commission



as a respondent to the plea as several colleges are now becoming autonomous.  
 The HC asked the Maharashtra government, MU, and the Higher and Technical Education Department to file affidavits within three weeks.

## UK: Man Goes On Stabbing Spree, Injures Eight Including Children In Southport

**Agencies**  
 A man went on a stabbing spree in northwest England on Monday injuring at least eight people, including children. According to police, the suspect was arrested with the knife in his hand.  
 Prime Minister Keir Starmer condemned the attack and called it "horrendous and deeply shocking."



Merseyside Police said that they received a call about a 'major accident' in Southport, a seaside town near Liverpool. The police commissioner said that the situation was under control and there was no wider threat to the public.  
 The North West Ambulance Service said medics treated eight people with stab injuries. The injured were taken to local hospitals, including a children's hospital.  
 Alder Hey Children's Hospital declared the incident as a "major" one. "We can confirm that the Trust has declared a major incident. The Trust is working with other emergency services to respond to this incident and our emergency department is currently extremely busy. We ask parents to only bring their children to the emergency department if it is urgent. All other appointments and services are running as normal," said a statement released by the hospital.  
 Colin Parry, who owns an auto repair shop near the site of the attack, told the Associated Press that he believed several children had been stabbed. "It's like something from America, not like sunny Southport," he said.  
 Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said she was "deeply concerned at the very serious incident." "The news from Southport is truly devastating. My heart goes out to all the families affected by this horrific incident & to the whole community. I have just spoken to the Merseyside Chief Constable & I thank all the emergency services responding in such difficult circumstances," she said.

از عدالت ایڈیشنل ڈسٹرکٹ جج (بنک مقدمات) سرینگر  
 با اجلاس: اردو شہر  
**JK BANK B/U NAIDYAR**  
**بنام**  
**MOHAMMAD ALTAF WANI**  
 Suit under order XXXVII for recovery  
**Rs:94807.80/=**  
**اشتہار بمراد آگاہی بنام**  
 Mohammad Altaf Wani S/o: Ali Mohammad Wani  
 R/o: Wani Mohalla Chowdary Bagh Rainawari  
 مقدمہ مندرجہ عنوان صدر میں مدعا علیہ مدعا علیہ کی تعمیل کرانے کی بسیار کوشش کی گئی  
 - الا نہ پتہ جدید پر مدعا علیہ مدعا علیہ دستیاب ہوئے اور نہ ہی بذریعہ معین تعمیل لائی  
 گئی۔ بدین وجہ حسب استنادی مدعا علیہ مدعا علیہ جو بذریعہ اشتہار بذراطلاع کیا جاتا  
 ہے کہ آپ کے خلاف مقدمہ بعنوان بالا اجراء بغرض وصول رقم مبلغ  
**Rs:94807.80/=** زیر سامت عدالت ہوا ہے۔  
 لہذا آپ کو بذریعہ اشتہار بذراطلاع کیا جاتا ہے کہ آپ بغرض بیرونی ابراہم ہذا بعنوان  
 بالا مورخہ 31.07.2024 اصالتاً یا وکالتاً بروقت تجرہ کی حاضر آکر مقدمہ ہذا کی  
 بیرونی کریں۔ بصورت عدم حاضری حسب ضابطہ کا روای عمل لائی جائے گی۔ تجرہ  
 ایڈیشنل ڈسٹرکٹ جج، بنک مقدمات سرینگر

Government of Jammu & Kashmir (UT)  
**Office Of The Zonal Education Officer, Srigufwara**  
 (Zeosrigufwara7@gmail.com)  
 Subject: Establishment of newly approved Seasonal Centres for the year 2024-2025 and engagement of Seasonal Educational Volunteers on temporary/ Contract basis and extension of Notification thereof.  
 Reference: School Education Department's Order No.: 1684-Edu of 2017 Dated: 07/12/2021  
 This office Advertisement Notification No. ZEO/S/Seasonal/4936/24 Dated: 19/07/2024.  
**NOTICE**  
 Whereas, this office vide aforesaid reference invited Offline applications as per prescribed format from the eligible candidates for their engagement as Seasonal Education Volunteers on the monthly honorarium of Rs.10000/- only purely on temporary/ contract basis for a maximum period of 06 months or till the closure of these centres during the current year.  
 Whereas, this office has received very less in number applications/ files from the eligible candidates for their selection as Seasonal Education Volunteers in advertised Behaks/ Locations where new seasonal centre is approved viz. Bugmud Top/ Givershahr/ Khelinarid Liddewath upto cutoff date i.e 26-07-2024.  
 Whereas, on the basis of requests and consequent upon the receiving of less applications from the eligible candidates for their selection/engagement as EV's at above shown advertised Behaks.  
 Whereas, matter has been examined by the undersigned and it has been decided to extend the last date of submission of filling of offline applications for engagement of Seasonal Education Volunteers vide aforesaid advertisement notification No. ZEO/S/Seasonal/4936/24 Dated: 19/07/2024.  
 Now, therefore in light of above the last date of submission of Offline applications for Selection of Seasonal Education Volunteers shall now be 02-08-2024 instead of 26-07-2024.  
 Sd/-  
 Zonal Education Officer,  
 Srigufwara  
 DIPK-3791/24  
 dated: 30-07-2024

**PW(R&B) Department,**  
**Government of Jammu & Kashmir,**  
**Jhelum & Tawi Flood Recovery Project (World Bank Funded)**  
**BID [TENDER] NO: 38/3615-24/2024-25/RnB/Bla Dated 30.07.2024 (4th Call)**  
**(Fresh to NIT No: 14/2318-27/2024-25/RnB/Bla Dated 27.06.2024)**  
**NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING**  
**(Two-Envelope Bidding Process with e-Procurement)**  
**NAME OF WORK: DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION (Complete Job) of SUPERSTRUCTURES OF BRIDGE AT WAZMOHALLA INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION OF APPROACH ROADS AND NALLAH TRAINING WORKS**  
 PERIOD OF SALE OF BIDDING DOCUMENT : FROM 30.07.2024 TO 12.08.2024 upto 04:00 PM  
 TIME AND DATE OF PRE-BID CONFERENCE : 03.08.2024 TIME 11:00 AM in the Office of Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla.  
 LAST DATE AND TIME FOR RECEIPT OF BIDS : 12.08.2024 upto 04:00 PM  
 \* TIME AND DATE OF OPENING OF BIDS - Technical Part : 13.08.2024 upto 11:00 AM  
 PLACE OF OPENING OF BIDS : Office of Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla  
 OFFICER INVITING BIDS : Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Baramulla  
 DIPK-3785/24  
 No. 3615-24  
 Dated 30.07.2024  
 May 2024  
 Executive Engineer  
 R&B Division Baramulla

## DC Srinagar Visits City Hospitals; Takes Stock Of Functioning

Observer News Service

Srinagar: To ensure smooth patient care facilities in City hospitals, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today undertook visits to JLN Hospital Rainawari, CHC Gousia Khanyar, PHC Zadibal PHC Zadibal and other hospitals.

During the visit, the DC took first hand appraisal about the medical facilities being extended to the patients. He inspected various wards and sections of these hospitals. He also enquired about the availability of medicines, diagnostics and other facilities available in the hospital.

On the occasion, Dr Bilal also interacted with the patients and attendants to enquire about their satisfaction with the services of these health institutions.

At JLN hospital, the DC directed for early completion of works on additional blocks of the facility being constructed by the J&K Housing Board. He further directed to explore

every possibility for its completion to ensure better patient care.

The DC also made a commitment for enhancing the parking facility at the hospital and committed to providing 30 lakh by the District Administration to overcome parking issues at the hospital.

Similarly to provide space/shed for Medical/Solid Waste Management in Gousia Hospital, the DC committed to provide Rs 20 lakh. He also instructed the concerned to take measures for the upgradation of the public park adjacent to the CHC Gousia.

Meanwhile, in a first of its kind in Government health centre's, the DC vowed to provide machinery equipment for early investigations and on pilot basis the said machinery shall be provided to PHC Batamalo and PHC Zadibal.

Further, the DC assured that the said machinery shall be provided to other health centres in a phased manner for providing investigation facility during wee hours.



PI: Abid Bhat/KO

## Apni Party Protest Seeking Restoration Of Statehood To J&K Foiled

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: Police on Tuesday foiled Apni Party protest march to Lal Chowk against the centre for failing to restore statehood to the erstwhile J&K state, which was downgraded into a union territory after the centre abolished its special status under Article 370 on August 5, 2019.

Led by the party senior leader and vice-president, Ghulam Hassan Mir, dozens of Apni Party workers and activists took out a protest rally from the Apni Party head office at Abiguzar here this afternoon, demanding restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

Chanting slogans "restore statehood to J&K, restore people's constitutional rights", the protesters asked the centre to fulfill its promise made on the floor of the Parliament before scrapping the special status of the erstwhile state five years ago.

Five years have already passed since the special status of under Articles 370 and 35-A which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir was scrapped, however, the union government is yet to restore the constitutional status of the erstwhile state, they claimed.

A pose of police deployed in advance, however, prompted the protesters to disperse, no sooner they tried to march towards city centre Lal Chowk to register their protest.

The Apni Party vice-president Ghulam Hassan Mir later talking to the reporters said the protest was organized to convey

a strong message on behalf of the people of Jammu and Kashmir to the centre to do away with delaying tactics and adopt its promise of restoring the statehood to the erstwhile state on the ground.

He also asked the centre to implement the Supreme Court of India's orders to hold Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir in the month of September.

"We have gathered here to register our strong protest against the centre for failing to restore statehood to J&K. It has been five years since the centre on August 5, 2019 abolished Article 370 and assured the Parliament that the same will be restored in its original form once the situation normalizes in J&K," said Mir.

## 2nd Special Summary Revision- 2024 Series Of Awareness Cum Registration Drives Held In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In connection with ongoing 2nd Special Summary Revision-2024 and Voters Registration of Electoral Rolls-2024, a series of Awareness cum registration drives were organized by District

Election Authority Srinagar.

The drives were held on the directions of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat who is also the District Election Officer (DEO) to raise the awareness among the people particularly youth to get enrolled in Electoral Rolls.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to notify all that i Farooq Ahmad Wani S/O Ab Ahad Wani R/O Gantamulla have lost my School Leaving Certificate/Transfer Certificate issued by Government Higher Secondary School, Pahlipora Uri of class 10th with admission no 1284 and DOB as 01-03-1990. The certificate was dated 08-11-2007 and serial number 198. Now i am applying for the issuance of duplicate certificate from the Government Higher Secondary School, Pahlipora. If anybody has any objections in this regard he/she may kindly approach the concerned office within seven days.

inf

### Before The Hon'ble High Court Of Jammu & Kashmir And Ladakh At Srinagar

Caveat Application No. 72024

In the case of:-  
Estate Officer,

SKIMS Medical College Hospital Bemina Srinagar.

VS ...  
Public at Large

Caveator...

Non-Caveator ...

In the matter of:

Caveat Application in Respect of Tender Notice No. SKIMS MC 01 of 2024, dated 30.07.2024 issued by the Caveator, for Running of Car Parking in SKIMS Medical College, Srinagar.

May it please your Lordships,

The Caveators most respectfully submit as under:

- That, caveators herein issued Tender Notice No. SKIMS MC 01 of 2024, dated 30.07.2024, for Running of Car Parking in SKIMS Medical College, Srinagar for the year 2024-25, enclosed as Annexure
- That the Caveators apprehend that some persons unknown to the caveators, may file writ petition challenging the NIT supra.
- That in case any person challenges NIT supra, the caveators hereby seek an opportunity of being heard prior to passing of any order adverse to the rights of the Caveator.
- That the Caveators have given wide circulation of the NIT through media. Document evidencing the fact that the NIT supra has been given wide publicity is placed on record as Annexure-II.

In the premises: it is, therefore, respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Court may be pleased to afford an opportunity of being heard to the Caveators through their counsel at the time of consideration of writ petition by the Hon'ble Court.

DIPK-NB-1120/24  
dated: 30-07-2024

Caveators through Counsel,  
Furkan Yaqoob Sofi Government Advocate  
Cell No. 9419180426



ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.  
Tele: 01933-247954/247955. Website: www.iust.ac.in

### NOTICE

It is notified for information of all the candidates who have submitted online application form, for admission to below mentioned Undergraduate programmes to update the CUET-UG 2024 details/ score online by clicking on the tab (Update CUET UG Score) in admission login portal available on University website [www.iust.ac.in](http://www.iust.ac.in) by or before 02-08-2024 (Friday) 3:00 pm.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES	
B. Tech. Food Technology	MBA (5-Year Integrated)
B.A. English (FYUGP)	B. Sc. Physics (FYUGP)
B. A Journalism & Mass Communication (FYUGP)	B. Sc. Chemistry (FYUGP)
B. Sc. Economics (FYUGP)	BS Design your Degree - DYOD (FYUGP)
B. A. Islamic Studies (FYUGP)	B. Sc. Mathematical Sciences (FYUGP)
B. A. Arabic Language & Literature (FYUGP)	B. Sc. Computer Science (FYUGP)
B. Arch.	

THREE YEAR POLYTECHNIC DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES		
Diploma Civil Engineering,	Diploma Electrical Engineering,	Diploma Mechanical Engineering

LATERAL-ENTRY PROGRAMMES	
B. TECH. ENGINEERING: Civil/ Computer Science/ Electrical/ Electronics & Communication/ Mechanical/ Food Technology	DIPLOMA ENGINEERING: Civil/ Electrical/ Mechanical

Further, the candidates who have not applied yet can also apply online for the aforesaid academic programmes by following the link <https://admission.iust.ac.in> or on the University Website [www.iust.ac.in](http://www.iust.ac.in) by or before 02-08-2024 (Friday) 3:00 pm. For any further query/information, the candidates may contact on EPABX: 01933-247954/ 247955 EXT: 2086 Email ID: [admissions@iust.ac.in](mailto:admissions@iust.ac.in)

No: IUST/DAA-Acad/24/1400 Sd/-  
Dated: 29-07-2024 DIPK-NB-1121/24 dated: 30-07-2024 Assistant Registrar Academics

### Office of the Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Ganderbal

Address: Mini Secretariat Ganderbal Tel.No.0194-2416058

Subject:- Design and Construction of 1x50 Mtr Span Steel Trussed Girder Bridge Over Nallah Sindh at Ahangar Mohalla Gadoora on EPC MODE (ENGINEERING PROCUREMENT AND CONSTRUCTION MODE) with 7.5 mtr Carriage Way.

Reference: This Office NIT No. 22 of 2024-25 issued under endorsement No.2439-44 Dated: 03-07-2024.

### Extension Notice

The Bid submission end date for the subject work floated for tenders vide this office NIT No. referred to above which were scheduled to be on 30-07-2024 upto 4:00 PM is hereby extended and the details where of are given as under:-

1	Date of issue of Tender	03-07-2024
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	03-07-2024 from 06:00 PM
3	Bid submission start date	04-07-2024 from 12:00 PM
4	Bid submission End date	05-08-2024 upto 04:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening	06-08-2024 at 11.00 AM in the office Of the Chief Engineer PWD(R&B) Central Kashmir.

The other terms and conditions of the aforesaid NIT shall remain unaltered.

No.: 3517-22  
DIPK-3806/24  
dated: 30-07-2024

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
(R&B)Division Ganderbal

- 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  
SHEIK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

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

HIGHWAY STATUS  
Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)  
Mughal Road - (Open)  
Srinagar-Leh- (Open)

PRAYERS

FAJR 4: 04  
ZUHR 12:37  
ASR 5: 32  
Magrib 7:36  
ISHA 9: 09

HIJRI CALENDAR  
24 Muharram  
1446

### This Day In History

- 30 BC - Battle of Alexandria: Mark Antony achieves minor victory over Octavian, but most of his army subsequently deserts, leading to Octavian's invasion of Egypt
- 432 - St Sixtus III begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 781 - The oldest recorded eruption of Mt. Fuji (Traditional Japanese date: July 6, 781)
- 1291 - Egyptian Mamelukken occupies Akko, crusaders driven out of Palestine
- 1423 - Hundred Years' War: Battle of Cravant - the French army is defeated by the English on the banks of the river Yonne in Burgundy
- 1498 - Christopher Columbus discovers the island of Trinidad on his third voyage
- 1655 - Russo-Polish War (1654-1667): the Russian army enters the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Vilnius, which it holds for six years
- 1658 - Aurangzeb appoints himself Mughal emperor
- 1667 - Peace of Breda: 2nd English war-Suriname vs New-Netherlands ends
- 1777 - Marquis de Lafayette, 19, made major-general of Continental Army
- 1790 - 1st US patent granted, to Samuel Hopkins for a potash process
- 1813 - British invade Plattsburgh, NY
- 1877 - Second Russian assault on Plevna, Turkey fails, during Russo-Turkish War, 7,300 Russian casualties
- 1901 - Abraham Kuyper becomes premier of Netherlands
- 1914 - German Emperor Wilhelm II threatens war, orders Russia to demobilize
- 1917 - World War I: Battle of Passchendaele (Third Battle of Ypres) begins, goes on to cause approximately 500,000 casualties
- 1925 - Last allied occupying troops leave Ruhrgebiet
- 1929 - Aristide Briand becomes premier of France for the 6th time
- 1936 - IOC awards Tokyo, Japan 1940 Summer Olympic Games (later cancelled, Second Sino-Japanese War)
- 1938 - Archaeologists discover engraved gold and silver plates from King Darius in Persepolis.
- 1942 - U-boats sank 96 allied ships this month: 476,000 tons
- 1958 - Anti-Chinese uprising in Tibet
- 1960 - Elijah Muhammad, leader of Nation of Islam, calls for a black state
- 1964 - US Ranger 7 takes 4,316 pictures before crashing on Moon
- 1980 - Soyuz 37 crew returns to Earth aboard Soyuz 36

### From KO Archives

## Kashmiris Take To Soccer For Relief

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As peace slowly takes root in Kashmir, people are taking to soccer to forget the sound of gunshots and grenade blasts.

Football used to be played in the picturesque valley until the advent of militancy. Now, with the threat of this menace dwindling, hundreds of fans recently turned up at a polo ground to see a game of soccer.

The Jammu and Kashmir Football Association (JKFA) is taking the lead in organising matches so that traumatised people can forget their miseries.

"I think that people are getting a better opportunity and finding relief by watching these matches after two-three years," claimed Zameer Thakur, the president of the association

Residents welcomed the resurgence of soccer in the valley.

Sayed Ahmad, a resident, said that for the past two years these matches were being organised and there was enjoyment around.

Over 300 budding players between 8-15 age groups participated in a JKFA championship in May, organised with Brazil's Troia's International Sports Academy (Kashmir Observer, 31 July, 2007)

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Wednesday | 31-07-2024

## Tackling Jammu Violence

Amid apparently apocryphal social media claims that Pakistan army and militants have sneaked into the Jammu region, the central government has made clear its zero tolerance for terrorism. Responding to a question in parliament, Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai, in a written reply to a question in the ongoing Monsoon Session of Lok Sabha stressed "sustained actions against terrorists and support structures", crackdown on terror finance and banning of anti-national organisations. The minister listed a series of the other measures such as seizure of properties belonging to militants and their associates. He highlighted that no incidents of 'organised stone pelting and organised hartal' have been reported this year. However, the minister admitted that there have been 11 incidents of violence in the region this year in which 14 security forces personnel have been killed in action so far, and 14 civilians have lost their lives.

Jammu has largely been in news this year for security reasons. Militancy in the region has revived after over a decade of absence. As the region grapples with the heightened threat, the Union government and security agencies are working to ensure a secure environment. It is believed that these militants have infiltrated from across the border, although the exact number is unknown. The dense forests of the region have made it difficult for security forces to find them, and their presence in Jammu has caught security forces off guard. The situation is made even more concerning by the fact that the forest area where the militants are hiding extends to Shopian in South Kashmir, the district that has been a hotbed of militancy in recent years. But the militants have chosen to stay in Jammu only, possibly because the region has a lower concentration of security forces than the Valley and also a warmer climate throughout the year.

Last two years have also witnessed a certain thinning of the presence of security forces in the Jammu region, which is being exploited by the militants. Recurrent militant attacks and the attendant loss of lives of security personnel in the Jammu region has created a challenging situation for both the UT and the union government. The new strategy aims to address operational flaws, intensify counter-terrorist operations, and track down hiding militants with active support from locals. But it is likely to take longer before the situation gets any better. Here's hoping that apart from a strictly security driven approach, the central government also needs to embark on a political outreach to people. And to start with, it needs to urgently hold Assembly elections.



Did you know?

## Responsibility at a Young Age: Crafting a Path to Success

Irshad Mushtaq

Each young generation independence, critical thinking, Educate them on hard work saving, investing, and the honest path to success, not through mobile games or shortcuts.

In a world that too often shields our youth from challenges, there's a profound need to instill responsibility at a young age. This isn't just about fostering independence; it's about unlocking the immense potential that lies within each child. Teaching them to navigate difficulties helps them become measured, make better decisions, and lays a foundation for success.

We all want the best for our children. But simply giving them everything often falls short. Spoon-feeding, however well-intentioned, doesn't prepare our children for the complexities of the real world. It's through taking on responsibilities early in life that they learn to make their own choices, earn their own way, and develop maturity, grit, and expertise.

Maturity doesn't come overnight. It's born from facing obstacles, gaining knowledge, and the relentless process of hard work. Each problem encountered is a lesson in disguise, an opportunity to learn and grow. Encouraging our kids to see problems as opportunities rather than setbacks fosters a positive mindset, an outlook that sees hope where others see defeat.

The journey to becoming well-rounded starts early. Hard work, dedication, passion, and experience don't just happen—they're cultivated. Responsibility teaches our children not only how to work effectively but also how to create systems, manage finances, and plan for the future.

By giving our children more responsibility, we enable them to become financially independent. They start to understand the true value of money, developing habits of careful spending, diligent saving, and wise investing. Each dollar they earn by their own efforts builds not just their wallet but also their character and understanding of life's intricacies.

Learning from mistakes is crucial. Each mishap is a building block for future success. Developing strong listening skills, understanding people and processes deeply, and striving to learn something new every day are invaluable. Never giving up, even when times are tough, is a key lesson that fortified through early responsibility.

Unfortunately, too many in the new generation get lost in the allure of gaming and mobile phones, jeopardizing their financial future. Yet, when they earn their own money, they gain respect—and more importantly, self-respect. They become the dependable future pillars for their families. By fostering responsibility at a young age, we equip our children with the tools they need for a bright, successful future. They grow into individuals who face the world with confidence, capability, and unwavering determination.

Learn from the insights of writer, investor, and entrepreneur, founder of MI Securities and business partner of Sharekhan Srinagar. Reach out at [misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com](mailto:misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com) for valuable financial advice!

# Branwar and Broken Vows

Small hydro-power projects are disastrous for the environment and have led to economic losses for communities who were promised concessions and affordable power supply.

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

We all know that in order to gain something, one has to lose something. Even happiness is built on someone else's misfortune and for every loss there is a hidden gain. For hidden gain there is a loss as well. In this world, there are some occasions and times when people lose everything and get nothing in return except disasters and stress. A famous Urdu couplet explains this aptly:

"Na khuda hi mila, na  
visaal-e-sanam/  
Na idhar ke rahe, na udhar  
ke rahe." or

"I neither found faith nor did I get the union  
with my beloved/  
and now I belong neither here nor there."

This couplet describes the fate of many communities and people living in remote areas of Jammu & Kashmir especially the forest dwellers whose resources (land, forest, water) were acquired for so-called developmental projects. These projects, especially hydropower generation ones, left communities with economic losses and ecological damage. Even small hydropower projects, otherwise minimal in their impact on the environment, have been harming the biodiversity, ecology and economic conditions of people.

When the 7.5 MW Branwar Hydropower project was being constructed around 15 years back in a forest village called Branwar in District Budgam, a lot of false promises were made to villagers by the local politicians in power. Many villagers whom I met in the recent past told me that the former Finance Minister of J&K Mr A R Rather who was also the five-times legislator from Charar-e-Sharief had assured residents of Branwar that they would get free electricity from the hydropower project.

"We were told by Mr A R Rather, our former MLA and Finance Minister of J&K, that within a 5 kms radius people would get free electricity, especially the residents of Branwar, Neegu and Jabbad villages. That remained only a promise and the successive PDP-BJP Govt also could not make sure we get free or at least subsidized electricity from the power project", said Ghulam Qadir Ganai a local resident of Branwar.

After more than a decade, the electricity crisis is still bad in Branwar. In fact, it is just as bad in but also in adjoining areas and villages like Neegu, Jabbad, Surasyar, Bonen, Batwoder and Kutbal as well. During winters people get mere 4 to 5 hours of power supply and when it snows, power supply is interrupted for weeks. No new electric cables, transformers or iron pylons have been erected. Lot of electricity transmission loss is taking place and locals have to pay for these losses as well.

Even after a drizzle, power supply is cut in most of the villages in this remote area of Budgam which comes under the Surasyar block. Recently, when I visited Mechi Khanain meadow, trekking 12 kms up Branwar, I found the old course of Doodh Ganga dry. This was the area I along with my friends would catch fresh trout but that is now a history.

From Meche Khanain downstream to Branwar, the Doodh Ganga is almost dry. A little water joins it around Yusmarg from the Kalnag stream but that is very little. From Meche Khanain to Frasnag and downstream 2 kms this waterbody is completely dry now and everything in this stream has perished.

### Hundreds of Trees axed in Branwar forest

The private company which got the project on a 40-year lease only destroyed the local forest landscape and biodiversity with the support of the then Government especially the Forest department. After 15 years, locals of Branwar and adjoining villages say that it seems that hundreds and thousands of forest trees (Kail, Fir, Deodar) were axed to help this company. On the other hand, the local people who actually own these forests under the Forest Rights Act 2006 got nothing in return.

Not only were the trees in Branwar forest uprooted and axed but even the course of Doodh Ganga was changed which not only impacted the aquatic life but also continues to impact the forest cover even after 15 years.

### Green Meadow dredged

The pristine and green meadow around Metch Khanain 12 kms up Branwar was dug with huge JCBs to create an artificial canal for diverting Doodh Ganga waters. A small water reservoir was created and a huge pipeline was laid through another green meadow called Haijan. JCB cranes, trucks and lorries went into deep jungle which was virgin until 2008-2009. The massive pipeline was laid over the green



Doodh Ganga dried up at Meche Khanain. Pic by author.

meadow of Haijan which is like a massive scar on its landscape and beauty. Trees were axed to make the canal in deep forest and trees which are there on the embankments of this artificial canal continue to get impacted with water. No concrete embankments or stone pitching was done to prevent oozing of water from the canal towards surrounding forest and trees.

### Misleading information on UNFCCC

There is hardly any detailed information available on Govt websites in J&K about the Branwar 7.5 MW small hydropower project. After surfing the internet, I found a document related to this project called Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) on the website of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The UNFCCC is the UN process for negotiating an agreement to limit dangerous climate change. It is an international treaty among countries to combat "dangerous human interference with the climate system. The CDM allows emission-reduction projects in developing countries to earn certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO2. These CERs can be traded and sold, and used by industrialized countries to meet a part of their emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol. Under the Kyoto Protocol it is required that countries limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by setting such targets. It also helps countries meet their emission targets, and to encourage the private sector and developing countries to contribute to emission reduction efforts, negotiators of the Protocol included three market-based mechanisms - emissions trading, the clean development mechanism (CDM) and joint implementation.

As per the details available about Branwar hydropower project on UNFCCC website, local

communities had been taken on board and the consent of local Gram Panchayat was sought in a stakeholders' meeting held on June 15th 2008. It is important to note that in 2008 there were no Gram Panchayats in Kashmir and elections for the Panchayats were held in May 2011. The document says that stakeholders were invited by giving advertisements in two local newspapers mentioning the date, time and venue of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) stakeholders meeting.

"Also, the Gram Panchayat was given an invitation letter for the same. Around 30 numbers of Local Stakeholders were present during the meeting", the document reads.

How can 30 people of the three villages of Branwar, Jabbad and Neegu decide their fate? As per law, a Gram Sabha/Deh Majli has to be convened which includes the adult population of the village. When the Panchayat elections were held in 2011, the then Govt could have convened a Maha Gram Sabha in the village to address the concerns of the local vis a vis ecology, environment and biodiversity. The issue related to supply of free electricity could also have been addressed.

The situation in Branwar and the adjoining hamlets, Jabbad and Neegu, is such that even the families living under Below Poverty Line (BPL), who have mere one or two rooms are made to pay Rs 1300 to 1800 per month as electricity fees which was mere Rs 108 only five years back. When people say that they were assured free electricity, the officers of the power department tell them they were mere political slogans and nothing was on paper.

### Conclusion

This author has seen Branwar without a hydro-power project and I am witnessing the situation now as well. I am of the belief that even small hydropower projects cause environmental destruction and they severely impact biodiversity. The environmental impact is immense and it is a lesson for those people who say there is a lot of potential for creating new hydropower projects in J&K.

Not only mega dams but run of river hydropower projects also destroy the forest landscape and river biodiversity as has been witnessed in Branwar. The local population is further pushed to the wall as they are charged exorbitant electricity fees by the Government and the natural resources like forest, land and water which were owned by these people have no value at all. It is a clear violation of Forest Rights Act 2006 as well.

This is not the case with Branwar only. We have many such hydropower projects wherein the government and political leaders made several promises with locals but they remained unfulfilled. People in Doda, Kishtwar, Reasi, Ramban where we have mega hydropower projects in operation also suffer from the same issues. People of Gurez valley in Bandipora district were also given lots of assurances around 2013-2014 when the work on the dam was taken up there. When I assess the situation after 10 years I believe that people of Gurez valley lost everything and they are still dependent on diesel gensets there. Like Branwar, people of Gurez also sail in the same boat. This reminds me of the famous quote by Richard Pual Evans who in his book Promise Me writes,

"Broken vows are like broken mirrors. They leave those who held to them bleeding and staring at fractured images of themselves."

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow. He is Chairman & Founder of Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement. He is also Anant Fellow for Climate Action

# Paris Olympics Hijab Ban Tell Us About Its Brand of Secularism

France is known for its extreme form of secularism but the recent hijab ban in the 2024 Paris Olympics reflects its fundamentalist nature incapable of making sports inclusive.

Ayiesha Gauher

The 33rd Olympic games commenced on 26 July 2024 in France. Athletes from across the world participated in it to represent their countries which is a matter of prestige and honour for them. However, to give their best performances they need a sound environment. The Olympic Charter enshrines, "The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Olympic Charter shall be secured without discrimination of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status." Despite this proclamation, the 2024 Paris Olympics is a source of disappointment for many French Muslim female athletes, who were prohibited from wearing hijab, thereby limiting their participation in the games due to the secularist policy followed in the country.

France follows a different variant of secularism which forbids people from expressing their religious affiliation in public spaces, emphasising the principle of equality of all the citizens. People are not allowed to wear headscarves, turbans, abayas etc., as they symbolise religious beliefs. The French brand of secularism represents a hardcore ideology which associates religion with inequality. This ideology facilitates the portrayal of religion as violent and a breeding ground for fundamentalism. The headscarf particularly has been the victim of state's scrutiny. In 2004, the country banned headscarves in schools, and in 2010, it passed a ban on full-face veils in public. Due to these laws, Muslim women who wear hijab are unable to participate



in public life reflecting the systemic oppression that they are subjected to. These laws have led to the exclusion and suppression of Muslims in the French society which claims to be liberal and emancipatory. Therefore, many scholars accuse French secularism of spreading islamophobia and intolerance in the country.

The hijab particularly is seen as a symbol of violence, inequality and threat in France. The effects of such views can be felt across various spectrums of society including sports. It is banned by major sports federations, for instance, in football in 2006, in basketball in 2022 and in volleyball in 2023. According to Amnesty International, the hijab

**It is a clear example of Secularism turned to Fundamentalist and tries to limit the role of religion in the public and the private sphere, legitimises the violence committed by the state disguised as laws and justifies repression in the name of the protection of democracy**

ban in sports is applied at all levels outside the Olympics. Several French athletes including French Olympic sprinter Sounkamba Sylla, were barred from attending the Olympic ceremony unless they wore a cap or styled their hijab in a way that did not signify their religious beliefs. It is argued that the athletes are civil servants as they represent the state and are bound to follow the secularist ideals of France. Such laws have contributed to limiting the participation of Muslim women in sports and their exclusion from the community. It has created a culture where hijab is seen as an anomaly that needs to be eradicated to preserve the social fabric of French society.

The IOC President, Thomas Bach, has declared the Paris Olympics as "the youngest, most inclusive, most urban and most sustainable". However, the committee remains oblivious to the difficulties that several French athletes face and makes mockery of the Olympic Charter which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion. French athletes such as basketball player Diaba Konaté, and French Olympic sprinter Sounkamba Sylla are among many athletes who were subjected to unequal treatment due to their hijab. Such a situation puts enormous pressure on the athletes and their ostracization for expressing their individuality. It leads to

the deterioration of their mental and physical health as they are forced to choose between their beliefs and their love for sports.

The harsh laws implemented by the state lead to the alienation especially of the Muslims who are forced to consider leaving the country to secure a better and safe future. French secularism fails to create a safe space for people who wish to express their religious beliefs. It is a clear example of Secularism turned to Fundamentalist and tries to limit the role of religion in the public and the private sphere, legitimises the violence committed by the state disguised as laws and justifies repression in the name of the protection of democracy.

Therefore, Secularism in France needs to be reformed and put under surveillance to ensure equality and protect the rights of people. Sports which help in bringing people together should not be enslaved by such fundamentalist policies which lead to prejudice against Muslims in the country. The non acceptance of the Muslim women who wear hijab has severely affected their freedom and their ability to become a part of the society which is clearly visible in the 2024 Paris Olympics. Therefore, it is important that the French society sheds its intolerant attitude towards religion to ensure equal opportunities for all its citizens and not impose restrictions on them for their beliefs.

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

*The author is an intern at Kashmir Observer and is pursuing her Masters from Jamia Millia Islamia*

# Why the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict is Heating up Again

Hezbollah deems Israel an illegitimate state established on occupied Palestinian lands and wants to see it gone

Reuters

A deadly rocket strike in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights has added to concerns that Israel and the Iran-backed Lebanese group Hezbollah could be sucked into a full-scale conflict — something they have both previously indicated they want to avoid but for which they have also said they are ready.

Israel said on Sunday it would strike hard at Hezbollah after accusing the group of killing 12 children and teenagers in a rocket attack on a football field in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

Hezbollah denied any responsibility for the attack on Majdal Shams, the deadliest in Israel or Israeli-annexed territory since Hamas' October 7 assault sparked the onslaught in Gaza.

This is the background to hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah:

**Why are they fighting?**

Hezbollah began trading fire with Israel on Oct 8, a day after Hamas attacked communities in southern Israel and sparked the Gaza offensive.

Hezbollah, a Hamas ally, says its attacks aim to support Palestinians who are under Israeli bombardment in Gaza.

The Gaza conflict has drawn in Iran-backed militants across the region. Hezbollah is widely deemed the most powerful member of the Iran-backed network, known as the Axis of Resistance.

Hezbollah has said repeat-

edly it will not halt its attacks on Israel unless a ceasefire in Gaza comes into force.

While linked to Gaza, the conflict has its own dynamics.

Israel and Hezbollah have engaged in many conflicts. The last was in 2006.

Israel has long viewed Hezbollah as the biggest threat at its borders and has been deeply alarmed by its growing arsenal, and the foothold it has established in Syria. Hezbollah's ideology is largely defined by conflict with Israel. It was founded by Iran's Revolutionary Guards in 1982 to fight Israeli forces that had invaded Lebanon that year, and waged years of guerrilla war that led Israel to withdraw from south Lebanon in 2000.

Hezbollah deems Israel an illegitimate state established on occupied Palestinian lands and wants to see it gone.

**What's the impact so far?**

The current conflict has already taken a toll on both sides.

Tens of thousands of people have been forced to flee their homes on both sides of the border. Israeli airstrikes have pounded areas where Hezbollah operates in southern Lebanon and struck the Bekaa Valley near the Syrian border.

Israel has also occasionally hit elsewhere, notably killing a senior Hamas commander in Beirut on January 2.

Israeli strikes have killed some 350 Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon and more than 100 civilians, including medics, children, and journalists, according to security and

medical sources and a Reuters tally of death notifications issued by Hezbollah.

The Israeli military said after Saturday's attack the

**How much worse could it get?**

A lot. Despite the ferocity of these hostilities, this is still seen as a relatively contained

pand the conflict would be met by "devastation, destruction and displacement" in Israel, Hezbollah deputy leader Sheikh Naim Qassem said in

Hezbollah rockets and some 2,000 homes destroyed.

Hezbollah has a far bigger arsenal than in 2006, including rockets it says can hit all

Much will depend on what happens in Gaza, where efforts to agree a ceasefire and a return of Israeli hostages have faltered. A ceasefire there could help bring about a rapid de-escalation of tensions in southern Lebanon.

The United States, which deems Hezbollah a terrorist group, has been at the heart of diplomatic efforts aimed at easing the conflict.

Hezbollah has signalled its eventual openness to an agreement that benefits Lebanon, but has said there can be no discussions until Israel halts the Gaza offensive.

Israel has also said it would prefer a diplomatic settlement that would restore security in the north, but says it is also prepared for a military offensive to achieve the same goal.

The US official at the heart of diplomatic contacts, Amos Hochstein, brokered an unlikely diplomatic deal between Lebanon and Israel in 2022 over their disputed maritime boundary.

Hochstein said on May 30 he did not expect peace between Hezbollah and Israel but that a set of understandings could remove some of the impetus for conflict and establish a recognised border between Lebanon and Israel.

A French proposal submitted to Beirut in February included elite Hezbollah fighters withdrawing 10 kilometres from the frontier and negotiations aimed at settling disputes over the land border.

*Views expressed do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer*



death toll among civilians killed in Hezbollah attacks had risen to 23 since October, along with at least 17 soldiers. Hezbollah denied it was responsible for Saturday's attack.

In Israel, the displacement of so many Israelis is a big political issue. Officials had hoped they would be able to go home for the school year beginning Sept 1 but that has looked increasingly unlikely as the standoff has continued.

confrontation. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned in December last year that Beirut would be turned "into Gaza" if Hezbollah started an all-out offensive.

Hezbollah has previously signalled it is not seeking to widen the conflict while also saying it is ready to fight any offensive imposed on it and warning that it has used only a small part of its capabilities so far.

Any move by Israel to ex-

an interview with Al Jazeera in June.

**Past conflicts have inflicted heavy damage.**

In 2006, Israeli strikes levelled large areas of Beirut's Hezbollah-controlled southern suburbs, knocked out Beirut airport, and hit roads, bridges, and other infrastructure. Nearly 1 million people in Lebanon fled their homes.

In Israel, the impact included 300,000 people fleeing their homes to escape

parts of Israel.

It has demonstrated advances in its weaponry since October, shooting down Israeli drones, launching its own explosive drones into Israel, and firing more sophisticated guided missiles.

Israeli troops have invaded Lebanon several times in the past, reaching as far as Beirut in the 1982 invasion that aimed to crush Lebanon-based Palestinian guerrillas.

**Is escalation avoidable?**

## Imran Seeks Modi Govt Help To Stop Shia Persecution In Pak

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** All Jammu and Kashmir Shia Association head Imran Ansari on Tuesday appealed to the Centre to take a "strong stand" against the persecution of the Shia community in Pakistan.

"I am writing to bring to your attention a catastrophic situation unfolding in Parachinar, Pakistan, where the Shia community is facing an existential threat from extremist groups. The situation is dire and immediate action is necessary to prevent a massacre," Ansari



wrote in a letter to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

Ansari alleged years of sectarian violence and apathy and inaction of the Pakistani government have emboldened extremist groups, leaving the Shia community vulnerable to further attacks.

"The recent escalation of violence has created a humanitarian crisis and it is imperative that India takes a strong stance to prevent further bloodshed," he added.

"India has a moral obligation to act, given its commitment to human rights and religious freedom," he added.

## OGW Apprehended In Poonch

Agencies

**JAMMU:** A terror associate was apprehended on Tuesday in a joint operation by Rashtriya Rifles and the District Police Poonch from Mangnar area of Police Station Poonch.

The individual, identified as Mohd Khalil Lone, son of Da-wood Lone of Bandipur district in the Kashmir valley, was apprehended after a meticulously

planned and executed operation, the official said.

He said that preliminary investigations reveal that Khalil is associated with the proscribed terror organization Hizbul Mujahideen as a logistics provider and Over Ground Worker.

He was deputed to receive a consignment of arms and ammunition, the official said, adding that further investigation is going on—(KNO)

## School Edu Deptt Fails To Utilize Full Funds Allocated Under Revex Budget

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** In the past four years, the School Education Department has not utilized full funds allocated under the Revex budget for the elementary and secondary level education.

According to the official figures accessed, in the fiscal 2020-21, under the Revex budget a total of Rs 224027.73 lakh were allocated for the elementary education and Rs 194950.96 lakh for secondary level education out of which only Rs 210502.12 Lakhs and Rs 161246.67 Lakhs were utilized in both elementary and secondary level education on the account of salary and administrative expenses.

The figures reveal that

in the year 2021-22, a total of 230413.75 Lakhs and 213576.46 Lakhs were allotted to the department out of which only Rs 226533.35 Lakhs and 186743.39 Lakhs were utilized by the department at all levels.

It also states that in the year 2022-2023, the department was allocated with Rs 262777.61 Lakhs and Rs 218079 Lakhs out of which it utilized only Rs 257062.91 and Rs 206626.51 Lakhs respectively.

The official figures further reveal that the School Education Department was allocated with Rs 281102.35 Lakhs and Rs 223962.05 Lakhs in the year 2023-24 out of which it had utilized only Rs 275307.50 Lakhs and Rs 215937.97 respectively under the Revex budget—(KNO)

## Bonibagh Residents Move To Safer Places After Land Sinking Incident

Agencies

**GANDERBAL:** Residents of Bonibagh area in Kangan in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district have been forced to relocate after the land within the locality started sinking.

According to residents, panic gripped the locality last evening when the land began to sink suddenly. They attributed the issue to the Hyder Canal, which runs through the upper part of the town, noting that water leaking from the canal is contributing to the land sinking.

The affected population has moved to safer areas to avoid potential loss and financial damage, the residents said adding that a shopping complex was also damaged by landslides in the same location in 2020, resulting in the significant losses.

At that time, the administration promised to provide land to the affected people, but no provision has been made till yet.

The local people have appealed to the administration to take immediate steps to address the issue and prevent further difficulties for residents—(KNO)

### SEARCH OPERATIONS IN RAJOURI

## People Asked Not To Visit Forests Wearing Blankets During Night Hours



Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Security forces are undertaking frequent search operations in the forests of Rajouri and adjoining Poonch district to track down and neutralize the terrorists, who have managed to infiltrate from across the border and are hiding in the areas.

In an attempt to avoid any untoward incident amid intensified anti-terror operations, the authorities in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district on Tuesday advised people not to visit the forest areas wearing shawls and blankets during night hours.

The advisory has been issued by Additional District Magistrate Rajeev Kumar Khajuria on the request of the army, which informed the civil administration about some ci-

vilians roaming in the forest areas or their fields wearing shawls and blankets during night hours.

"General public is hereby informed that no person shall visit, roam in the forest area during late and night hours from 9 pm to 4 am, wearing shawls and blankets," Khajuria said in an official notice.

The movement has been strictly prohibited without prior permission from concerned army and police authorities in order to avoid any mishap or untoward incident, he said.

Security forces are undertaking frequent search operations in the forests of Rajouri and adjoining Poonch district to track down and neutralize the terrorists, who have managed to infiltrate from across the border and are hiding in

the areas.

Earlier this month, the authorities in Mendhar sector of Poonch issued a similar notice asking people not to visit the forest areas or their fields during night hours without prior permission from the concerned army or police camp.

Security has been intensified across Jammu region which has witnessed a spurt in terror activities with three major attacks taking place in the past two months.

Nine army personnel were killed when the terrorists ambushed security forces in remote forest belts of Machedi in Kathua and Desa forest in Doda on July 8 and July 15.

Earlier on June 9, nine passengers, including seven pilgrims returning from Shiv Khori temple, were killed by the terrorists in Reasi district.

## Kashmir's Handicraft Exports Surge Past Rs 1100 Crores

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Kashmir's handloom and handicraft exports have more than doubled over the past two years, with export figures going above worth Rs1100 crores.

As per the figures available, exports surged from ₹563 crore in 2021-22 to a remarkable ₹1,162 crore in 2023-24, reflecting a robust growth trajectory.

The sharp increase highlights the rising global demand for Kashmiri craftsmanship, renowned for its intricate designs and high-quality materials.

Figures suggested that against Rs 165.98 crore in 2021-22, the shawls worth Rs 424.20 were exported in the last fiscal. Similarly, against Rs 251.05 crore in 2021-22, the carpets worth Rs 357.21 crore were exported in 2022-23.

The other handicrafts and handloom items too witnessed a surge in exports especially after government promoted and preserved their authenticity by issuing geographic Indication tag to the prized crafts.

Artisans attribute this growth to a combination of factors:



enhanced global awareness of Kashmiri crafts, improved marketing strategies, and strengthened export channels.

"Government initiatives and support have also played a crucial role in this surge. Policies aimed at promoting exports and providing incentives to the handicraft sector have contributed to the sector's expansion," said Khalid Ahmad Bhat, a Pashmina artisan.

He said the promotion and enhancement in the exhibition have contributed to the growth of the handicraft sales across India as well.

"We have a good demand also. We get orders from various states with people

preferring to buy Kashmir handicrafts with GI tags. This increase in the demand has boosted the production as well," Bhat said.

Officials said the government has taken various initiatives to promote and market Kashmir handicrafts worldwide. "From exhibitions to promotional campaigns, the department took various initiatives to promote Kashmir handicrafts. GI tag proved a game changer as the demand has increased which subsequently enhanced the exports of handicrafts to various countries. Currently we have a good demand for handicrafts from the Gulf, Europe and other nations," they said—(KNO)

### HEAT WAVE

## J&K's Chenab Valley Bears Brunt, Horticulture, Agriculture Worst Hit

Agencies

**JAMMU:** Since the heat wave continues to engulf the entire region and many previous records have been broken with Kashmir valley witnessing hottest night in 132 years, the Chenab valley is one of the worst affected areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

The temperature in a few places has touched 40 degrees Celsius and there is no respite from the hot weather conditions.

Both Chenab valley and Kashmir have witnessed deficit rainfall in the month of July which led to increase in day temperature and even during the night temperature kept rising.

Chenab valley comprises Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts and weather in this part of the union territory keep changing. During the winters upper reaches witness heavy snowfall like Kashmir valley and temperature in many parts



goes below zero degrees Celsius, whereas during the summers the weather resembles with Jammu and use of air conditioning equipment has increased tremendously in the area to beat the heat.

Moreover, the area didn't have many showers this year as mon-

soon clouds couldn't cross the Patnitop hills to bring relief to the people. The absence of rain has impacted various sectors including horticulture and agriculture, and most of the streams in the areas have either less water or are running dry.

The horticulture experts said

that less rain has affected the Apple and pear production in the area which till the beginning of the month of July was being seen as a bumper crop. "Apples and pears have received black spots and due to less rainfall the size of these fruits is small. The local farmers

were expecting a good amount for their produce but now their hopes have almost shattered," the officer said.

Secondly, the Chenab valley's agriculture is mostly dependent on rain as most of the areas don't have irrigation canals. With less rainfall, the maize crop has been affected a lot and farmers believe that if the crop doesn't get rain in upcoming days, they will have to bear the loss.

Thirdly, people in most of the areas in Chenab valley are dependent on streams for drinking water, and as the water level has decreased tremendously in the streams, people fear a drought situation in upcoming days. "Firstly, during the winters the area didn't have much snowfall and now the absence of rain during the month of July has increased our worries. If the situation continues to remain the same, life will become difficult," said Niaz Ahmed, a local farmer of Doda—(KNO)



## Delegation Of J&K Sikh Coordination Committee Calls On LG

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A delegation of Sikh Coordination Committee J&K led by its patron Shriman Mahant Manjit Singh, Chief of Shiromani Dera Nangali Sahib called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, at Raj Bhawan on Tuesday.

Shriman Mahant Manjit Singh expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor led UT Administration for resolving long pending issues of the Sikh community including the recent appointment of a member of J&K Public Service Commission from the community.

The members of the delegation submitted a charter of demands highlighting the

concerning issues of the Sikh community living in the UT. They also put forth several demands pertaining to inclusion of eligible Sikh population in Pahari ethnic group, promotion of Punjabi language and installation of statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh at Srinagar.

Ajit Singh, Chairman, Sikh Coordination Committee J&K, who also heads All J&K Transport Welfare Association appealing issues of the Sikh community including the various welfare issues of transporters community.

The Lt Governor assured the members of the delegation of appropriate action on the issues projected during the interaction.

## J&K Bank's UPI Services Down, Customers Aghast

Agencies



**SRINAGAR:** Jammu & Kashmir Bank has come under criticism from its customers as its UPI servers have been down since Monday, causing widespread inconvenience to users dependent on these services for everyday transactions.

In a message addressed to its customers, J&K Bank stated: "Due to an issue with the partner network, our UPI/IMPS services are currently impacted and shall be restored as soon as possible. Inconvenience caused is regretted."

According to the details, the service disruption has left many customers struggling to manage their financial activities.

Imran Ahmed, a shopkeeper, expressed his frustration, saying, "I depend on UPI payments for my business operations. Since the outage, I haven't been able to process transactions, which is severely impacting my sales."

Asma Bhat, a student, shared

her concerns, saying, "I needed to transfer money for my college fees, but with the UPI service down, I'm facing unnecessary delays. It's very stressful."

Similarly, Zahoor Mir, who frequently shops online, said he had an online order ready for payment, but the outage has made it impossible to complete the transaction. "It's extremely inconvenient," he said.

Meanwhile, Rouf Trambo, President of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK), said that they also faced problems due to the UPI servers being down.

"As the tourist footfall is good in Jammu and Kashmir, we also face issues. Our travel agents as well as tourists also face problems, and we too wish it must be restored soon," Trambo said—(KNO)

## Training Program For Women Tour Operators Commences

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** An 11 day Women-preneurship Training Program for Tour Operators kick-started here today under the auspices of the Tourism Department.

The programme held under the supervision of Director Tourism Kashmir, Raja Yaqoob, aims to empower women by equipping them with the skills necessary to thrive as professional tour operators. The programme is supported by the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) under its Tourism Cluster Intervention Program in collaboration with a local hospitality group.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Director Tourism, Dr. Mantasha Binti Rashid underscored the need for increased female representation in the tourism sector in view of the

flourishing business. She said that the tourism industry is a major economic driver for the region and expressed confidence that such programs would pave the way for more women to enter and excel in this field.

Assistant General Manager, SIDBI, Adil Ahsan provided valuable insights into various schemes designed by his organization to support women entrepreneurs. He outlined the resources and assistance available for setting up businesses in J&K and also informed about an upcoming training program for 100 female tour guides from J&K. He underscored SIDBI's commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and supporting women in achieving their entrepreneurial dreams. He also emphasized on leveraging government schemes and incubation support to set up their enterprises.

## Kashmir: Jewellers Witness 15% Increase In Sales After Govt Slashes Duty Cut On Gold

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The duty cut in Gold has brought smiles on the faces of jewellers in Kashmir as the sales in the markets here have increased in the past few days, bringing much-needed relief to the jewellers and delighting customers with more affordable prices.

The jewellers associated with gold and silver trade in Kashmir said that they are witnessing a surge in their sales.

President Gold Jewellers Association Kashmir, Bashir Ahmad said that prior to the slashing of custom duty on gold, the sales were extremely low, with a nearly 90% decline.

"There is some happiness now on our faces, it used to be gloomy as our sales were almost 90% down," he said, adding that since

the slash in custom duty on gold, they are witnessing a spike in daily gold sales by 10-15 per cent, and are further anticipating more spike in the coming months.

He, however, added that people have some confusion with regard to the prices, saying that the labour charges are to be included during the purchase of gold items.

Notably, the Government of India last week slashed import duties on gold to 6% from 15%, a move stakeholders said could lift retail demand.

Since the duty cut, customers in Kashmir have been flocking to jewellery stores to buy gold at reduced rates, with many opting for heavier pieces of jewellery that were previously out of reach when gold prices hit a record high of Rs 74,000 per 10 grams earlier this month.—(KNO)



## RBI Issues Norms To Improve Safety Of Payment Systems



Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI:** The RBI on Tuesday said non-bank payment system operators will have to put in place a real-time fraud monitoring solution to identify suspicious transactional behaviour and generate alerts.

Also, non-bank payment system operators (PSOs) will have to ensure that an online session on mobile application is automatically terminated after a fixed period of inactivity and customers are prompted to re-login, according to Master Directions on Cyber Resilience and Digital Payment Security Controls for non-bank PSOs.

The directions have come into effect from Tuesday, but the Reserve Bank has also prescribed a phased implementation to provide adequate time to PSOs to put in place the necessary compliance structure.

RBI said the directions aim to improve safety and security of the payment systems operated by PSOs by providing a framework for overall information security preparedness with an emphasis on cyber resilience.

Regarding mobile payments, RBI said PSOs should ensure that an authenticated session, together with its encryption protocol, remains intact throughout an interaction with the customer.

"In case of any interference or if the customer closes the application, the session shall be terminated, and the affected transactions resolved or reversed out," it said.

Further, the PSO should ensure that an online session on mobile application is automatically terminated after a fixed period of inactivity and customers are prompted to re-login.

"The PSO shall put in place a control mechanism, to identify any presence of remote access applications (to the extent possible) and prohibit access to the mobile payment application while the remote access is live," the directions said.

RBI further said the card networks should facilitate implementation of transaction limits at card, bank identification number (BIN) as well as at card issuer level.

## About 6 Cr ITRs Filed For FY24; 70% Under New Tax Regime

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** About 6 crore income tax returns have been filed for income earned in 2023-24, of which 70 per cent were filed under the new simplified tax regime which offers lower rate of tax, Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra said on Tuesday.

Addressing the post-budget session of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Malhotra said there were apprehensions as to whether people would shift to the simplified tax regime.

"About 6 crore filed for last year and 70 per cent is under the new income tax regime. The whole move has been towards simplicity with the ultimate purpose being to reduce the compliance burden," Malhotra said.

For the 2022-23 fiscal, 8.61



crore ITRs were filed.

The idea behind comprehensive income tax review as announced in the Budget is to make the tax law simpler.

"We will come up with a draft and then we will seek suggestions," Malhotra said.

Currently, India has two personal income tax regimes. In the old income tax regime, the tax rates are relatively high but taxpayers can claim several exemptions and deductions. However, in the new tax regime, tax rates are lower but fewer deductions.

**About 6 crore filed for last year and 70 per cent is under the new income tax regime. The whole move has been towards simplicity with the ultimate purpose being to reduce the compliance burden"**

## Households Losing Rs 60,000 Cr A Year On Derivative Bets: Sebi Chairperson

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI:** Sebi chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch on Tuesday said households are losing up to Rs 60,000 crore a year in the problematic futures and options segment.

Speaking at an event at the largest equity bourse NSE, Buch wondered why such bets in the derivative markets should not be called as a "macro issue", as it had done earlier.

"If Rs 50,000-60,000 crore a year is going away into losses in F&O whereas that would have been productively deployed as may be the next IPO round, maybe MF, to other productive purposes, why is that not a macro issue?" Buch said.

A Sebi study had earlier pointed to 90 per cent of the trades resulting in losses. The capital markets regulator also came up with a consultation paper on Tuesday proposing ways to limit the activity.

Responding to a question on the impact of such attempts to curb the fee-yielding trades, NSE's chief executive and managing director Ashish Kumar Chauhan said it will abide by the regulations.

Buch said while there is a short-term trade-off for exchanges by way of fees impact, in the long term it will be beneficial to all the stakeholders.

She also said that exchange-traded funds cannot be an alternative or a replacement for the riskier derivatives activity for investors as the dynamics of liquidity and leverage are very different.

Meanwhile, to a question on whether a bank customer can use the same KYC (know your customer) validation for



investing in mutual funds, Buch replied in the negative and referred to the banking system's troubles with Paytm.

"We will not allow for a Paytm-type contamination in our market. We all saw what happened in Paytm. Because in the banking system, there is no KRA type system, the problem of Paytm stays in Paytm. It does not spread to other banks. But if we allow Paytm to come into our system, and no KRA, then it contaminates the whole system," she said.

"We will always have our KRA sitting in the middle to see that things are validated. Otherwise, you will have any mischievous player coming and contaminating the whole system," she added.

On finfluencers, Buch said Sebi has identified difficulties in getting registered as an investment advisor being a detrimental factor and will soon be rationalising it.

She said that there are false claims being peddled by such platforms, and added that an entity from the NSE Group has showcased a performance validation mechanism and hinted that it will soon be implemented.

Buch said the Sebi management will also soon be tak-

ing a proposal to its board to make ASBA or application supported by blocked amount mandatory and added that to begin with, it can start with at least the qualified brokers.

There is a "misunderstanding" in the market about the investors not paying the broker to carry out transactions, she said, adding that brokers are getting Rs 2,800 crore from trades will now get reclassified as broker fees instead of exchange fees.

The Sebi chairperson also went public with her "frustration" at the mutual fund industry for not coming up with suggestions for making it easier for the diaspora to invest in schemes.

Buch also pitched for the need to have broader, principle-based regulations on artificial intelligence and hinted that the regulator will look at it.

Replying to a question, Buch also said that it is wrong to equate stock exchanges with crypto exchanges, and gave a stern statement on the same drawing from the ongoing WazirX challenges.

"USD 250 million cannot vanish (in the exchanges) and be called as an Act of God," she said.

## Mcap Of BSE-Listed Firms Hit New All-Time High Of Rs 460 Lakh Crore



Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms hit a new all-time high of Rs 460 lakh crore on Tuesday, helped by a record-breaking rally in equities.

The 30-share BSE Sensex closed higher by 99.56 points or 0.12 per cent at 81,455.40 -- its all-time closing high -- with 16 of its components advancing and 14 ending lower. The index opened higher and jumped 459.43 points or 0.56 per cent to hit an intra-day high of 81,815.27.

The NSE Nifty edged up 21.20 points or 0.09 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 24,857.30. During the day, it surged 135.65 points or 0.54 per cent to 24,971.75. The index hit a low of 24,798.65.

Thanks to the bull run in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged to a lifetime high of Rs 460,91,445.34 crore (USD 5.50 trillion). In the last three sessions, investors' wealth jumped Rs 3.98 lakh crore.

"Sustained capital flows into mutual funds and the retail investor enthusiasm will keep the market resilient."

"The elevated valuations continue to be a concern, particularly in the broader market. A healthy trend in the market now is that high-quality stocks with good earnings visibility are gaining strength on buying by institutions," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

From the Sensex pack, Tata Motors, NTPC, Bajaj Finserv, Power Grid Corp, Titan, Asian Paints, IndusInd Bank, Maruti Suzuki India and Tata Steel were among the biggest gainers.

Sun Pharmaceuticals, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Bharti Airtel, UltraTech Cement and Reliance Industries were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge jumped 0.88 per cent, and the midcap index climbed 0.27 per cent. During the day, both indices hit their all-time high level.

## Pulses Import Jumps 90% In 2023-24 To 47.38 Lakh Tonnes To Meet Domestic Demand: Govt

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** India's import of pulses rose 90 per cent annually to 47.38 lakh tonnes during 2023-24 to meet domestic demand, the government informed Parliament on Tuesday.

"All India production of pulses has increased from 163.23 lakh tonnes during 2015-16

pulses and oilseeds production has increased by 43 per cent and 44 per cent, respectively," Thakur said.

In reply to a separate question, the minister said the government has substantially enhanced the budget allocation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare from Rs 27,662.67 crore in BE (budget



to 244.93 lakh tonnes during 2023-24 (as per 3rd Advance Estimates)," the Minister of State for Agriculture Ram Nath Thakur said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

In 2021-22, import of pulses stood at 26.99 lakh tonnes, while exports were at 3.87 lakh tonnes.

During 2022-23, imports of pulses stood at 24.96 lakh tonnes, while exports were 7.62 lakh tonnes.

In 2023-24, the imports of pulses were 47.38 lakh tonnes and exports stood at 5.94 lakh tonnes.

"During the last ten years i.e. 2014-15 to 2023-24 (as per 3rd Advance Estimates), total

estimate) during 2013-14, to Rs 1,25,035.79 crore BE during 2023-24.

Answering another query, Thakur said the National Commission on Farmers (NCF), constituted under the Chairmanship of MS Swaminathan in 2004, inter alia, recommended that Minimum Support Price (MSPs) should be at least 50 per cent more than the weighted average cost of production.

"To give effect to this recommendation, the government, in its Union Budget for 2018-19, had made an announcement to keep MSP at a level of minimum one and half times of the cost of production as a pre-determined principle.

## Gold Jumps Rs 550 To Rs 71,600 Per 10 G

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Gold prices jumped by Rs 550 to Rs 71,600 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday following strong demand from jewellers and firm global trends.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at Rs 71,050 per 10 grams.

Silver prices, on the other hand, remained flat at Rs 84,500 per kg on Tuesday, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also bounced by Rs 550 to Rs 71,250 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 70,700 per 10 grams.

Traders attributed the rise in gold prices to fresh demand from local jewellers and a firm trend in the international markets. Globally, Comex gold is trading higher at USD 2,432.90 per ounce, up by USD 7.40 per ounce from the previous close.

Market experts said gold prices are stuck in a range ahead of policy meeting outcomes by the Bank of Japan and the US central bank.

"Gold/commodities broadly are stuck in a range so far in the session, amid caution ahead of the key event i.e. the policy meeting outcome from Bank of Japan and the U.S. Federal Reserve tomorrow, and the U.S. employment data later in the week," Pranav Mer, VP - Research (Commodity & Currency) BlinkX and JM Financial, said.

## Dir Agri Urges Farmers To Adopt Diversification Of Crops

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal Tuesday undertook an extensive tour of district Ganderbal to take stock of the agriculture scenario in the district.

During the visit, the Director inspected the agriculture crop fields viz. paddy fields, vegetable fields in many areas including at Chountwaliwar, Watlar, Lar, Wayil and Nunar of the district and held interactions with the concerned farmers.

Director also visited Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKG) at many places in the district. Highlighting the importance of KKG, the Director said this will ensure all the facilities to the farmers at their doorsteps. He asked farmers for diversification of crops so that they could earn round the year.



On his visit to 'Sagg eco village' Watlar Ganderbal, Director held an exchange of thoughts with the farmers. He asked concerned farmers to avail benefits from the department's marketing initiatives for their unique produce. He assured the concerned farmers of technical guidance in their future endeavours also.

Earlier Director Agriculture visited some HADP works and took feedback from the con-

cerned farmers about the said works. He also chaired a meeting of officers of district Ganderbal and reviewed the progress under different centrally sponsored schemes and Holistic Agriculture Development Programme.

Chief Agriculture Officer Ganderbal, Shah Nawaz Ahmad Shah; District Agriculture Officer, Sub-divisional Agriculture Officer and other officers were present on the occasion.

## No State Has Been Denied Money In FY25 Budget: FM

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday termed misleading claims by opposition leaders that if any state is not named in the Budget speech, then it does not get any budgetary allocation.

Replying to a Budget discussion in the Lok Sabha, Sitharaman asserted that no state was being denied money.

She recalled that in the past Budgets by the UPA government also did not mention names of all states in their Budget speech.

"I have been picking up on Budget speeches since 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and so on. The Budget of 2004-2005 did not take the name of 17 states. I would like to ask the members of the UPA government at that time - did money not go to those 17 states? Did they stop it?" Sitharaman said.

She was responding to com-

ments by several opposition members that the Budget has provided funds only to Bihar and Andhra Pradesh and nothing to other states.

Sitharaman said India is the fastest-growing economy globally and has overcome the after-effects of the pandemic due to heavy capex push.

She also said the government is complying with the fiscal deficit trajectory. It will bring down the deficit to below 4.5 per cent by 2025-26 from the targeted 4.9 per cent for the current fiscal. The deficit was 5.6 per cent in 2023-24.

The Budget has provided substantial financial support of Rs 17,000 crore to the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir this year. It includes Rs 12,000 crore towards financing the cost of J&K police.

"That's the burden we want to take on our shoulders," Sitharaman said.

## Paras Health Srinagar Hosts Successful Free Medical Camps in Rajouri and Poonch, Emphasizing Accessible Quality Healthcare in J&K

Agenceis

Srinagar: Paras Health Srinagar recently held a series of impactful healthcare events, including a Meet & Greet with medical experts and free medical camps in Poonch and Rajouri, underscoring their dedication to accessible and quality healthcare for the people of J&K.

A Meet & Greet session took place at Hotel Ashirwad in Rajouri, focusing on case-based interventions in Neurosurgery, Neurology, Orthopaedics & Nephrology. Esteemed medical experts shared their insights and clinical experience with attendees, enhancing the understanding of advanced medical practices. The event featured prominent specialists such as Dr. Basharat Kanth, Associate Director of Neurosurgery, Dr. Hilal Ahmad Ganaie, Associate Director of Stroke Interventions & Neurology, Dr. Muhammad Haseeb Gani, Senior Consultant in Orthopaedics, and Dr. Abid Ahmad Kuchay, Consultant Nephrologist. The session drew a diverse group of attendees from Govt medical college Rajouri and private practitioners.

Additionally, Paras Health Srinagar organized 02 free medical camps in Poonch and Rajouri, providing essential medical services to underserved communities, in which 850 patients were screened for various illnesses from remote areas—Mendhar, Surankote, Thanamandi, and peripheries of Rajouri. The Poonch camp was held at Jamia Zia-ul-Uloom, Department of School Education, Poonch, J&K, from 9



am to 4 pm. The Rajouri camp took place at Matrix Hospital, Ward Number 6, Jawahar Nagar, Rajouri, J&K, from 9 am to 6 pm. Both camps offered comprehensive health check-ups and consultations, benefiting a large number of local residents, including 02 spine surgeries assisted by Dr. Basharat Kanth.

Dr. Basharat Kanth, remarked, "Our commitment to providing high-quality healthcare to the people of J&K is unwavering. These events are a testament to our dedication to reaching out to communities, offering them the best medical care possible, and educating them about advanced medical interventions. We believe in making healthcare accessible to everyone, and these camps are a step in that direction. By engaging directly with

the community and addressing their immediate health needs, we aim to foster a culture of proactive health management. These initiatives not only provide essential medical services but also serve as a platform to educate individuals about preventive measures, thereby improving overall health outcomes. Our ongoing efforts are designed to ensure that every person in J&K has the opportunity to benefit from high-quality healthcare services."

Dr. Vidushi Badial, MS, ENT, Associate professor, ENT Head & Neck Surgery, added, "It is truly encouraging to witness the overwhelming response from the community. Our primary goal is to bridge gaps in healthcare accessibility and ensure that high-quality medical

services reach every individual, no matter where they reside. The purpose of these free medical camps were not only to offer free medical support but also to emphasize the critical importance of regular health check-ups and early diagnosis. By raising awareness and making healthcare services more accessible, we aim to empower individuals with the knowledge and resources they need to take control of their health, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more informed community."

Paras Health Srinagar continues to demonstrate its commitment to improving healthcare outcomes and accessibility in the region through these and other initiatives, striving to make a meaningful impact on the lives of the people of J&K.

## US Army Stops Paying Wages To Soldier Imprisoned In Russia

Agenceis

Washington: The Army has stopped paying wages and allowances to a U.S. soldier sentenced last month to nearly four years in a Russian penal colony and may prosecute him if he returns to the United States, U.S. officials said.

Gordon Black, a 34-year-old staff sergeant, was convicted in Russia of theft and threatening murder. But he broke a series of Army rules first, traveling to Russia without U.S. military authorization, and flying through China to get there.

He was also having an extramarital affair - prohibited in the U.S. military - with a Russian woman named Alexandra Vashchuk, who he met during a deployment in South Korea. During leave from the military, Black followed her to Russia's far eastern city of Vladivostok, where she reported him to the police after an argument.

A senior U.S. defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity, drew a comparison to the case of U.S. Army Private Travis King, who last year ran into North Korea and was taken into custody there. Once the United States secured his release, King was charged in October by the Army with crimes including desertion.

"When Black is back in the United States, there will be probably consequences, just as Private King is experiencing consequences for essentially unacceptable behavior," the official said.

"So the Army is going to do the right thing in terms of punishing bad behavior."

Black's case created another headache for U.S. officials already coping with several high-profile detentions in Russia, including Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich and former U.S. Marine Paul Whelan.

Russia's Foreign Ministry has said the case was not political and the U.S. military has not weighed in on the substance of the charges against Black in Russia.

Black was arrested in Vladivostok in May after he and Vashchuk had an argument, and on June 19 a Russian judge found Black guilty of stealing \$10,000 rubles (\$116) from his girlfriend's purse and threatening to kill her. He pleaded not guilty to threatening to kill Vashchuk but admitted he took the money and said he did so out of necessity.

His defense lawyer in Russia, who has said she will appeal the verdict, was not immediately reachable for comment.

The violations of Army rules present a quandary for the U.S. military, given the high-profile nature of Black's arrest and the fact he has a wife and daughter near Fort Cavazos in Texas who depended on benefits, including a portion of his housing allowance.

In May, the military quietly decided to stop paying Black his wages and housing allowance, Army officials told Reuters.

Controversial Decision  
An Army spokesperson told Reuters Black's status was now CCA, or "Confined Civilian Authority," and that he is being kept on active duty without pay or allowances. The Army is

maintaining medical benefits and base privileges for Black's family members.

Franklin Rosenblatt, an associate professor at Mississippi College School of Law and former Army Judge Advocate General, suggested the decision to change Black's status to CCA would be routine, if he were detained in the United States.

But assigning that status to him in Russia could be controversial, Rosenblatt said.

"There's a concern here that we may be giving legitimacy to the proceedings conducted in Russia with how we reflect his duty and pay status," he said, when informed by Reuters about Black's CCA status.

The U.S. military is not providing Black with any special military counsel, the Army has said.

Black's wife and mother, in interviews with Reuters, have portrayed a sometimes violent relationship between Black and his girlfriend.

His wife Megan recounted a time that Black's girlfriend stabbed him during a drunken video-call from Seoul with his daughter back in Texas.

Black's mother, Melody Jones, said he had followed his girlfriend to Russia even though they "fought like cats and dogs."

In Russia, prosecutors said that during an argument at Vashchuk's apartment, Black had grabbed her by the neck before taking her money. Black argued that Vashchuk had drunk half a bottle of vodka that day, was aggressive and had struck him.

CONTD. FROM PAGE 3

### J&K Govt

of POJK and their long pending demand will also be fulfilled.

The Administrative Council also approved conferment of proprietary rights upon Displaced Persons of 1965 in respect of state land. The Government has always remained committed to provide benefits to the Displaced Persons of 1965 as has been granted to Displaced Persons of 1947 and 1971.

Revenue Department shall ensure that proper safeguards are built in the operational guidelines to prevent any misuse particularly unauthorised encroachments on the state land.

### Approves Revised

under PMDP-2015 and taking up allied works at various locations of Transit Accommodations in Kashmir Valley.

The decision is aimed at creating some allied infrastructure facilities for the transit accommodations which shall facilitate early allotment of quarters to the employees.

The decision shall enable early completion of construction of targeted accommodation for migrant employees by providing additional funds for construction purposes.

The Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction shall ensure that allied works related to security arrangements like watch tower, installation of CCTV cameras etc. are taken up to ensure security of the inhabitants.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary, Dr Mandeep K Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor were present in the meeting.

### 28 Killings Reported

actions taken to contain acts of terrorist incidents in Jammu and Kashmir include effective, continuous, and sustained actions against terrorists and support structures, as well as the dismantling of the terror ecosystem using a whole-government approach, said the MoS.

"Crackdown on terror finance, such as seizure and attachment of properties belonging to terrorists and their associates under relevant sections of law and banning of anti-national organizations, preventive operations involve identifying the strategic supporters of terrorism and initiating investigations to expose their mechanisms of aiding and abetting terrorism, multi-pronged strategy to prevent infiltration, enhancement of counter-insurgency grid, and special focus on modernization and strengthening of security equipment, are among key steps that have been taken by the government to vanish terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir," he stated.

The Minister also said that besides, round-the-clock nakas at strategic points, intensified Cordon and Search Operations (CASO) to effectively deal

with the challenges posed by terrorist organizations, and sharing of intelligence inputs on a real-time basis, among all security forces, operating in Jammu and Kashmir, as well as day and night area dominance are other strategies adopted and actions taken for containing acts of terror incidents in Jammu and Kashmir.

### Rs 12,000 Cr

in the Budget speech, then it does not get any budgetary allocation. Replying to a Budget discussion in the Lok Sabha, Sitharaman asserted that no state was being denied money.

She recalled that in the past Budgets by the UPA government also did not mention names of all states in their Budget speech.

"I have been picking up on Budget speeches since 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and so on. The Budget of 2004-2005 did not take the name of 17 states. I would like to ask the members of the UPA government at that time - did money not go to those 17 states? Did they stop it?" Sitharaman said.

She was responding to comments by several opposition members that the Budget has provided funds only to Bihar and Andhra Pradesh and nothing to other states.

Responding to a remark by TMC leader Saugata Roy that the JNU-educated Finance Minister is "beret of new ideas", Sitharaman retorted by saying that even the Chief Minister and Finance Minister of West Bengal have studied from the University of Calcutta (not from Harvard or Oxford). "I want to ask him, are they too bereft of ideas?"

"From the land of Bengal, which gave us 'Vande Mataram', today we have Professor Saugata Roy, who remarked that I'm 'beret' of new ideas because I'm from JNU and not Harvard or Oxford... We're all from Indian Universities, and I want to ask him, in what way, are we less than the Harvards and Oxfords of the world? Even he teaches at an Indian University. He should be ashamed of himself," the minister said.

To Roy's remark on inequality in the country, Sitharaman said, "It is a shameful statement to make that inequality was less under the British than now".

She said West Bengal's share of the total Industrial Production of the country, which used to be 24 per cent at the time of Independence, declined to just 3.5 per cent by 2021.

She also said the government is complying with the fiscal deficit trajectory. It will bring down the deficit to below 4.5 per cent by 2025-26 from the targeted 4.9 per cent for the current fiscal. The deficit was 5.6 per cent in 2023-24. "I am confident of achieving this goal of 4.9 per cent".

After Sitharaman's reply in the lower House, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a post on X, said, "FM @ nsitharaman presents a very comprehensive picture of this year's Budget and what it offers for every

section of society. She reiterates our Government's commitment to growth and reforms".

Sitharaman said India is the fastest-growing economy globally and has overcome the after-effects of the pandemic due to heavy capex push.

Refuting allegations of the Opposition that the Budget has cut allocation for agriculture, health, education and other social sector, she said allocations on all these heads have gone up compared to the previous year.

Budget 2024-25 is a balance between social objectives and fiscal consolidation, she added.

Stating that fiscal prudence without compromising on welfare schemes is the hallmark of the Modi Government, Sitharaman said that Congress-led UPA used to do off-budget borrowing, and there was a lack of transparency in their budget numbers.

"Lack of transparency was there during UPA, not in the NDA government," she said.

Giving a comparative analysis of the inflation management during the UPA versus NDA regime, Sitharaman said during the UPA regime, inflation was in double digits for 22 months. Domestic inflation used to be higher than the global average.

However, the NDA government has brought it down to 5.1 per cent in the last 10 years from 8.1 per cent during UPA's 10-year rule.

On the demand for a legal guarantee on MSP, Sitharaman said it was UPA, which rejected this, saying that it may lead to distortion in the market. "Now, they (UPA) are shedding crocodile tears even though they have not done anything in their 10-year tenure or even for decades," she said.

She said "whatever little" the UPA had done in the form of farm debt waiver was mired in "gross irregularities", as pointed out by the CAG.

Stating that the INDI alliance is doing politics over the MSP, Sitharaman said in 2007, the UPA government did not accept the MS Swaminathan commission's suggestion of giving MSP of more than 50 per cent of the weighted average cost of crops.

It was the Modi government, which gave the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, she said, adding that a committee has been constituted to look at how CACP (Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices) can work better in the interest of farmers.

She said agriculture allocation was Rs 21,934 crore in 2013-14, which went up 5 times to Rs 1.23 lakh crores in FY25.

More than Rs 3.2 lakh crore has been disbursed to 11 crore farmers under the PM Kisan scheme, she added.

### LS Approves

with the Opposition-ruled States in the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and said her speech mentioned projects for only two States. On Monday,

Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi addressed the Lower House on the Union Budget 2024. The Upper House, meanwhile, held a discussion on the tragic death of students in the IAS coaching institute in Delhi.

### Govt Forms Panel

February 2024, the Parliament amended the J&K's municipal and Panchayat laws to facilitate reservation of OBCs in local bodies of the UT. (KNO)

### Kashmir Valley

For the next 24 hours, the weatherman here has predicted generally cloudy with intermittent spells of light to moderate rain and thundershower at many places of Kashmir division and widespread places of Jammu division.

From August 01 to August 07, Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad stated that generally cloudy with spells of intermittent light to moderate rain and thundershower is expected at many places of Kashmir division and most places of Jammu division.

However, the MeT has issued an advisory, saying that intense showers for a brief period with possibility of flash floods, cloud bursts, landslides, mudslides and shooting stones are expected over vulnerable places of J&K with possibility of heavy rainfall at few places of Jammu division.

Pertinently, most parts of Jammu & Kashmir experienced thunder showers and some areas received heavy rainfall yesterday, which led to the dip in the mercury and thus simultaneously ended the prolonged heat wave in the Union Territory. (KNO)

### Top Cola, Snack

on insurance of buildings, plants and machinery for a maximum of five years. Beyond food and beverage makers, yarn and knitted fabric manufacturing company RSWM has been recently allotted 32 acres to set up a production unit. The company has proposed to invest Rs 730 crores.

Last year, Dubai-based Emaar Group announced a plan to open a 1-million sq ft mall in Srinagar. The proposed mall, with an investment of Rs 250 crore, is estimated to generate employment for 7,500 people and is expected to become operational by 2026.

### Ganderbal DC Accused

the petitioners approached the court saying they were not compensated by the government after it acquired land from them, even though a decree in this regard was issued in 2022.

In January this year, the court directed the Deputy Commissioner to compensate the petitioners. In an order dated June 21, the court said that the DC had not acted on the January order, and directed that his and other officials' salaries be withheld.

In the latest order, issued on July 23, the court said that his previous

order "didn't go well with Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, namely Mr Shyambir, who attempted to personally attack the Presiding Officer (the sub-judge) by scandalising him and weakening him by manipulation and fabrication, and for this purpose, he called a meeting immediately after the order and conspired with some other officers/officials of the district to implicate the Presiding Officer of the court for passing a lawful order against the judgment-debtors".

The court accused Shyambir of launching a vindictive investigation to "implicate" him in a false case. "Out of the steps decided to be taken by the contemnor Deputy Commissioner against the Presiding Officer, one step was to frame the Presiding Officer in any fabricated incident, and if this is not possible, to trace out if there is any property in the name of the judge anywhere," the July 23 order said.

The court said DC Shyambir found out that he had two kanals of land in Ganderbal, and that the DC "misused his official machinery and devoted time in tracing out the documents of the property, which the Presiding Officer lawfully holds". After this, "as a first attack" on the judge, the Judge said a patwari visited his land thrice under the DC's direction. He said the patwari told the caretaker of the land that the DC Shyambir had constituted "a team for demarcation of the land of the judge" as the judge had "passed the order against the Deputy Commissioner and other higher officers".

Therefore, the Deputy Commissioner has constituted a team for demarcation of the land of the Judge. However, the Patwari had no knowledge whether there was any application moved by the owner of the property/Judge for identification or demarcation so as to give reason to Deputy Commissioner to send a team on the spot. This sudden visit of the Patwari on the land belonging to and in lawful possession of the presiding officer for about last fifteen years, much before his appointment from the year 2009, actually amounted to harassment to the Presiding Officer.

"The committee constituted for demarcation is clear abuse of the official position as neither the Presiding Officer moved any application for demarcation nor any notice was ever given to the presiding officer for any intended so-called demarcation of land in his possession for the last more than 15 years."

In fact, the court said, there does not exist any dispute at all regarding the land. "The Committee was called to submit a report within two days and most of the members of the committee are from different jurisdictions having no authority to demarcate the land outside their jurisdiction."

In fact, the court said, this committee was constituted by DC to "manipulate the spot position to demonstrate the land purchased and in possession

of the Presiding officer (judge) as Khascharai, against the recorded and settled spot position." The committee has been constituted by the Deputy Commissioner-Shyambir with oblique and mala fide motives and evil intention in reaction to a lawful order passed by the Presiding Officer, the court said.

"Till the time order was passed, there was no problem with the contemnor as regards the land of the Presiding Officer but after passing of the judicial order in execution petition, the contemnor started misusing his position rendering him liable not only for contempt but criminal proceedings under Prevention of Corruption Act for abuse of the official position for ulterior motives."

The order also said that as the DC may "try to implicate the judge in some false and frivolous", he has been issued a notice to explain why he should not be referred to the High Court for criminal contempt.

"Such an act on the part of the Deputy Commissioner/Contemnor, on the face of it, amounts to criminal contempt as the same is aimed at scandalizing the Judge who passed a judicial order and it has the potential to lower down the authority of this court as the Deputy Commissioner, by abuse of official position, wants to demonstrate the mighty powers he enjoys to lower the authority of the Court," the court said, adding, "Therefore, in the larger interest of the institution and to maintain the public trust, faith and confidence of the people in the independence and sanctity of the judicial institution, this court deems it appropriate to proceed in accordance with The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971."

### HC Asks CS

important statutory role the Commission plays. Accordingly, we direct that the respondents shall without fail intimate as to the status of the process for appointment of the members of the Committee by the next date failing which, we would be compelled to call the concerned official respondents to remain present in person before this Court to explain before us."

### ED Raids Ex-Manager

the funds received as loans were transferred to either the accused or the relatives of the accused from where proceeds were withdrawn mostly in cash, the ED said.

The loans were mostly sanctioned on the basis of forged or fake documents and the persons in whose name the loans were sanctioned did not exist, the agency claimed.

All the loan accounts (total 250) were sanctioned "without" following the due procedure and by "violating" the norms and conditions of the loans, the ED said.

The agency said "incriminating" documents including books of account and digital devices were seized during the searches.

# Olympics 2024: 2nd Medal For India, Manu & Sarabjot Win Shooting Bronze

Press Trust of India

**CHATEAUXROUX:** A calm and composed Manu Bhaker scripted history to become the first Indian athlete in post-independence era to win two Olympic medals in a single edition of the Games as she combined with an equally unruffled Sarabjot Singh to clinch the 10m air pistol mixed team bronze here on Tuesday.

The Indian pair defeated the Korean duo of Lee Wonho and Oh Yeh Jin 16-10 to earn the country its second medal at Chateauxroux's shooting range.

The 22-year-old Bhaker had earlier snared the women's 10m air pistol bronze medal at the same venue on Sunday, wiping off the memories of a horrendous Olympic debut in Tokyo 2020 where her pistol malfunctioned leaving her in tears.

Before her, British-Indian athlete Norman Pritchard had won two silver medals in 200m



sprint and 200m hurdles at the 1900 Olympics but that achievement had come in the pre-Independence era.

While it is a massive achievement for women's sport in the country, Tuesday's medal is also redemption for Sarabjot, who had failed to make the men's 10m air pistol final, finishing ninth on Saturday with a score of 577.

"I'm feeling really proud and there is a lot of gratitude, thanks for all the blessings," said Bhaker after the match, which the two young Indians played with remarkable poise to make it a one-sided contest.

Ambala shooter Sarabjot, who

passed through a difficult phase trying to come to terms with the disappointment of the individual competition just three days back, said he was under a lot of pressure to perform.

"I'm feeling good, the game was very tough and there was a lot of pressure, I am very happy," said the 22-year-old Sarabjot, who

comes from a farming family.

The Indians started on the wrong foot with Sarabjot's opening shot fetching a poor 8.6, while Bhaker shot 10.2 for an aggregate of 18.8. The Koreans aggregated 20.5 to take the opening round and open a 2-0 lead.

In mixed team events, the pair that reaches 16 points first wins the medal.

Down 0-2, Bhaker's consistency came to the fore and it rubbed off on Sarabjot as the pair took the next four rounds to take their tally to 8-2.

Such was her level of confidence that Bhaker had just three shots below 10 in the entire contest which lasted 13 rounds.

It was an uphill task for the Koreans who succumbed to pressure and could not match their rivals losing 16-10.

Bhaker will next be seen in action in the 25m women's pistol qualification on August 2 and has a good chance of making the finals.

## 25th District Srinagar Sqay Championship Concludes



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The 25th District Srinagar Sqay Championship, organised by the District Sqay Association Srinagar, came to an end on Tuesday at Sports Complex Polo Ground here.

Shakil Hafiz, President of Kashmir School Federation, was the chief Guest on concluding function.

The championship, which saw participation from more than 100 talented boys and girls, aimed to

promote Kashmir's traditional martial art of Sqay and provide a platform for young athletes to showcase their skills.

The chief guest praised the efforts of the District Sqay Association Srinagar for their dedication to promoting Sqay in the region.

The championship featured various events and competitions, and the winners were awarded prizes and recognition. The main theme of the event was to make drugs free Srinagar.

## 'MYMP': JKSC Hosts Sports Events In North Kashmir

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** J&K Sports Council's 'My Youth My Pride' initiative kicked-off in North Kashmir on Monday.

The Sport Council's sports events saw over 500 athletes compete in hockey, kabaddi and volleyball events at SA Stadium Baramulla, drawing large crowds of both participants and spectators.

Meanwhile, around 280 athletes from various schools and clubs took part in Wushu, Judo and Kho-Kho competitions held at Indoor Sports Hall Handwara and Playfield Kultari Mawar.

In Bandipora, spectators also enjoyed watching skilled basketball athletes, while boys and girls football teams



competed on the first day of the special activities at Playfield Naidkhai, Bandipora.

The boxing ring was lively with matches at Playfield Shadipora, Bandipora, overseen by expert coaches and technical staff from JKSC.

In addition, the closing ceremony of a 21-day special summer kabaddi coaching camp was held at SKISC Srinagar, attended by the Secretary, JKSC, along with DSO, Kashmir, and DSO, Central. The camp trained 43 players.

Secretary, J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul, praised the athletes, noting that these coaching camps would prepare them for national and international competitions.

## Provincial U-19 Girls Handball C'ship Begins At Baramulla



Observer News Services

**BARAMULLA:** The Inter District Provincial Level Under-19 Girls Handball Tournament began on Tuesday at Indoor Stadium Baramulla. The championship was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Minga Sherpa and Joint Director Department of Youth Services and Sports.

The tournament, organised by the DYSS, began with the National Anthem and a heartfelt sports pledge.

In his opening remarks, the DC encouraged all participants, wishing them success in their athletic pursuits. He applauded the Youth Services and Sports Department Baramulla for their ongoing efforts in organizing daily sports activities.

The tournament features teams from eight districts across the Kashmir province, highlighting the extensive enthusiasm and talent in handball among the youth.

The event promises thrilling matches and high-level competition, with the semifinals and final scheduled to be played today, Wednesday.

## District Bandipora Rugby Championship 2024 Kicks Off

Observer News Service

**BANDIPORA:** The District Bandipora Rugby Championship 2024 began Monday at Government Higher Secondary School Nadihal Bandipora. The championship is being organised by District Rugby Association Bandipora under the patronage of J&K Rugby Association. This event witnessed an impressive turnout of 34 teams, including both boys and girls from all age categories representing different clubs and schools of Bandipora.

Chief Guest, Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr. Shakeel Ur Rehman IAS, inaugurated the championship. Accompanying him was the



Guest of Honor, Chief Education Officer Bandipora and Padmashri Fasil Ali Dar.

In his address to the participants, the chief guest emphasized the global popularity of Rugby as a new sport. He extended his appreciation to all the coaches and participants who partook in the championship.

The District Bandipora Rugby Championship 2024 serves as a platform for emerging players to demonstrate their prowess and potentially pave the way for future national and international successes.

## Short TAKES

### Anantnag U-19 Kabaddi Team Reaches Provincial Semi-Final



Anantnag's Under-19 Kabaddi team claimed a series of impressive victories at the UT Level Kabaddi Event, establishing themselves as a formidable force in the competition. The team secured dominant wins against Shopian, Bandipora, Srinagar and Baramulla.

Anantnag outplayed Shopian with a resounding score of 35-09. The team's momentum continued as they defeated Bandipora, finishing the game with a score of 29-15.

They faced Srinagar and emerged victorious with a score of 37-17, followed thereafter they defeated Baramulla, sealing the game by 32-18.

### Sri Lanka Announces Squad for ODI Series Against India

Sri Lanka has unveiled its 16-member squad for the upcoming three-match ODI series against India, commencing on August 2. The squad features senior all-rounder Chamika Karunaratne alongside promising young batters Janith Liyanage and Nishan Madushka.

The squad received approval from Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs, Harin Fernando. The series will be played on August 2, 4, and 7 at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo.

Liyanage and Madushka join Charith Asalanka (captain) and Kusal Mendis in the national team line-up.

### PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi Set To Become Next ACC President

Pakistan Cricket Board's incumbent chairman Mohsin Naqvi is set to become the next president of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) later this year as per its rotation policy.

The matter of the president's post was discussed at a recent ACC meeting with Naqvi in line to become the next head.

"When the ACC meets later this year, it will confirm that Naqvi will be the next president for a two-year term," a source said.

### New Stars Shine as England Triumphs 3-0 In West Indies Tests

England Test Head Coach Brendon McCullum lauded the commendable performances of new players, pacer Gus Atkinson, wicketkeeper-batter Jamie Smith, and spinner Shoaib Bashir, in their 3-0 series win against the West Indies.

The Test series marked a period of transition for England as they introduced fresh talents to their red-ball squad. The opening Test at Lord's saw Gus Atkinson emerge as a standout performer, taking 22 wickets and earning the Player of the Series accolade.

### COVID-19 Reemerges at Paris Olympic Games With Athletes Affected

In a worrying turn of events at the Paris Olympic Games, COVID-19 has once again impacted athletes, forcing some to withdraw. Australian swimmer Lani Pallister, a strong contender in the women's 1,500 metres freestyle, tested positive and has been isolated. British swimmer Adam Peaty also tested positive after narrowly missing out on gold in the 100 metres breaststroke.

The Paris Games have no strict COVID-19 protocols, a significant change from the Tokyo and Beijing Olympics.

## Water Breaks, Fans & Ice As Paris Heatwave Forces Tweaks To The 2024 Olympics

Agencies

**PARIS:** Tennis and soccer players are allowed water breaks, BMX riders sit under umbrellas in between runs and horses are being monitored with thermal cameras as the summer Olympics adapt to a heatwave that is hitting Paris and much of France.

At the Roland Garros tennis complex, just outside Paris, the temperature was due to peak at 37 degrees Celsius (98.6°F) on Tuesday.

Players were granted a 10-minute break between the second and third sets in singles, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) said, invoking a protocol based on the "Wet Bulb Globe Temperature" which measures potential heat stress in direct sunlight.

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Players could use the break to have a shower, change their outfit, eat, drink or go to the bathroom but they could not



have medical treatment or talk to their coach.

If the heat gets worse, a panel including the tournament referee and medical professionals could decide to suspend play.

In the soccer, with temperatures above 32 degrees Celsius, there are cooling breaks in both halves of a match.

At BMX freestyle events in Concorde square, in central Paris, riders stood under umbrellas, cooled by electric fans, with trainers applying ice.

**HYDRATION FOR THE HORSES**

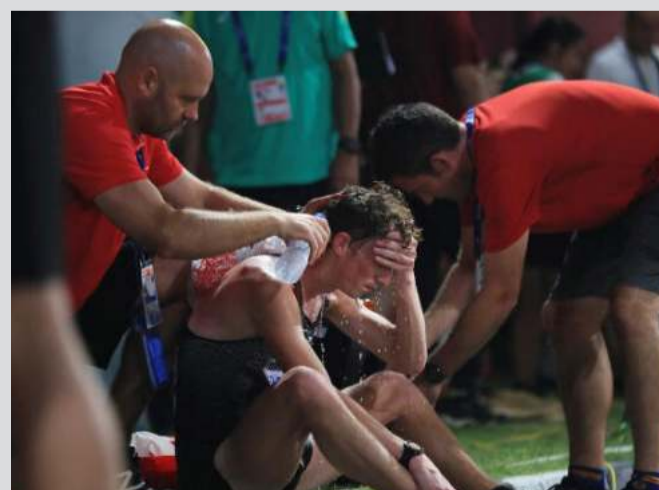
It is not just the athletes who need protection from the fierce heat.

In Versailles, World Equestrian Federation FEI activated a special plan to protect the horses, the body's chief veterinarian said, monitoring the animals with thermal cameras, cooling them if necessary and checking climate data.

Some of the muscular dressage horses weigh up to 750 kilos and need around 50 litres of water per day just for their basic body functions, FEI chief vet Goran Akerstrom told Reuters, saying hydration was key.

Some athletes did not mind the heat too much.

Australian BMX Freestyle rider Natalya Diehm said after qualifying for the finals: "We do have an advantage as Aus-



trians, over other countries, given the summers we have."

Indoor sports faced less of an issue. At Lille's Pierre Mauroy stadium in northern France, full-blast air conditioning meant basketball players did not feel the heat.

Spectators also found ways to cope.

"I feel like I'm in a sauna

here," Yamen Zang, 31, a Chinese, Paris-based financial analyst, said at Roland Garros. "I knew it would be like that, that's why I took a fan, a fan and all that's needed."

"We knew it would be hot and that there is no shade on the (main court)," said 22-year-old student Mathilde Landin, who was wearing a hat to protect herself from the sun as she watched the tennis. "So we took the whole kit: a fan, a small blower fan, water, sunscreen."

British player Jack Draper, who went out in the second round, said the heat had been tough and water bottles left at the side of the court did not stay cool.

Thunderstorms are set to hit Paris later in the day and later this week, which would help to lower temperatures to a maximum of 33 degrees on Wednesday and 27-29 degrees for the rest of the week, according to Meteo France weather forecasts. (Reuters)

## What Centre Said On Direct Correlation Of Deaths Due To Air Pollution

### Agenceis

New Delhi: There is no conclusive data available in the country to establish direct correlation of death/disease exclusively due to air pollution, Minister of State for Health Anupriya Patel told the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday.

Air pollution is one of the triggering factors for respiratory ailments and associated diseases, she said in a written reply.

Health effects of air pollution are synergistic manifestation of factors which include food habits, occupational habits, socio-economic status, medical history, immunity, heredity etc. of the individuals.

The Government of India has taken several steps to address air pollution issues, she said. Elaborating further, Patel said the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) aims to safeguard the health of women and children by providing them with clean LPG.

Swachh Hawa (clean air) is an integral component of Swachh Bharat, she said.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the National Clean Air Programme in 2019 as a national level strategy to reduce air pollution levels across the country, Ms Patel said.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) launched the National Programme on Climate Change

and Human Health (NPCCHH) at the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), with the objective to create awareness, capacity building, health sector preparedness and response-and partnerships-related activities on the climate sensitive health issues in the country since 2019, Ms Patel said.

Now the programme has expanded in all the states and Union Territories and activities are conducted in the form of training on climate sensitive diseases, surveillance on acute respiratory illnesses and heat related illnesses, generation and dissemination of information, education and communication (IEC) on air pollution and heat and its health impacts on health, including children's health.

Further, guidelines on 'Air Pollution and its Impact on Children's Health' have been developed in both Hindi and English under the National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health in 2020 and shared with states for implementation, she stated.

The NCDC under the MOHFW issues health advisory every year to states and Union Territories to address health concern of the masses, including those of children. Several workshops and trainings have been conducted for community-level health workers on air pollution and its impact on children's health, Ms Patel said.



## From Torrential Rain To Scorching Heatwave: India's Extreme Weather Events



More than 50 people were killed after landslides swept through tea estates and homes in Kerala

### Agenceis

New Delhi: India has witnessed extreme weather conditions in recent years, from torrential rain and floods to droughts and cyclones, blamed by some experts on climate change.

More than 50 people were killed after landslides swept through tea estates and homes in Kerala state on July 30.

Following are details of extreme weather events in the country.

#### HEATWAVE, FLOODS IN DELHI

Heavy rains caused floods in capital New Delhi in June, following weeks of extreme heat. Torrential rains caused a fatal airport roof collapse in June, while three students drowned in a flooded basement classroom on July 27.

In May, thunderstorms caused a billboard to collapse in financial capital Mumbai, killing at least 14 people, while flash floods in July disrupted transportation.

#### RIVERS OVERFLOW IN ASSAM

Several rivers swelled up in Assam state in the northeast in July after seasonal monsoon rains, triggering floods and landslides that killed at least 79 people and displaced thousands. More than 150 animals, including rare one-horned rhinoceros, drowned the state's Kaziranga National Park.

#### CYCLONE IN SOUTHERN INDIA

A severe cyclone hit India's southeastern coast in December 2023, after torrential rains and flooding killed at least 13 people. Sustained downpours in Tamil Nadu state in the subsequent days led to inundated neighbourhoods, roads and railways, and killed at least 31 people.

#### HIMALAYAN GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST

A Himalayan glacial lake burst its banks in October 2023 after heavy rains in the northeastern state of Sikkim, trigger-

ing the region's worst floods in more than 50 years which killed 179 and swept away homes and bridges.

#### LANDSLIDE SWEEPS POWER PROJECTS

A landslide 20 km (12 miles) away from the second highest peak in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand in February 2021 left more than 200 dead, triggered flash floods and swept away two hydroelectric projects.

#### LANDSLIDES NEAR MUMBAI

A landslide in July 2023 flattened several homes in a village near Mumbai, killing at least 27 and trapped scores of residents.

#### FLOODS IN KERALA

The southern state of Kerala witnessed its worst flood in a century in 2018, which killing at least 373 people and displaced 1.2 million to shelter camps. The state had received 40% more rainfall than usual.

## Every hour 26 lives lost to drowning worldwide, finds WHO

### Agenceis

About 236,000 lives every year, which can be 350 per day or 26 every hour, are lost due to drowning worldwide, said Saima Wazed, the World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Director for South East Asia on Thursday, 25 July.

25 July is observed as World Drowning Prevention Day to bring awareness about the leading cause of injury-related death and disability worldwide.

The theme this year is 'Anyone can drown, no one should'. "In 2019, drowning claimed 70,034 lives in the South-East Asia Region, making it the second-highest contributor to drowning deaths worldwide," said the Regional Director.

"Drowning is a sudden and silent killer, often catching victims and those around them unawares until it is too late.

A few seconds may not be enough time to respond. The pow-

er is in prevention," she added.

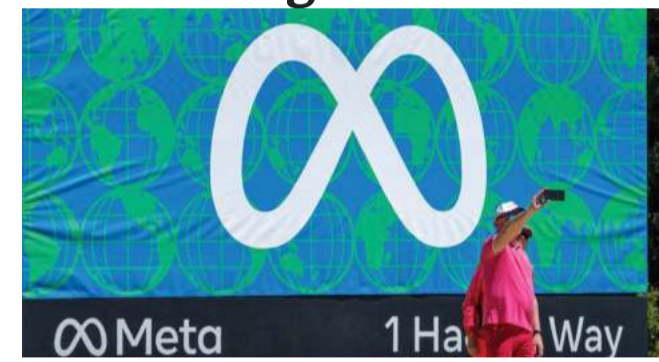
Wazed noted that the majority of the incidents took place near homes due to lack of supervision, exposure to hazardous water bodies, insufficient awareness, and poverty.

There are preventive measures that exist and are crucial to address this issue, Wazed said, adding that the global health body has outlined evidence-based, cost-effective, and scalable strategies to prevent drowning.

It also comes with guidance that is tailored to different contexts. "We all have a role to play in preventing drowning.

Whether by raising awareness, promoting knowledge of effective solutions, collaborating on prevention plans and policies with local or national governments, volunteering with relevant organisations, or ensuring personal and family safety around water, each of us can make a difference," Wazed said.

## Meta To Pay \$1.4 Billion To Settle Texas Lawsuit Over Facial Recognition Data



### Agenceis

Texas: Meta Platforms has agreed to pay \$1.4 billion to Texas to resolve the state's lawsuit accusing the Facebook parent of illegally using facial-recognition technology to collect biometric data of millions of Texans without their consent.

The terms of the settlement, disclosed on Tuesday, marks the

largest accord ever by any single state, according to the lawyers for Texas, whose legal team included the plaintiffs firm Keller Postman.

The lawsuit, filed in 2022, was the first major case to be brought under Texas' 2009 biometric privacy law, according to law firms tracking the litigation. A provision of the law provides damages of up to \$25,000 per violation.

27<sup>th</sup> year OF PUBLICATION



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