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## Three Million Tourists Visited J&K In 2024



### Agencies

Srinagar: In 2024, Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a significant surge in its tourism sector, with over three million domestic and international tourists visiting the region this year. Officials said the growth is largely due to the ambitious initiatives undertaken by the government to boost tourism across various sectors.

An official said that the Jammu and Kashmir administration launched an ambitious plan to develop 75 new tourist destinations, 75 heritage and cultural sites, 75 Sufism and religious sites and 75 adventure treks, to attract tourists across all four seasons. Work on these projects is in full swing, with ongoing developments across the region, he added. These initiatives, he said,

encompass various facets of tourism, including nature, adventure, pilgrimage, heritage and sports tourism. "Efforts have been made to explore new tourism avenues such as amusement parks, water sports, rafting, rock climbing, and snow parks to attract a broader spectrum of tourists," the official said.

He said that to strengthen J&K's tourism brand, a sustained marketing strategy has been implemented, with a strong emphasis on utilising information technology to better reach global audiences. "Eco-friendly infrastructure is being developed to standardise tourism products and services, and targeted marketing strategies are being employed to tap into emerging markets, which will contribute significantly to [More on P11](#)

## Uninterrupted Power Supply After 100% Metering: CM Omar

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said people in the valley were facing difficulties due to intense cold conditions but the government would be able to provide uninterrupted electricity only after 100 per cent metering is achieved.

"As far as winter preparedness is concerned, there is an intense cold, and there has been a dry spell. I pray to God for snowfall so that this dry spell ends.

"Our endeavour is to minimise the power cuts, and ensure water supply even as pipes freeze due to the low temperature. Despite difficulties, our endeavour is that



the government functions smoothly," Abdullah told reporters here.

The chief minister said the complaints of unscheduled power cuts would continue "because there is pressure on the system".

"The problem is that some

people have a (load) agreement of four bulbs, but they use four heaters instead... Meter is the best way to address this, the more metering we have, the less power cuts there will be.

"I hope we take J&K to 100 per cent metering | [More on P11](#)

### Srinagar MLAs Meet CM

The Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday chaired a meeting of Srinagar-based Member of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from National Conference (NC) at his Gupkar residence. Sources privy to the development said that the Chief Minister has convened a meeting at his residence today in which Ali Muhammad Sagar, Tanvir Sadiq, Mushtaq Gurro, Ahsan Padesi and Salman Sagar were present. The MLAs discussed the issues confronting the people in their respective constituencies, they said, | [More on P11](#)

## Ex-PM Manmohan Singh No More



### Observer News Service

Srinagar: New Delhi, Dec 26 (PTI) Former prime minister Manmohan Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, died here on Thursday night. He was 92.

Singh's death was announced by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi, where he was admitted in the Emergency ward around 8.30 PM in a critical condition.

An AIIMS bulletin said "he was treated for age related medical conditions and had sudden loss of consciousness at home" on December 26.

"Resuscitative measures were started immediately at home. He was brought to medical emergency at AIIMS Delhi at 8.06 pm. Despite all efforts, he could not be revived and was declared dead | [More on P11](#)

### Meets Delegations, Vows Priority To Public Concerns

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday met several delegations and emphasized his government's commitment to addressing the challenges faced by various sectors of society. The Chief Minister stated this during his public outreach programme at Raabita office here, where

scores of delegations and individuals from various parts of Kashmir presented their concerns and demands. The Chief Minister interacted with various stakeholders, including representatives from education, artisan, labour, and healthcare sectors, who brought forth issues requiring immediate | [More on P11](#)

## Land Transfer For NIT Pulwama Campus Underway

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Deputy Commissioner's office in South Kashmir's Pulwama has initiated the transfer of 4,834 kanals and 19 marlas of state land for the establishment of a new campus for the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar in Hazratbal.

In an official communication, the district administration

announced the formation of a team to expedite the preparation of necessary revenue documents.

The team comprises officers and officials from various tehsils, including Naib Tehsildars from Nawa and Kakapora, as well as revenue staff such as Girdawars and Patwaris from Trich, Parigam, Patalbagh, Kangan, and Nawa.

These officials have been directed to | [More on P11](#)

### Seizing 5000 Kanals Unacceptable: PDP

Peoples Democratic Party leaders on Thursday opposed the government move to transfer nearly 5000 kanal of land for setting up the National Institute of Technology (NIT) campus in South Kashmir's Pulwama district. | [More on P11](#)



## Snowfall Likely In Higher Reaches Today: Met Water Bodies Turn To Ice As Cold Wave Grips Kashmir

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Intense cold wave conditions prevailed across Kashmir as the minimum temperatures settled several degrees below the freezing point, officials said on Thursday. There is a possibility of light

snowfall over the higher reaches on Friday and Saturday as a Western Disturbance is set to impact the region, they said.

The night temperature dropped at most places in Kashmir as the valley continued to reel under freezing conditions. The fall in the mercury led

to the freezing of water supply lines as a thin layer of ice covered the surface of several water bodies including the Dal Lake.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 7 degrees Celsius on Wednesday night, slightly up from the previous night's minus 7.3 degrees | [More on P11](#)

## Promote Harmony And Mutual Respect: LG



### Says Christian Community's Selfless Service Inspires All

### Observer News Service

Jammu: The Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha called for united resolve from all the sections, especially the younger generation, to promote harmonious living and mutual respect for all. He said the youth are the inheritors of the rich legacy of spiritual values and they must work for equality and fraternity.

"India's culture is unique and ageless. This great country has

been a witness to co-existence of almost all major religions known to humankind. The co-existence of all major religions has enriched and diversified our cultural heritage," the LG said.

Sinha attended the Christmas Celebrations organised by 'All J&K Christian Sabha'.

He interacted with Bishop, Priests and members of CNI Church, Jammu-Srinagar Diocese and All J&K Christian Sabha and commended their contribution in building a peaceful, selfless, compassionate and caring society.

"The Christian community has selflessly | [More on P11](#)

## Only One NC MLA Attends Meeting Chaired By MP Ruhullah

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Only one out of seven National Conference MLAs from district Srinagar attended a meeting chaired by Lok Sabha member Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Thursday, fueling speculations that the party has snubbed the MP for his participation in anti-quota protest earlier this week.

Mehdi presided over the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meeting here and reviewed the progress of various centrally sponsored schemes (CSS) and ongoing development projects in the district.



The eight MLAs from Srinagar are the members of the committee, and seven of them belong to the Mehdi's party, the ruling NC, while Congress' J-K chief Tariq Hameed Karra is the eighth one.

However, only Zadibal MLA

Tanvir Sadiq, a Shia leader, attended the meeting, while other NC MLAs skipped it.

The absence of the NC MLAs fuelled speculations that the party's top brass was miffed with its Srinagar MP for joining a protest on | [More on P11](#)

## Kashmiri Teen Awarded Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir's 13-year-old singing prodigy Ayaan Sajad Thursday said it was a surreal feeling to receive the prestigious Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024 from President Droupadi Murmu. He asserted it was a huge responsibility as well.

The Bal Puraskar is the highest award given to children for extraordinary accomplishments in social service, innovation, sports, bravery, art and scholastic achievements.

Sajad, a Sufi singer from south Kashmir, was honoured for his soulful contributions to Kashmiri music.

Sajad said he felt excited



and honoured when he received the news of him being awarded.

"I became very excited but honoured as well. It was a kind of an unreal feeling, but the enhanced feeling was when I actually got the award in my hands," he said.

The singing | [More on P11](#)

## Harassment Of Kashmiri Shawl Sellers In Himachal Worrying Pattern Of Targeted Violence: Mufti

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday said the alleged harassment of Kashmiri shawl sellers in Himachal Pradesh highlighted a "worrying pattern of targeted violence" and urged the governments to ensure a safe environment for them.

"Kashmiri shawl sellers in Himachal Pradesh's Bilaspur District are facing harassment, assault, and threats from right-wing groups. Despite proper documents, they're being barred from doing business and evicted," Mufti said in a post on X.

The former chief minister of the erstwhile state of Jammu and

Kashmir said it was the third such incident of its kind to come to notice and highlighted a "worrying pattern of targeted violence".

"This othering of Kashmiris will alienate them further. I urge @OmarAbdullah and @SukhuSukhvinder to intervene and ensure a safe environment for these traders," she said.

The PDP president also condemned the lathi-charge on locals in Katra who were protesting against a proposed ropeway project for the Vaishnodevi pilgrimage.

"The unwarranted crackdown on the Sangarsh Samiti has resulted in the arrest of 18 of its members," she said.

Mufti said | [More on P11](#)



**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The name of my daughter has been wrongly written in her adhaar as Seerat Manzoor While my correct name is Hadiya Manzoor . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned Adhaar Centre within 7 days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Manzoor Ahmad Rather  
 F/o Hadiya Manzoor  
 R/o Aglar Chirrat Shopian

fko

**From Office of the Advocate**  
**Ishfaq Rasool and Associates**

In the case of  
 Sameer Shaban S/O: Mohd Shaban Sheikh  
 Tariq Ahmad Sheikh S/o: Ab Rahman Sheikh

(Caveator)

V/s  
 Public at large

In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveator may file any Application, Petition, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seek in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irrepa- rable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.

Sd/advocate

**ICMR Develops AI Tool To Predict IVF Outcomes In Men With Infertility**

Press Trust Of India

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in collaboration with Amity University has developed an artificial intelligence-based tool to detect the type of 'Y' chromosome microdeletion—a genetic cause of male infertility—and predict IVF outcomes. The study regarding the AI tool was published in the Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics last week. In nearly 50 per cent of couples experiencing infertility, the problem is with the male partner, said Dr Deepak Modi, senior scientist at ICMR's National Institute for Research in Reproductive and Child Health (NIRRCH) and the lead author of the study. "In them there could be problems with sperm production. One of the leading causes, Y chromosome microdeletion (YCMD) is observed in one in every 10 men with infertility. Because of this genetic defect, the testes are unable to make enough sperm leading to infertility," Dr Modi said. Men with YCMD cannot benefit from medical treatment for improving the sperm count.



To become fathers, such men require assisted reproductive techniques such as in-vitro fertilization (IVF) for parenthood, he said. The AI-based tool—'Fertility Predictor'—de-

veloped by the ICMR-NIRRCH in collaboration with Amity University, Noida can predict sperm retrieval rates and success rates of assisted reproductive technology (ART) in men having this genetic problem.

It also predicts the rate of fertilization, clinical pregnancy and live birth rates based on the type of Y chromosome microdeletion, Dr Modi said. This helps the couples make informed decisions, he said. However, Dr Modi cautioned that the male babies born through IVF from men with YCMD will inherit the same defect and will be infertile as it is 100 per cent transmitted from fathers to their sons. Developing this tool took about two years by collating data of more than 500 men having YCMD and undergoing ART. After applying an artificial intelligence algorithm based on machine learning on this data, the tool could predict the outcomes. This was then validated on another sub-set and it was found to have accuracy of about 80 per cent, Dr Stacy Colaco, a scientist at NIRRCH and the first author of the study, said. "Fertility Predictor also provides a numerical output for chance of clinical pregnancy and live birth in men with YCMD. The validation studies indicated its robustness and high accuracy in predicting both these parameters solely based on the type of YCMD," said Dr Abhishek Sengupta of Amity University, Noida.

**PRESS RELEASE**

The J&K Bank Rural Self Employment Training Institute Budgam organised a six days EDP training and skill development programme on processing of fruits and vegetables for rural women. The programme was conducted in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra Budgam. The idea was to train and develop requisite skills of rural women in processing of fruits and vegetables so as to help them in starting their own small business venture with focus on value addition of products, innovative packaging, labeling and FSSAI licensing. RSETI Budgam broadly covered aspects like importance of skill building among youth, entrepreneurship development and various govt sponsored bank schemes whereas underscoring a paradigm shift in agriculture from sustenance to profitability, Dr. Bhinish Shaker (Senior Scientist, KVK Budgam) encouraged the trainees to explore opportunities in the realm of processed fruits and vegetables for better monetary returns. The women were also imparted training on making of pickles, jams preservation of vegetables, value addition of walnuts and almonds.

bmg

**Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan**  
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Imaad Ahmad Bhat S/o Mohammad Afroz Bhat R/o Palhullan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 23-07-2020 occurred at SDH Pattan

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class  
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

**Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan**  
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Aabid Bilal S/o Bilal Ahmad Bhat R/o Malpora Burn Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 06-09-2008 occurred at Home

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class  
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

**Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan**  
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Mehbooba Parveen D/o Gulam Ahmad Mir R/o Hanjiwera Bala Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 01-01-1969 occurred at Home

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class  
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

**Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan**  
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Faisal Zahoor S/o Zahoor Ahmad Bhat R/o Malpora Burn Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 17-09-2010 occurred at Home

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class  
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

**Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan**  
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Muazim Maqsood S/o Mohammad Maqsood Miya R/o Mian Mohalla Pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 08-01-2002 occurred at Home

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class  
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

Government of Jammu & Kashmir  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION ANANTNAG**  
 NITN0840F R&B/Anantnag/2024-25/E-TENDERING/9859-68 DATED 23-12-2024

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt.CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

| S.No | Name of Work  | Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)   | Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs) | Earnest Money (In Rs) | Time of Completion | Major Head of Account | Class of Contractor     |
|------|---|---|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1.   | Construction of Link Road at Danter.  | 2.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 1.70 + (18% GST Amount 0.30) | 200                    | 4000/-                | 15 Days            | M & R 3054            | DEE Class & MSME's Only |
| 2.   | Repair and Renovation of Quarter No. 01 of 24 set building at Housing Colony Khanabal.                | 3.80 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 3.22 + (18% GST Amount 0.58) | 200                    | 7600/-                | 15 Days            | M & R 2216 Housing    | DEE Class & MSME's Only |
| 3.   | Construction of Covered drain and wall at DC Colony Anantnag.   | 3.50 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.97 + (18% GST Amount 0.53) | 200                    | 7000/-                | 15 Days            | M & R 3054            | DEE Class & MSME's Only |
| 4.   | P/L of WBM Gr 2nd & R/wall on Nadi Canal (Balance Portion).   | 3.50 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.97 + (18% GST Amount 0.53) | 200                    | 7000/-                | 15 Days            | M & R 3054            | DEE Class & MSME's Only |
| 5.   | Development of Link Road upto metallic level at Pubhugh.  | 4.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 3.39 + (18% GST Amount 0.61) | 200                    | 8000/-                | 20 Days            | M & R 3054            | DEE Class & MSME's Only |
| 6.   | Construction of Cement Concrete Drain on Pushwara Road.   | 3.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.54 + (18% GST Amount 0.46) | 200                    | 6000/-                | 15 Days            | M & R 3054            | DEE Class & MSME's Only |
| 7.   | Construction of Drain and Edge wall from Middle School to Graveyard at Najigund Dabruna Utresoo Road. | 4.50 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 3.81 + (18% GST Amount 0.69) | 200                    | 9000/-                | 20 Days            | M & R 3054            | DEE Class & MSME's Only |
| 8.   | Construction of Cement Concrete Drain on Dugga Pora Road.   | 2.00 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 1.70 + (18% GST Amount 0.30) | 200                    | 4000/-                | 15 Days            | M & R 3054            | DEE Class & MSME's Only |
| 9.   | Construction of Drain from H/o Javid Ah Nanda to H/o Ghulam Nanda at Nandapora Nathpora road.         | 1.75 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 1.48 + (18% GST Amount 0.27) | 200                    | 3500/-                | 15 Days            | M & R 3054            | DEE Class & MSME's Only |

Project Authority: R&B Department South Kashmir Anantnag.  
 Position of Authorization: Accorded Vide Order No. ARD/SK/29, Dated 26.11.2024.  
 Position of TS: 1. Accorded Vide Order No. SEA(R&B) 60 of 2024-25, Dated 20.12.2024.  
 2. Accorded Vide Order No. EE/TS/3054-M&R/01/2024-25, Dated 14.12.2024.

The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, 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 as per schedule of dates given below:

| S.No. | Particulars                               | Dated   |
|-------|---|---|
| 1     | Date of issue of Tender Notice            | 23-12-2024  |
| 2     | Period of Downloading of bidder documents | From 24-12-2024 (09:00AM) To 30-12-2024 (04:30PM) |
| 3     | Bid submission Start Date                 | From 24-12-2024 (09:00AM)                         |
| 4     | Bid Submission End Date                   | To 30-12-2024 (04:30PM)                           |
| 5     | Date and time of opening of bid (online)  | 31-12-2024 (11:00AM)                              |

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / receipt (Under MH- 0059 PWD) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Anantnag (Tender Inviting Authority) (NIT No. Name of Work/Item No. to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt) (Refer Govt. order No. O.M No. A/24 (2017)-651 Dt 07-06-2018 (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and EMD (2% of advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Anantnag (Tender receiving Authority). (The Date of EMD (CDR/FDR/BG) should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date and validity of EMD at the time of opening of Bids shall be in period of 45 Days beyond Bid Validity of 120 Days)

2. All the Bidders have to submit Earnest Money/Bid Security (EMD@2% of Advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG. Non submission of Earnest Money/Bid Security shall render the bidder as Non-responsive.

3. Note: a. MSME's are required to pay only 50% of Tender Document Cost Rs 500/- whichever is lower. b. MSME's are required to pay only 50% of the amount of EMD/ Bid Security or Rs 5000/- whichever is lower

4. The 1st lowest responsive (Successful) Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Anantnag (Tender receiving authority) within 03 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released 60 days after successful completion of Defect Liability Period (DLP) of the work. The date of Performance Security (CDR/FDR/BG) should be after the date of issuance of letter/LOI to deposit the performance security. Failure to produce Performance Security shall render the LI as non-responsive and case for debaring of the Contractor to be forwarded to Higher Authorities for a period of 01 Year.

5. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD@2% of Advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG of the successful Bidder shall be released after receiving Performance security @5% of the allotted cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG and same shall be released 60 Days after successful completion of Defect Liability Period (DLP) of the work.

6. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site 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 Anantnag

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

8. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

a. 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 to acquaint bid submission process.

b. 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 vendors.

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

d. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

e. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid.

f. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents including tender document fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid.

Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

9. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.

10. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in the shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Anantnag (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Anantnag must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The Original Treasury Challan (Cost of Tender Document), EMD and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of the Contract.

11. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

12. Price escalation and taxes: The %age quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees, shall be deemed to include price escalation upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

13. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

14. All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

(Er Syed Ishfaq Ahmad)  
 Executive Engineer,  
 R&B Division Anantnag

DIPK-10061/24

dated: 26-12-2024

Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION SUMBAL**

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS  
 FRESH NIT No.65 of 2024-25/R&B Division Sumbal  
 (Single Cover System)

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on percentage 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  | Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs) | Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees) | Earnest Money (In Rupees) | Time of Completion | M.H of Account | Class of Contractor |
|------|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1    | Construction of Elementary boundary wall at Govt. Middle School Bathipora Naidkhai.     | 7.60                    | 300/-                      | 15200/-                   | 30 Days            | PAB 2023-24    | CEE/ DEE            |
| 2    | Construction of Elementary boundary wall at Govt. Middle School Bunpora Naidkhai.       | 7.60                    | 300/-                      | 15200/-                   | 30 Days            | PAB 2023-24    | CEE/ DEE            |
| 3    | Construction of Elementary boundary wall at Govt. Middle School Gulabwari Naidkhai      | 7.60                    | 300/-                      | 15200/-                   | 30 Days            | PAB 2023-24    | CEE/ DEE            |
| 4    | Construction of Elementary boundary wall at Govt. Middle School Muqdam Mohalla Vijpora. | 7.60                    | 300/-                      | 15200/-                   | 30 Days            | PAB 2023-24    | CEE/ DEE            |
| 5    | Construction of Elementary boundary wall at Govt. Middle School Markundal Naidkhai.     | 7.60                    | 300/-                      | 15200/-                   | 30 Days            | PAB 2023-24    | CEE/ DEE            |

Position of AA/TS: - Available

1. 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 as per schedule of dates given below:-

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Date of Issue of Tender Notice             | 26-12-2024 from 4.00P.M  |
| 2 | Period of downloading of bidding documents | 26-12-2024 from 4.00P.M  |
| 3 | Bid submission Start Date                  | 26-12-2024 upto 4.00P.M  |
| 4 | Bid Submission End Date                    | 03-01-2025 upto 4.00 P.M.  |
| 5 | Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)    | 04-01-2025 at 11.00 A.M in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sumbal. |

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in the shape of Treasury Receipt/e-Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sumbal. (The Date of Treasury Challan and CDR must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End Date.

Any deviation shall render the bidder as Non-responsive.

3. The successful Bidder has to produce Performance Security Deposit @5% of contract value in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 02 days after opening of Bids, which shall be released after successful completion of work with DLP. This will replace the EMD @ 2% of the Advertised cost uploaded by the Bidder.

4. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site 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 Sumbal (tender receiving authority).

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

6. For drawing of agreement of the contract and memorandum of an agreement relating to sake of bill of exchange one rupee for Rs.10,000/- or part thereof shall have to be realized/deposited by the Contractor at his own to revenue Head of Acctts.0030/ Stamps of Deputy Commissioner Stamps J&K UT.

7. The Bidder emerging as 1st Lowest (Successful Bidder) has to complete the work & if he fails in completion of the work allotted to him, the bill deposited, unpaid work done and the EMD submitted by him shall be forfeited & the Agency shall be debarred to participate in the future tenders of this Division for one year.

No. R&B/Sbl/24/7438-44.  
 DIPK-10105/24 Dated:-26-12-2024.

Sd./ Sd./ Sd./  
 Camp Clerk Head Draftsman T.O

Sd./  
 Executive Engineer  
 R&B Division Sumbal





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## BJP Got Over Rs 2,600 Cr, Congress Rs 281 Cr Donations: EC

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The ruling BJP received contributions of over Rs 2,604.74 crore during 2023-24 while the opposition Congress got Rs 281.38 crore in its kitty, according to contribution reports of the two parties put in public domain by the Election Commission (EC).

The donations listed in the reports were received till March 31, 2024 ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. The BJP had declared donations worth over Rs 740 crore ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, while the Congress had claimed to have received over Rs 146 crore in 2018-19.

During 2023-24, while the BJP received over Rs 723 crore worth of donations from Prudent Electoral Trust, it also got over Rs 127 crore from Triumph Electoral Trust and over Rs 17 lakh from Einzgartig Electoral Trust.

The Congress got over Rs 150 crore from the Prudent Electoral Trust, which was the sole trust donor to the party.

Interestingly, the Congress received multiple donations of Rs 1.38 lakh including those from top leaders including Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, K C Venugopal and Digvijaya Singh, among others.

Multiple donations were

made to the Congress under the heading "Happy Birthday to our leader--JKB".

The contributions declared by the BJP and the Congress do not include the donations received through electoral bonds as these have to be declared in the party's annual audit reports and not contribution statements.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is also a recognised national party, received contributions of over Rs 11.06 crore during the fiscal.

Another recognised national party, Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), received donations worth over Rs 7.64 crore.

National People's Party (NPP), which is the only recognised national party from the North East, got over Rs 14.85 lakh in its kitty.

The BJP was also a major beneficiary of electoral bonds purchased by big corporate groups like Vedanta, Bharti Airtel, Muthoot, Baja Auto, Jindal group and TVS Motors.

The party also received Rs 3 crore through multiple donations from Future Gaming and Hotel Services Pvt Ltd owned by Santiago Martin, also known as the 'Lottery King' of India. He is under scanner of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Income Tax (IT) department for alleged money laundering.

## Congress Charts 2025 Roadmap at CWC Meet

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting named "Nav Satyagraha Baithak" began here on Thursday as the party marks the 100th anniversary of its Belgaum session that was presided over by Mahatma Gandhi and chalks out a plan for

Jairam Ramesh and KC Venugopal, among others, attended the "historic" meeting.

A controversy has erupted over the alleged misrepresentation of India's map on the posters displayed by the party to commemorate the centenary of the 1924 Congress session, with BJP dubbing it as "vote bank" politics.



the political and electoral challenges in 2025.

Top Congress leaders, including party chief Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi, marched to the venue of the extended CWC meeting here.

The meeting, steeped in historical contexts, began at the same venue where Mahatma Gandhi had assumed the presidency of the party 100 years ago.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, Congress general secretaries

With new highs in 2024, public sector dominates defence production'

The Congress has said BJP is severely unnerved and peeved by events to celebrate 100 years of Mahatma Gandhi taking the reins of the grand old party and asked the ruling party at the Centre to stop making petty excuses.

Earlier, the Congress said it will re-dedicate itself to protect, preserve and promote Mahatma Gandhi's legacy, which is facing a "systematic assault by the ideological brotherhood that fought him bitterly".



## Israel Hits Broadcast Van Killing Five Palestinian Journalists In Gaza

Agencies

Jerusalem: Israel has targeted a broadcast van close to a hospital in central Gaza, killing at least five journalists, according to Palestinian authorities and media reports.

The journalists from the al-Quds Today channel were covering events near al-Awda Hospital, located in the Nuseirat refugee camp, when their broadcasting van was hit by an Israeli air strike, Al Jazeera's Anas al-Sharif reported early on Thursday morning.

Footage from the scene circulating on social media shows a vehicle engulfed in flames.

A screenshot taken from a video of the white-coloured van shows the word "press" in large red lettering across the back of the vehicle.

The deceased journalists have been named as Fadi Hassouna, Ibrahim al-Sheikh Ali, Mohammed al-Ladah, Faisal Abu al-Qumsan and Ayman al-Jadi.

Al Jazeera's al-Sharif said that Ayman al-Jadi had been waiting for his wife in front of the hospital while she was in labour to give birth to their first child.

Civil defence teams retrieved the bodies of the victims and extinguished a fire at the scene, the Quds News

Network said.

Israel's military said it had carried out a "targeted" attack against a vehicle carrying members of Islamic Jihad and that it would continue to take action against "terrorist organisations" in Gaza.

"Prior to the attack, many steps were taken to reduce the chance of harming civilians, including the use of precision weapons, aerial ob-

precedented massacre".

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said this month that at least 141 journalists have been killed in Gaza, calling on the international community to hold Israel accountable for its attacks against the media.

CPJ said on Thursday that it was "devastated" by reports of the five journalists killed inside their broadcast-

**“Prior to the attack, many steps were taken to reduce the chance of harming civilians, including the use of precision weapons, aerial observations, and additional intelligence information**

servations, and additional intelligence information," the military said in a post on X.

Israel, which has not allowed foreign journalists to enter the Gaza Strip except on military embeds, has been condemned by several press freedom organisations, which now rate the Strip as the most dangerous part of the world for reporting.

Earlier this month, Paris-based Reporters Without Borders said more than 145 journalists had been killed by the Israeli army in Gaza since the start of the war in October 2023, condemning the high death toll as an "un-

ing vehicle. "Journalists are civilians and must always be protected," it said on X.

The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate last week reported a higher death toll, stating that more than 190 journalists had been killed and at least 400 injured since the start of Israel's war on Gaza.

The syndicate condemned the "heinous attack" and called for "international protection" for journalists in Gaza.

Israel also banned Al Jazeera from its territory and accused six of its Gaza reporters of being members of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

## Far-Right Israeli Minister Ben-Gvir Again Storms Al-Aqsa Mosque

Agencies

Jerusalem: In an X post on Thursday, the extremist minister said he had prayed at the complex for Israeli forces and captives, as well as what he called "a total victory" in the regime's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip.

Ben Gvir also posted a photo of himself being protected by armed soldiers as he entered the holy Muslim site.

This was the minister's fifth visit to the compound since he joined Israeli prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet in 2022.

Israeli lawmaker Mansour Abbas blasted Ben-Gvir

for "desecrating the sanctity" of al-Aqsa Mosque and trying to "drag the Arab citizens of Israel into a confrontation" with the regime.

Abbas, who is the chairman of the Ra'am party, also said Netanyahu bears responsibility for authorizing the provocative visit.

Non-Muslim worship at the compound is prohibited according to an agreement between Israel and Jordan following the regime's seizure of East al-Quds in 1967.

Ben-Gvir had previously said that if he could, he would build a synagogue on the al-Aqsa Mosque complex.

The UN condemns the

latest remarks by far-right Israeli minister Itamar Ben-Gvir about the al-Aqsa Mosque compound as "highly counterproductive."

Thursday's intrusion takes place at a time, when the occupying regime keeps its bloody war machine running in the Gaza Strip.

Israel has killed at least 45,361 Palestinians in its Gaza onslaught since early October 2023.

The barbarous campaign began after the Gaza-based Palestinian resistance movement Hamas launched an unprecedented military operation into the occupied territories.

## Pakistani Airstrikes On Afghanistan Killed 46: Taliban

Agencies

Kabul: Bombardment by Pakistani military aircraft in Afghanistan's eastern Paktika province on Tuesday killed at least 46 people, most of whom were children and women, the Afghan Taliban said, adding it would retaliate.

Six people were also injured in the bombing at four locations in Afghanistan, deputy spokesman Hamdullah Firat said on Wednesday.

Pakistani government and military officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Afghanistan's foreign office

of National Defence, said in a statement. "The Islamic Emirate will not leave this cowardly act unanswered."

A Pakistani official with knowledge of the matter, but declining to be named, told Reuters Pakistan had carried out airstrikes against a camp of the Pakistani Taliban (TTP) Islamist militant group.

TTP pledges allegiance to, and gets its name from the Afghan Taliban, but is not directly a part of the group that rules Afghanistan. Its stated aim is to impose Islamic religious law in Pakistan, as the Taliban has done in Afghanistan.



said it had summoned Pakistan's head of mission in Kabul to deliver a formal protest note to Islamabad over the bombing by Pakistani military aircraft, warning the diplomat of consequences of such actions.

"Afghanistan considers this brutal act a blatant violation of all international principles and an obvious act of aggression," Enayatullah Khowrazmi, a spokesman for the Ministry

A major TTP attack in Pakistan's South Waziristan area, which borders the location of the alleged camp targeted by Pakistani aircraft, killed 16 Pakistani security personnel on Saturday.

Afghanistan's defence ministry identified those killed in Pakistan's bombardment as "mostly Waziristani refugees" - indicating that they were from Pakistan's Waziristan territory.

## Structures In Mehrauli Park Bear Religious Significance, ASI tells SC



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has told the Supreme Court that two structures inside the Mehrauli Archaeological Park bear religious significance as Muslim devotees visit daily to the Ashiq Allah Dargah and Chillagah of Baba Farid, the revered 13th century Sufi saint.

In a report submitted before the top court, the ASI said an inscription on the tomb of Shaikh Shahibuddin (Ashiq Allah) says it was constructed in the year 1317 AD.

"The structural modifications and alterations for the sake of restoration and conservation

have impacted the historicity of the place," ASI said, adding that the tomb was close to the citadel of Prithviraj Chauhan and "falls within the regulated zone of 200 m according to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act".

It said any repair, renovation or construction work was to be conducted with prior permission of competent authority. "Both structures are frequently visited. Devotees light lamps at the Ashiq Dargah for fulfillment of wishes. They visit Chillagah to get rid of evil spirits and bad omen. The place is also associated with the religious sentiment and faith of a particular religious community," the report said.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Author Bapsi Sidhwa passes away in US at 86

Celebrated novelist and pioneer of South Asian literature Bapsi Sidhwa, best known for her iconic novel 'Ice Candy Man', passed away on Wednesday at the age of 86 in Houston, US, her family said.

Her brother, Feroze Bhandara, announced that memorial ceremonies would be held over three days, followed by her last rites in Houston.

Born on August 11, 1938, in Karachi to a prominent Parsi family, Sidhwa moved to Lahore shortly after her birth, where she spent much of her life.

She is regarded as one of Pakistan's most influential writers, with her works gaining global acclaim for their vivid depictions of history and culture.

Her novel 'Ice Candy Man' — later adapted into the critically acclaimed film 'Earth' by Indian-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta — captured the horrors of the 1947 Partition, a period Sidhwa personally witnessed as a child.

## Over 70 Hours On, Rescue Efforts Continue For Girl Trapped In Borewell In Rajasthan

Three-year-old Chetna has been stuck inside a narrow 150 feet deep borewell for over 70 hours as the rescue operations were still underway on Thursday to save the girl.

Worried about her daughter's condition, Dholi Devi has not eaten anything since the tragic accident on Monday.

Chetna fell into the borewell while playing in the agriculture farm of her father in Badiyali Dhani under Sarund police station of Kotputli-Behror district.

With each passing moment, the hope for the girl being well is diminishing as the rescue team was not able to supply any food or water to Chetna.

Dholi Devi and others are constantly praying for the well being of Chetna amid the non-stop rescue operation by NDRF and SDRF teams, assisted by the local police and administration.

Initially, efforts were made to pull the girl out of the borewell with the help of a ring but all attempts failed.

After two days of repeated attempts that fetched no results, a piling was brought to the spot on Wednesday morning and a pit parallel to the borewell was dug.

"... Now a horizontal tunnel will be made through which the experts will reach the girl," Sarund SHO Mohammad Imran said.

He said all possible efforts were made to pull out the girl but all hard work went in vain as the borewell is narrow and the technique could not deliver results.

A team of doctors with an ambulance are at the spot. "The rescue operation is likely to conclude today," the SHO said.

Kotputli-Behror District Collector Kalpana Agarwal reached the village late Wednesday night to take stock of the situation.

She said that the rescue operation had been constantly going on. A lot of preparations had to be done to bring the piling machine to the farm.

## 'Gave birth to son 'Tsunami' in snake-infested jungle'



Namita Roy was 26 when she gave birth to her son, 'Tsunami', in a snake-infested jungle where she and her family took shelter after deadly waves triggered by a massive earthquake devoured her home in Hut Bay Island in Andaman and Nicobar on this day in 2004.

Twenty years later, she remembers the day with a shudder. "I don't want to recall that dark

day. I was pregnant and busy with daily chores. Suddenly, I noticed an eerie silence and was shocked to witness the sea receding miles from our shore. We also noticed zugunrue in birds," she told PTI.

"Seconds later, there was a scary surruration sound and we saw a huge wall of sea waves gushing towards Hut Bay Island followed by strong tremors. I saw people screaming and running towards

a hillock. I had a panic attack and fainted.

"Hours later, I regained consciousness and saw myself among thousands of locals deep inside a hilly jungle. I was relieved to see my husband and my elder son. Most parts of our island were devoured by the monstrous waves. Almost all the properties were damaged," a teary-eyed Roy said.

She now lives in West Bengal's Hooghly district with her sons Saunrabh and Tsunami after her husband Laxminarayana died during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"At 11.49 pm, I had labour pain but there was no doctor around. I lay on a boulder and cried for help. My husband tried his best but could not get any medical help. Then he pleaded with some women who had also taken shelter inside the jungle. With their help, I gave birth to Tsunami amid an extremely challenging situation...the jungle was infested with snakes," Roy said.







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### KO VIEW

## Deep Freeze

Winter's icy grip has tightened across Kashmir, with night temperatures dropping to staggering lows. Srinagar, the summer capital, has been shivering at upwards of -5 degrees Celsius over the past week. On December 21, temperature plummeted to -8.5 degree Celsius, marking the coldest night of the season so far. However, amidst this bone-chilling cold, a different kind of chill persists—an intermittent power supply that's causing significant inconvenience to the residents.

While the mercury continues its downward descent, the power situation seems to be following a similar trend. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, currently stationed in the valley to personally oversee crisis management during this challenging period, stressed the importance of taking effective measures to tackle power shortages and ensure essential services for residents. The CM outlined a comprehensive plan to manage peak electricity demand and directed officials to not just prioritize efficiency in maintaining a stable power supply during the harsh winter, but also strictly adhere to the scheduled curtailment plan. However, the disconnect between promise and implementation is evident in the accounts of residents facing ongoing power disruptions despite the installation of smart meters. And it is time that the newly elected government ensures that its decisions are also followed on the ground.

That said, the record cold this winter has taken people by surprise. Last winter, the Valley witnessed an unusually warm winter from November through January - including the 40-day harshest period of Chillai Kalan - marked by an absence of snowfall and day temperatures hovering above 15 degrees Celsius, comparable to New Delhi. This uncharacteristic warmth raised alarms. This, in turn, triggered concerns about the depletion of glaciers, which could impact water-bodies and pose challenges for agriculture and hydropower facilities. But thankfully, apart from erratic heat waves, summer passed off without any serious implications for agriculture. As one of India's coldest places experiencing a deviation from its winter norms, Kashmir's situation highlights the broader impact of climate change on diverse regions.

This winter is the opposite of the last. Temperature has dropped to its lowest lows but snowfall has so far been very inadequate. Only higher reaches have witnessed some snow while most of the plains including Srinagar are waiting for the winter's gift. According to predictions of the meteorological department, the cold conditions are only going to exacerbate going forward and the erratic power supply will make life further difficult for people. As temperatures drop and the demand for electricity soars, the government and the power department must collaborate to find sustainable solutions to this lingering issue.

### OTHER OPINION

## GIFTED VERSES

S.Sarwar.M

November 2024 gifted us a book titled 'Ba Wanith Zaane Kas'—the poetic collection of Naseem Shafaie; widely known Literary Personality of J&K; lone female recipient of the coveted 'Sahitya Akademi Award'. Prior to that, she has been awarded 'The Kashmir Woman Leadership Award' & 'The Bakhshi Memorial Award'; given in recognition of her contribution to literature. Besides being a teacher Naseem Shafaie is a voice in the academic arena and she continues to be on advisory boards, even after her retirement.

Fairly known is that Naseem Shafaie is the author of two poetic collections: 'Darie-Che-Mutsrith & Na Aks Na Tsai'. Third/recent one is 'Ba Wanith Zaane Kas'.

#### Writers Have Remarkd About Her Being

"the Essence of Kashmir ...She lives on in every word she Pens. Evocative cadence of her Words... her Unfiltered Expression, make Naseem Shafaie, the Beacon of Creative Expression ...a Guiding Light... a Transformative Force In Kashmiri Literature."

Reading Shafaie one cannot but recall Sappho and Emily Dickinson with whom she shares certain things. All three use vivid images marked by immediacy to articulate their emotions and ideas. Apart from this, they offer a feminist perspective on the world.

Till date no voice has emerged in Kashmir that matches her feminine-sensibilities.

S.Sarwar.Malik is the author of the book, titled CRIES OF THE THORN BIRD- English Poetry Book of 2024; Released on 14 Sep 2024; for Readers World-wide with ISBN: 9789334123265; available on Amazon, Flipkart & Pothi.com



## Modern Housing Architecture and Chilly Winters in Kashmir

Abid Hussain Rather

A house or shelter is one of the basic needs of human beings; providing safety, security, and a space for personal and communal life. It serves as a refuge from environmental elements like heat, cold, rain, and natural disasters, ensuring physical protection and comfort. Beyond its practical purpose of protecting against natural elements, it serves as a foundation for emotional and social well being. The construction and design of shelters are deeply tied to cultural identity, reflecting the traditions, beliefs, and environmental conditions of a community. For instance, indigenous structures such as igloos, mud huts, or stilt houses exhibit resourcefulness and harmony with the local climate and available materials. Additionally, cultural values of a society influence spatial arrangements, decorations, and functionality while a shelter is being constructed in a particular region. Thus, a shelter is not merely a physical structure but a manifestation of cultural heritage and human ingenuity.

When we look at the old traditional house construction style in Kashmir Valley, it reflects a profound harmony between nature, culture and the environment. Our old traditional houses, which were often crafted using locally sourced materials like timber, mud, and stones, blend seamlessly with our valley's natural surroundings. The sloping roofs, designed to withstand heavy snow, and intricately carved wooden panels show the ingenuity and artistic heritage of Kashmiri culture. Such architectural choices ensure thermal insulation, reducing dependence on artificial heating, and highlight an eco-friendly approach. The design and architecture of our old houses was rooted in our cultural values and environmental sustainability; depicting a symbiotic relationship between the people of Kashmir and their unique ecosystem. Their architecture was not only aesthetically pleasing but also meticulously designed to adapt to the region's climatic extremes. In the biting winters, these homes provided warmth through their efficient use of deodar wood and unbaked clay bricks; which used to work as excellent insulators from the scorching heat of summer and biting cold of winter. The sloping roofs allowed heavy snow to slide off effortlessly, preventing structural damage. The use of natural materials such as mud, stone, and timber ensured that the homes were eco-friendly and blended harmoniously with their surroundings. In our old houses, the inner rooms were often adorned with walnut woodwork. Since this wood is soft, it allows for exquisite carving. This craftsmanship reflected the aesthetic taste of the Kashmiris. All things considered, it can be said that our old traditional homes were more than mere shelters; they were cultural artefacts, embodying centuries of wisdom, craftsmanship, and environmental adaptation.

From the last one or two decades, the construction landscape of Kashmir has undergone a dramatic transformation. The advent of concrete and steel structures with flat roofs, large glass windows, and minimalist designs reflects

“  
The need for modernization is undeniable, but it must not come at the expense of cultural identity and environmental harmony. To preserve Kashmir's architectural heritage, it is essential to rethink our approach to construction and ensure that future developments are sustainable and reflective of the region's unique culture and environment

a deep taste for modernity. This shift is driven by several factors, including increased access to technology, the aspiration to emulate urban lifestyles, and the perception that traditional designs are outdated or inefficient. Unfortunately, this trend has come at a significant cost. Modern houses in Kashmir often ignore the region's climatic requirements. Flat roofs, for example, are unsuitable for the heavy snowfall that is a hallmark of winters in Kashmir, leading to water leakage and structural vulnerabilities. The excessive use of glass, iron and steel contributes to poor thermal insulation, making these homes harder to heat during the winter months and less energy efficient overall. The severe cold climatic conditions of Kashmir valley demand architectural solutions that respect its unique conditions. Traditional houses, with their thick mud walls and small windows, were naturally insulated and reduced the reliance on external heating systems. Modern houses, in contrast, require extensive energy consumption (excessive use of electric room heaters, LPG heaters, Hamaam system etc.) to maintain warmth during winters. Besides the environmental implications, the loss of traditional architecture

represents a profound erosion of cultural identity. Houses are often seen as extensions of one's heritage, and in our Kashmir valley, the architecture was a visual reminder of the valley's unique history and traditions. The complex designs of Khatamband ceilings and Pinjrakari windows in our old houses were displaying the skilled craftsmanship passed down through generations. But these elements are now being replaced in modern houses by sterile designs that could belong to any generic cityscape. This architectural shift alienates our younger generations from their cultural roots. With the disappearance of traditional houses, the stories, values, and skills associated with them are also vanishing, creating a cultural void that cannot easily be filled. The traditional architecture of Kashmir not only connected us to the past but also served as a significant defence against earthquakes. It has been observed that during earthquakes, modern concrete houses collapse, while centuries old houses remain intact. The reason is that after the tremors, the traditional structures return to their original position, whereas concrete structures lack the flexibility to do so.

The need for modernization is undeniable, but it must not come at the expense of cultural identity and environmental harmony. To preserve Kashmir's architectural heritage, it is essential to rethink our approach to construction and ensure that future developments are sustainable and reflective of the region's unique culture and environment. We should incorporate elements such as sloping roofs, natural insulation, and intricate woodwork into modern designs while constructing our houses. Further, we must use locally sourced, sustainable materials to reduce the ecological imbalance. It is essential to merge traditional aesthetics with contemporary functionality while designing our houses, such as energy efficient windows with Pinjrakari designs. It is pertinent to mention here that in our valley most individuals in the field of engineering are primarily learning concrete based designs. This approach needs a reconsideration and revision. The government has also not taken significant steps to promote the education and innovation of traditional architecture. The misleading notion of modernity has overshadowed traditional knowledge and sciences. The government and private stakeholders must play a proactive role in promoting architectural policies that respect local traditions. The charisma of modernity is undeniable, but Kashmir must not lose sight of what makes it unique. We must keep in mind that the construction of houses that ignore cultural identity and climatic realities may offer short term convenience, but the long term consequences are far reaching.

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

The author teaches Geography at GDC Kulgam and can be reached at rather1294@gmail.com



Mindful Fridays

## STRENGTHENING BONDS

## The Art of Understanding and Conflict Resolution in Marriage

Wasim Kakroo

Misunderstandings and arguments are often viewed as disruptive forces within marital relationships, yet they possess the potential to fortify and deepen the connection between partners. Contrary to popular belief, when handled constructively, these challenges can serve as catalysts for growth, communication, and intimacy. In this article we discuss the nuances of embracing misunderstandings and arguments within marital relationships, elucidating their transformative power when approached with empathy and understanding.

## Embracing Conflict

Conflict avoidance often stems from a desire to maintain harmony and avoid discomfort within relationships. Yet, it can inadvertently result in unresolved issues simmering beneath the surface. Embracing conflict, however, offers a path to growth. Instead of seeing disagreements as threats, couples can view them as opportunities for understanding and strengthening their bond. By confronting differences openly and respectfully, they lay the groundwork for honest communication and deeper connection. Through this process, couples not only resolve immediate issues but also build resilience and trust, fostering a healthier and more fulfilling relationship in the long run. Embracing conflict may be uncomfortable at times, but the rewards of increased intimacy and understanding make it a worthwhile endeavor.

## Communication Skills

Effective communication serves as the bedrock for nurturing successful relationships. It acts as a shield against misunderstandings that frequently stem from miscommunication or varying perspectives on events. Mastering communication skills becomes imperative in steering through misunderstandings and conflicts adeptly. Key elements like active listening, where one genuinely absorbs and comprehends the partner's message, empathy to understand their emotional state, and the knack for articulating thoughts clearly play pivotal roles in fostering effective com-



munication within marital bonds. Through active listening, partners demonstrate respect and validation for each other's viewpoints, while empathy cultivates understanding and connection. Clear expression ensures that thoughts and feelings are conveyed accurately, reducing the likelihood of misinterpretation. In essence, honing these skills lays the foundation for harmonious and enduring marital relationships.

## Cultivating Empathy

Empathy acts as the vital conduit between partners, enabling comprehension and bonding despite conflicts. Amidst disagreements, individuals often fixate on their own viewpoints, disregarding their partner's emotions and experiences. Nurturing empathy entails consciously contemplating your partner's sentiments, viewpoints, and requirements. Through recognizing and affirming each other's feelings, couples cultivate a more profound connection and intimacy. Rather than solely focusing on proving oneself right, em-

pathy encourages individuals to genuinely listen and understand their partner's perspective. This empathetic approach fosters mutual respect, strengthens emotional bonds, and paves the way for constructive communication, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of the relationship.

## Trust and Resilience

Conflict resolution transcends mere problem-solving; it's a journey toward fortifying trust and resilience in relationships. It demands openness, honesty, and a readiness to confront discomfort. Couples who adeptly navigate disagreements not only find solutions but also deepen their bond. Each instance of overcoming challenges together strengthens their commitment and equips them with resilience for future conflicts. It's not just about reaching an agreement; it's about nurturing the foundation of trust upon which the relationship thrives. Through vulnerability and communication, conflicts become opportunities for growth and deeper

connection. Ultimately, conflict resolution becomes a testament to the strength and endurance of the relationship.

## Growth and Adaptability

Every misunderstanding and argument offers a silver lining, serving as a catalyst for growth and learning within relationships. Through introspection and reflection, couples can discern recurring patterns and unearth underlying issues, paving the way for improvement. Approaching conflicts with a growth mindset fosters adaptability and resilience, essential qualities for navigating the complexities of relationships. Embracing disagreements as opportunities for personal and relational development instills a sense of continuous improvement and evolution. Rather than viewing conflict as a threat, couples can embrace it as a tool for strengthening their bond and deepening their understanding of each other. In this way, every discord becomes a stepping stone towards a stronger, more harmonious relationship.

## The Art of Difficult Conversations

Difficult conversations are crucial for fostering healthy relationships, despite the discomfort they may bring. Evading such discussions only prolongs issues and stifles genuine connection. Mastering these conversations requires empathy, openness, and vulnerability. Establishing a safe environment where both parties feel heard and understood enables couples to navigate concerns and desires effectively. Through transparent dialogue, partners can address underlying tensions constructively, strengthening their bond in the process. Embracing difficult conversations as opportunities for growth fosters mutual trust and understanding, ultimately deepening the connection between individuals. By confronting challenging topics head-on, couples lay the foundation for a resilient and fulfilling relationship built on honesty and mutual respect.

## Establishing Healthy Boundaries

Conflict within relationships can indeed be productive, but maintaining healthy boundaries is paramount to ensure that disagreements lead to growth rather than harm. Couples must establish clear guidelines to navigate arguments constructively. This involves implementing strategies like taking breaks when emotions run high, using "I" statements to express feelings without assigning blame, and refraining from resorting to personal attacks or criticism. By respecting each other's boundaries, couples foster an environment of safety and mutual respect. Such boundaries serve as pillars supporting the foundation of the relationship, allowing for open communication and the resolution of conflicts in a constructive manner. Ultimately, these boundaries help strengthen the bond between partners, promoting understanding and growth within the relationship.

The author is a licensed clinical psychologist (alumni of Govt. Medical College Srinagar) and works as a Child, Adolescent and Family therapist at Centre for Mental Health Services (CMHS) at Rambagh Srinagar. He can be reached at 8825067196

## Understating Stress in Wild Animals

Dr. Mohsin Ali Gazi

Stress has often been described as the state of the animal when it has difficulties to adapt to environmental or physical constraints. Unlike domestic animals, wild animals are exposed to environmental stress, food deprivation, parasite infestation and numerous untreated diseases. In animals, stress is a biological and physiological response to external or internal challenges.

It can be a natural and necessary reaction of an individual to certain stimuli. This stress response is characterized by the activation of the animal's stress system, particularly the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, which controls the release of stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline.

Stress in animals has a variety of causes some of which include environmental stressors like climate changes in temperature, rainfall patterns, extreme weather that can affect the availability of food, water, and shelter and other factors necessary for survival of an animal. Another factor that is mostly experienced in wild animals is acute stress due to presence of predators usually involving fight-or-flight mechanism leading to adrenaline rush causing changes in animal physiology.

One more factor that contributes to animal stress is pollution, including noise, light, chemical pollutants, and plastic waste etc, has become one of the leading causes of stress in wildlife. Noise pollution from traffic, aircraft, or construction, mining etc can disrupt communication, breeding, and feeding behaviors and mating behaviors in animals. Toxic pollutants in the water, air, and soil can also cause physical harm, altering reproductive success and survival rates and affect the overall health of wild animals. Due to scarcity or shortage of food and water or during periods of drought lead to stress due to competition for food with other individuals or species. Additionally human activities such as deforestation, urbanization, or agricultural expansion lead to habitat fragmen-



Kashmir Hangul at Dachigam Wildlife Reserve

tation which again becomes a serious cause of stress in wild animals.

As far as animal physiology is concerned the spread of diseases among wildlife populations or sudden disease outbreak can lead to stress due to the potential for widespread illness and death. Pathogens entering animal body can weaken their immune systems, making them more vulnerable to other stressors leading to serious health hazards. Orphaned, injured or sick, accidental wild animals that fear chance of predation or hunting, easily fall into category of stressed animals through physical

pain and impaired ability to find food for survival. One more commonly occurring factor is interaction of humans with wild animals viz man animal conflicts, hunting, poaching, and the destruction of habitats through urbanization also become a source of stress for wild animals. The presence of humans, especially in areas where animals are not accustomed to human interaction, can lead to altered behaviors, abandonment of animal shelters or territories, also causes overall increase in stress levels affecting animal health. So there is a need for regulating tourism with sustainable tourism practices

that limit human-wildlife interaction can help reduce the stress on animals in popular wildlife reserves and parks.

Now if we observe the impact of the stress on the wild animals it can range from immediate changes in behavior to long-term health problems that affect mental health, physical fitness and overall animal life. Repeated exposure to stress factors can cause the continuous release of stress hormones such as cortisol & adrenaline and can impair the animal's immune systems, leaving them more vulnerable to infections and diseases, digestive problems, respira-

tory diseases and hormonal imbalances, affecting animal's health and well being. In some species, it is observed that stress can suppress reproductive hormone production, leading to reduced fertility or even complete reproductive failure. Additionally, continuous mental stress alters the serotonin and dopamine levels in an animal's brain. This, in turn, can cause repetitive and frequently harmful animal behavior that result in a loss of energy. Stressed animals may show signs of excessive vocalization, decreased appetite, and changes in sleeping patterns, poor grooming habits, hiding away from people or other animals, and aggression.

## Tailpiece

Stress has often been described as the state of the animal when it has difficulties to adapt to environmental or physical constraints. Wild animals are frequently or constantly exposed to stressful stimuli, as they are all either predator or prey. Unlike domestic animals, wild animals are exposed to environmental stress, food deprivation, parasite infestation and numerous untreated diseases. Preserving and restoring natural habitats is one of the most effective ways to reduce stress in wildlife. By reducing habitat fragmentation and protecting ecosystems from human encroachment, deforestations, poaching and hunting, animals can live in environments that meet their physical and behavioral needs, reducing stressors and promoting healthy wildlife. Another thing is reducing or minimizing incidences of man-wildlife conflicts through effective conservation strategies like habitat restoration, proper waste management, creating buffer zones and thus reducing stress. Educating and awareness about the impacts of human activities on wildlife is an important thing necessarily required for conservation and preservation of wildlife.

The author is Veterinary officer, Department of Wildlife Protection Kashmir



# Are We Moral Blank Slates At Birth? A New Study Offers Some Clues

The Conversation

What does a baby know about right and wrong? A foundational finding in moral psychology suggested that even infants have a moral sense, preferring “helpers” over “hinderers” before uttering their first word. Now, nearly 20 years later, a study that tried to replicate these findings calls this result into question.

In the original study, Kiley Hamlin and her colleagues showed a puppet show to six- and ten-month-old babies. During the show, the babies would see a character — which was really just a shape with googly eyes — struggling to reach the top of a hill.

Next, a new character would either help the struggling individual reach the top (acting as a “helper”) or push the character back down to the bottom of the hill (acting as a “hinderer”).

By gauging babies’ behaviour — specifically, watching how their eyes moved during the show and whether they preferred

to hold a specific character after the show ended — it seemed that the infants had basic moral preferences. Indeed, in the first study, 88% of the ten-month-olds — and 100% of the six-month-olds — chose to reach for the helper.

But psychology, and developmental psychology, in particular, is no stranger to replicability concerns (when it is difficult or impossible to reproduce the results of a scientific study). After all, the original study sampled only a few dozen infants.

This isn’t the fault of the researchers; it’s just really hard to collect data from babies. But what if it was possible to run the same study again — with say, hundreds or even thousands of babies? Would researchers find the same result?

This is the chief aim of ManyBabies, a consortium of developmental psychologists spread around the world. By combining resources across individual research labs, ManyBabies can robustly test findings in developmental science, like Hamlin’s original “helper-hinderer” effect. And as of last month, the results are in.



With a final sample of 567 babies, tested in 37 research labs across five continents, babies did not show evidence of an early-emerging moral sense. Across the ages tested, babies showed no preference for the

helpful character.

Blank slate?

John Locke, an English philosopher argued that the human mind is a “tabula

rasa” or “blank slate”. Everything that we, as humans, know comes from our experiences in the world. So should people take the most recent ManyBabies result as evidence of this? My answer, however underwhelming, is “perhaps”.

This is not the first attempted replication of the helper-hinderer effect (nor is it the first “failure to replicate”). In fact, there have been a number of successful replications. It can be hard to know what underlies differences in results. For example, a previous “failure” seemed to come from the characters’ “googly eyes” not being oriented the right way.

The ManyBabies experiment also had an important change in how the “show” was presented to infants. Rather than a puppet show performed live to baby participants, researchers instead presented a video with digital versions of the characters. This approach has its strengths. For example, ensuring that the exact same presentation occurs across every trial, in every lab. But it could also shift how babies engage with the show and its characters.

**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY SRINAGAR**  
Dated: 04.12.2024  
Present: Ms. Nusrat Ali Hakak

In the case of:  
The J&K Bank Ltd Branch Khanyar through Branch Head Mr. Mr. Shafeeq Hussain Mir. .... Applicant

V/S  
2. Mehboob Ahmed Sheikh  
S/o: Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh  
R/o: Kursoo Rajbagh Srinagar  
..... Non Applicant

In the matter of Substitute service through Publication / Advertisement

Whereas, applicant Bank has filed application before this authority in terms of Section 12-A of Act and Commercial Courts.

Whereas, notice was issued against non-applicant No 02 but services could not be effective due to insufficient / incomplete address.

Whereas, it has been shown to the satisfaction of the undersigned that service of non-applicant No 02 could not be effective in ordinary mode.

Therefore, the non-applicant No 2 namely Mehboob Ahmed & non applicant No \_\_\_\_\_ through the medium of this notice are directed to appear in person or their attorney by or before the next date of hearing i.e. 17.02.2025

Sd/-  
Secretary (Sub Judge)  
District Legal Services Authority Srinagar

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The electricity connection with consumer ID 0204030000156 registered in the name of Mehraj Ud Din Khan R/o Shamswari, Khankah, Srinagar is to be transferred in favour of Syed Faraz Ali S/o Syed Aijaz Hussain R/o Syed Manzil, Shribhat, Srinagar. Objections, if any, to the same must reach concern authority within a week at the most.

bko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have lost all the documents of my vehicle bearing regd no; JK01Q 1477 in Fruit Mandi Parimpora. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if. Anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may contact concerned RTO within seven days. After that no objections shall be entertained.

Farooq Ahmad Bhat  
S/o Gh Mohi-ud-din Bhat  
R/o Qamarwari Srinagar

laa

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I Mohamad Amin Sofi S/o Ghulam Nabi Sofi R/o Saderbal Palhallan have applied for pesticides license if anybody has any objection he/she may contact Plant Protection Officer Lal Mnadi Srinagar within 7 days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

FKO

**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE M/S NASIR AHMAD ADVOCATE AT BUDGAM**

IN THE CASE:  
1. Muzaffar Ahmad Sofi  
2. Mohammad Shafi Sofi Sons of Mohammad Yousuf Sofi  
3. Mohammad Yousuf S/O Gh Ahmad Sofi  
4. Zeba D/O Mohammad Yousuf Sofi  
All Residents of Betabagh Budgam  
Vs  
Public at large

In the matter of:  
Be it known to the public at large/interested persons that the caveators have reason (s) apprehensions (s) to believe that the Non-Caveators may file any suit/petition/ proceedings before the Honble court of jurisdiction against caveator on the grounds of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked up story and may succeed in obtaining some order ex parte order against the caveator and in such eventuality the caveator will be put to be an irreparable loss and inconvenience.

It is prayed before the Honble court that in the event of any petition or other case being filed by any manner of public at large /interested person, no interim order or any protective order be passed without granting the caveator an opportunity of hearing.

M/S Nasir Ahmad  
Advocate at Budgam  
Dated 26-12-2024

mko

**The Jammu and Kashmir State Board Of School Education**  
New Campus Bemina Srinagar  
Notice for General Public

The applicant/ candidate whose photograph is published in this notice and claiming to have lost her qualification certificate/s issued under as per below mentioned details:-  
Roll No: 15298  
Class 10th  
Year & Session 1980- Oct-Nov  
Registration: 6063-CG-1X-79  
Name : Chulam Mohd Mir  
Father's Name: Gh Qadir Mir  
Mother's Name : Mrs Saja  
Date of Birth:- 03-02-1965  
Residenc:- Pandach Gulab Bagh Hazratbal Srinagar

According to the candidate concerned has approach to this office for issuance of Duplicate Qualification /Marks Certificate/s, so before the same is processed and provided to the candidate, under rules, anybody having any objection in this regard, shall bring into the notice of Assistant Secretary of Certificate as well as Assistant Secretary Examination Unit I & III KD within the period of 10 & 7 days respectively, from the date of publication of this notice. (Besides the above referred "Qualification / Marks Certificate/s" bearing No: 1956 be treated as "CANCELLED")  
No: F(Cer is-I-DQC)/B/KD/  
Dated -  
su

Assistant Secretary  
Certificates, KD.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
Tender Notice

Dy. Chief Elect. Engineer/Const., Northern Railway, Jammu for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under Single Packet System for the under noted work:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Tender Notice No.                                    | 17-Elect-C-JAT-HQ-2024   |
| Name of Work   | Internal/External electrification works of IRECON Building and Civil IOW office of Headquarters building at Jammu in connection with USBRL Project.  |
| Approximate Cost of the Work                         | Rs. 37,00,764.87 (Including GST and all other taxes)   |
| Completion Period                                    | 03 Months (Three Months)   |
| Bid Security to be deposited                         | 74,000.00  |
| Sale/availability of tender document on Rly. Website | Tender documents will be available on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 26.12.2024.  |
| Last date/Time of upload of tenders                  | 16.01.2025 upto 15.00 hours. Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS web site.   |
| Date/Time of Opening of Tender                       | 16.01.2025 at 15.00 hrs. (Immediately after close of uploading of tender).   |
| Detailed Tender Notice & Tender document             | Tender Notice is available on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in from 26.12.2024 and the tender document will be available for uploading of offers on IREPS website from 02.01.2025 to 16.01.2025. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tender are given in the tender document. Only e-tenders will be accepted and tenders submitted in any other form will be summarily rejected. The detailed notice also can be seen on Notice Board of the above office. |
| No. 17-Elect-C-JAT-HQ-2024 Dated : 26.12.2024        | 3946/2024  |

**SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

**Office of the Naib Tehsildar Palhallan**  
Executive Magistrate 1st Class  
Application Of Farooq Ahmad Teli & Musrat Manzoor S/D/o Manzoor Ahmad Teli R/o Andergam Pattan for obtaining OBC Certificate for the cast of Teli

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

General Public is hereby informed through this notice that the applicant file is currently under process in the office of undersigned regarding obtaining OBC certificate. According to the field staffs report the applicants are permanent resident of village Andergam Pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla and have been residing here from more than 15 years and has not migrated from the said village the annual family income of the applicant from all sources is Rs /-. Family details of the applicant are give below.

| S. No | Name               | Parentage              | Age | Occupation |
|-------|--------------------|------------------------|-----|------------|
| 1     | Ab Ahad Lone       | Gh Mohd Lone           | 80  | Old Age    |
| 2     | Jana Begum         | W/o Ab Ahad Lone       | 78  | H/W        |
| 3     | Manzoor Ahmad Teli | S/L Ab Ahad            | 50  | Farmer     |
| 4     | Meema Begum        | W/o Manzoor Ahmad Teli | 48  | H/W        |
| 05    | Farooq Ahmad Teli  | S/o --                 | 30  | Student    |
| 06    | Mumtaza Begum      | W/o Farooq Ahmad       | 28  | H/W        |
| 07    | Musrat Manzoor     | D/o Manzoor Ahmad      | 26  | Student    |
| 08    | Nighat Manzoor     | D/o --                 | 24  | --         |

In this connection if any person(s) has any objection(s) he/she can visit the undersigned's office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be considered.

fko Naib Tehsildar

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My name has been wrongly written in my adhaar as Anees Hafeez while my correct name is Mohammad Anees Manhas and my DOB has been wrongly written as 04-03-2002 instead of 02-12-1998. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned Adhaar Centre within 7 days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohammad Anees Manhas  
S/o Abdul Hafeez Manhas  
R/o Deen Mohalla Zawoora Shopian

fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform that the fathers name mentioned in my insurance policy Bearing no. 22269022 with PNB MetLife is Abdul Gani Mir which is wrong and I want the fathers name to be same as mentioned in my Pan card that is Ghulam Sarwar Khan. Anybody having any objection regarding the same, may contact the Insurance Company in period of 3 days. Concerned within the afterwards, No objection shall be entertained.

Mr. Aijaz Sarwar Khan S/O Ghulam Sarwar Khan  
R/O 132 Garden Lane chanapora Srinagar 190015

zbs

**OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL PARADISE PUBLIC SCHOOL**  
Goom Ahmadpora Pattan Baramulla 193401  
Ref.No: PPS/GAP/24/55  
Dated: 26-12-2024

The management committee of Paradise Public School Goom Ahmadpora for the academic Session 2024-25 Is as under

| S. No | Name and Parentage                          | Residence      | Qualification     | Position      |
|-------|---|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 01    | Nazir Ahmad Wani S/o Ali Mohammad Wani      | Goom Ahmadpora | B Tech. B.LCS CIT | Chairman      |
| 02    | Tanyveera Hussain S/O Mohd Ibrahim          | -DO-           | M.A Bed           | Secretary     |
| 03    | Akhter Abass S/o Late Ali Mohammad Sheikh   | -DO-           | BA                | Member        |
| 04    | Mohammad Shafa Jan S/O Mohammad Maqsood Jan | -DO-           | M.A               | --            |
| 5     | Mohammad Iqbal MIR s/O Mohd Yousuf Mir      | -DO-           | B.A               | Member Parent |
| 6     | Mushtaq Ahmad Banka S/o Sadiq Ali Banka     | -DO-           | MA Bed            | Member parent |
| 7     | Mohammad Afzal S/o Ali Mohd Ganaie          | -DO-           | i2th              | Member Parent |

fko  
Principal Paradise Public School  
Goom Ahmadpora Pattan

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, TRANSMISSION LINE MAINTENANCE DIVISION-III, Amargarh, Sopore**  
Tele No: 01954-225010 Fax: 01954-225010, E-mail: tlmd3rdamargarh@gmail.com

EXTENSION NOTICE-III  
E-NIT No-EE/TLMDA/ 05 of 2024  
DATED: 02-11-2024

Due to poor response the dates for E-bidding for above referred E-NIT are extended as under, all the terms and conditions will remain the same.  
The Standard Bidding Document is available on website http://jktenders.gov.in.  
The information regarding schedule of downloading of the tender document and submission of dates thereof is as per the table given below:

| Sl. No | Description   | Date & Time   |
|--------|---|---|
| 1      | Downloading of bidding documents (End)                | 04.01.2025 (4:00 pm)                                |
| 2      | Online Techno-Commercial e-Bid opening date And time. | 06.01.2025 (02:30 Pm)                               |
| 3      | Venue of opening of Techno-Commercial Bids            | Office of the Executive Engineer, TLMD-III Amargarh |

• Only the bidders possessing the qualifying criteria as mentioned in the SBD should participate in the bidding process.  
• Clarifications can also be sought from the office of the under signed on E-mail tlmd3rdamargarh@gmail.com or fax 01954-225010.  
• Before participating in the bids, the bidder shall acquaint himself with the site of work and local conditions.  
• The corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.

---SD---  
Executive Engineer  
JKPTCL, TLMD-III,  
Amargarh Sopore

No: EE/TLMDA/2186-87  
DIPK-NB-2974/24 Dated: 26-12-2024

**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY SRINAGAR**  
Dated: 17.10.2024  
Present: Ms. Nusrat Ali Hakak

In the case of:  
The J&K Bank Ltd B/u: Habbak Crossing Srinagar Through Attorney Holder Javeed Ahmad Sheera ..... Applicant

V/S  
2. M/S Sabahat D/o: Mohd Ayoub Teli  
R/o: Teli Mohalla Nigeen Check Bagh, Hazratbal, Srinagar -190006  
Mobile No. 6006020489  
(Borrower)

In the matter of Substitute service through Publication / Advertisement

Whereas, applicant Bank has filed application before this authority in terms of Section 12-A of Act and Commercial Courts.

Whereas, notice was issued against non-applicant but services could not be effective due to insufficient / incomplete address.

Whereas, it has been shown to the satisfaction of the undersigned that service of non-applicant could not be effective in ordinary mode.

Therefore, the non-applicant through the medium of this notice are directed to appear in person or their attorney by or before the next date of hearing i.e. 03.02.2025

Sd/-  
Secretary (Sub Judge)  
District Legal Services Authority Srinagar



## Gulmarg Set For Grand New Year Celebrations Despite Lack Of Snow



Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The iconic Gulmarg ski resort, often referred to as the "Jewel of Kashmir," is gearing up for a grand New Year celebration despite the unusual absence of snow this season. Tariq Hussain Naik, CEO of the Gulmarg Development Authority, assured visitors that alternative arrangements have been made to ensure a vibrant and memorable holiday experience. Tariq Hussain told news agency KINS that while the lack of snow has impacted skiing and other snow-related activities, it hasn't deterred the authorities from creating an unforgettable experience for guests. "Gulmarg is ready to welcome visitors with a diverse lineup of events and activities to celebrate the New Year in style," he said. The CEO said that this year's

New Year celebration in Gulmarg promises to be one of the most extravagant to date.

He said that extra accommodations, improved transport services, and round-the-clock medical support have been arranged for the convenience of visitors.

"Strict safety measures are also in place to ensure a secure environment for tourists".

Tariq added, "We want to ensure that every visitor has a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable experience in Gulmarg. The lack of snow is unfortunate, but it has also given us an opportunity to showcase Gulmarg's potential as a year-round destination beyond just skiing."

The New Year celebrations are expected to give a significant boost to the local economy, benefiting hoteliers, shopkeepers, and transport operators in Kashmir (KINS)

### Good Governance Day

## J&K Resident Commission Holds Medical Camp



Observer News Service

**NEW DELHI:** A free medical health camp was held today in the Resident Commission's office to mark Good Governance Day.

The camp was inaugurated by the Principal Resident Commissioner, Dr Rashmi Singh.

About 150 people were screened, examined and given

medical consultation by Dr Rekha Jad (Gynecologist) and Dr Jyotsna Mukhi (Ayush). Besides, free medicines were also provided to the patients.

Addressing the health concerns, the doctors also imparted education about adopting healthy life style and stress management. They emphasised the role of good health for a productive and fulfilling life.

## Career Of Students Important Amongst All: MP Ruhullah

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The parliamentarian from Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency, Aga Ruhullah Mehdi on Thursday said that nobody is important before the career of the students, who staged a protest outside Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's residence a few days back.



Ruhullah while replying to a query, told the media persons that the reservation, students and their career is more important than others including him.

Asked about Apni Party President Syed Altaf Bukhari's statement over his protest, Ruhullah said everyone is not planted like him. "He believes he is planted and everyone is planted," he said.

Moreover, he said a DISHA meeting was held to review the progress of centrally sponsored schemes in Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency.

However, he added that some of the MLAs present in the Valley attended the meeting while some others, who were in Jammu couldn't attend—(KNO)

## CM Omar Inaugurates Amphitheater, Light & Sound At Bagh-E-Bahu

Strives To Establish Jammu As A Prominent Tourist Destination

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, while inaugurating the open-air amphitheater at Bagh-e-Bahu this evening, expressed his vision of transforming Jammu into a tourist destination of distinction.

Highlighting Jammu's potential, the Chief Minister emphasized the significance of leveraging the region's prominent pilgrimage sites, particularly the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine, which draws over a crore visitors annually. "If we can encourage even 15% of these pilgrims to explore other attractions in Jammu, we could see an influx of 15 lakh tourists—a number comparable to Kashmir's peak tourism years," he remarked.

The event was attended by Minister Satish Sharma, DDC Jammu Bharat Bhushan, MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa, Principal Secretary (Culture) Suresh Kumar Gupta, Secretary Y&S Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary Floriculture, Gardens & Parks Sheikh Fayaz, and DG Floriculture Jammu Jitender Singh.

Earlier, Secretary Floriculture, Sheikh Fayaz presented a detailed welcome address, outlining the department's initiatives to enhance the facilities at Bagh-e-Bahu.

Reflecting on the development of Bagh-e-Bahu, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah noted



its evolution over the years.

"I have witnessed the transformation of Bagh-e-Bahu, from its modest beginnings to becoming a hub with water fountains, an aquarium, and a sound and light show. Today, it stands as an integral part of this amphitheater, which adds a new dimension to Jammu's cultural and tourism landscape," he remarked.

He urged the concerned departments to maximize the potential of the amphitheater, advocating for its use as a platform for various activities.

"This facility should serve as a venue for school events, providing students with an opportunity to hone their skills and showcase their talent. It's vital to ensure that this amphitheater is not left underutilized."

The Chief Minister also reiterated the need for a concerted effort to give Jammu its unique identity in tourism.

He underscored ongoing projects, such as the long-pending initiative to create a

lake in Jammu, which is now nearing completion.

"Jammu will have its own lake—a milestone that will significantly boost tourism. Such projects are crucial to firmly establish Jammu on the tourism map," he stated.

He further urged the departments to organize regular programs at the amphitheater.

"Programs like today's wonderful presentation by the Cultural Academy should become a recurring feature. I hope to see a well-publicized calendar of events, involving private organizations and schools, especially those lacking facilities, to ensure vibrant and diverse participation."

Acknowledging the limitations of seasonal use, the Chief Minister expressed optimism about utilizing the amphitheater for at least 4-5 months each year.

On a lighter note, he shared that his residence across the river offers him a direct view of the amphitheater's activities.

## MoEF, CPCB Team Visits Sukhnag On NGT's Direction

Observer News Service

**BUDGAM:** Emotional scenes were witnessed around Sail and Kangripora villages of Beerwah in central Kashmir's Budgam on Thursday when the locals in large numbers came out and urged upon the senior officials of Ministry of Environment Forests & Climate change -MoEF, Central Pollution Control Board & J&K Pollution Control Committee to order for stopping the illegal riverbed mining -RBM in Sukhnag river. The young and old men spoke to this team constituted by National Green Tribunal -NGT in the matter of Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat v/s UT of J&K (OA No-1211/2024). The team which field from New Delhi / Chandigarh had come make on ground assessment of the damages caused to Sukhnag river by a construction company NKC Projects Pvt Ltd which according to the petition filed in NGT has been involved in large scale excavation of boulders, bajri and other riverbed material in the area for last 3 years without obtaining any environmental clearance.

The team of officers assured the locals that justice would be done with them as per law and they would submit a factual report to the NGT before the next date of hearing. The matter is listed for another hearing on January 14th 2025. Pertinently on October 4th 2024 the NGT's Principal Bench of Justice Prakash Srivastava (Chairperson), Justice A K Tyagi (Judicial Member) and Dr Senthil A Veil (Expert Member) heard petition filed by Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat social and environmental activist wherein he had alleged that illegal riverbed in Sukhnag was causing environmental disaster plus destroying the aquatic life especially the trout fish.

Advocate Saurabh Sharma the counsel for the petitioner apprised the NGT three member principal bench with factual details and produced geotagged pictures of the heavy machines and

dumpers extracting boulders from the Sukhnag Nallah in violation of J&K's Minor Mineral Concession Rules 2016. The counsel for the petitioner also argued that due to halting of water flow in May this year more than 2000 fishes were dead in a nearby Trout Fish Farm owned by a local entrepreneur Peerzada Rayees and Govt didn't take any action even as communication was made between SDM, Tehsildar and Fisheries department.

"I am happy to see the NGT constituted team on the ground and they saw the destruction themselves. I am sure that they would provide factual details of the NGT and I hope huge environmental compensation would be imposed on the violators plus the fish farmers will also be compensated" said Dr Raja Muzaffar.

The team was apprised by the locals that their agricultural fields have turned dry plus the local springs -naags have been impacted as well due to deep mining. The villagers told the visiting team that water gets contaminated due to mining and there is a lot of dust pollution in the area due to movement of dumpers and tippers carrying riverbed material. Director Fisheries J&K, SDM Beerwah, SDPO Magam, Tehsildar Beerwah, District Mineral Officer -DMO Budgam, SHO Beerwah senior members of Environmental Policy Group Faiz Bakshi, Dr Touseef, Mushtaq Ahmad and petitioner in the case Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat were also present during the visit.

## Vaishno Devi Ropeway Project: Fresh Stir Enters 2nd Day

Agencies

**JAMMU:** A protest against the ropeway project, a 72-hour shutdown call given by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sangarsh Samiti on Thursday entered into the second day in Katra town of Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.

All the stakeholders including pony owners, shopkeepers and other traders are protesting against the proposed ropeway project at Katra—the base camp of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine. The businesses in Katra town remained completely closed since morning on the second day of the 72-hours shutdown call.

Jammu and Kashmir Congress leaders, including Working President Raman Bhalla, Former Minister Yogesh Sawhney, and several other prominent leaders said that they were stopped by the police at Ban Toll Plaza on their way to Katra to extend support to the Katra ropeway protesters.

The leaders were en route to join the ongoing three-day strike supporting local protesters.

"Police action is an attempt to prevent Congress leaders from engaging with the protesting public in Katra," alleged a Congress party spokesperson.

Videos showed the "detained" Congress leaders arguing with police officers at the toll plaza, expressing their intent to participate peacefully in the ongoing strike. However, J&K Police are yet to issue an official statement.

Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) Working President, Raman Bhalla, condemned the "use of force against peaceful protesters in Katra". He further said that the project "threatens the livelihoods of thousands of workers". "Instead of engaging in dialogue, the administration

is using force, which is unacceptable," Bhalla added.

He criticized the administration for ignoring the concerns of the locals, accusing it of aggravating the situation. "The shutdown has caused significant inconvenience to pilgrims visiting Mata Vaishno Devi, with the closure of eateries and suspension of local transport adding to their hardships," Bhalla said.

Bhalla urged the administration to address the issue on humanitarian grounds and work towards an amicable solution. "Thousands of pilgrims are facing difficulties. The administration must resolve this issue without further escalating tensions," he added.

Bhalla's statement comes at a time when tensions in Katra are running high, with residents and workers continuing their protests against the "controversial" ropeway project, which they believe could lead to massive job losses.

Earlier, the fresh protesters have been on a 72-hour shutdown since Wednesday. Several people were detained by police during a protest. The protestors alleged that the government was derailing the issue and forcing them to come on the roads instead of finding the solution by holding deliberation. They stated that all activity in Katra would be halted during the protest.

### What is the project?

The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board said last month that it would be installing a ropeway to make it easier for elderly people, children, and anyone who finds it difficult to walk the 13-kilometre trail to the cave shrine to enter the temple. Connecting Tarakote Marg to Sanji Chhat, which leads to the shrine, is the goal of the proposed Rs 250-crore project.—(KNO)

## NC Legislator Protests Demolition Drive At Sonawar

Mohammad Abbas Bhat

**SRINAGAR:** National Conference legislator from Lal Chowk Assembly segment, Ahsan Pardesi, staged a protest on Thursday to halt a demolition drive initiated by the Badami Bagh Cantonment Board in Zabarwan Colony, Sonawar area of Srinagar.

The legislator sat in front of a JCB machine, vehemently opposing the Board's attempt to raze a structure that, he claimed, belongs to a local family that has resided in the area for over eight decades.

Speaking to reporters at the site, Pardesi expressed frustration over the Board's actions despite prior intervention. "I had already informed the district administration about this situation when I learned about the proposed demolition drive. It is unfortunate that the Cantonment Board still proceeded with the operation," he said.

Pardesi said that the matter is

sub judice and called for adherence to the court's directive to maintain the status quo. "The authorities must respect the legal process. Demolishing this house would be unjust and disregard the ongoing judicial proceedings," he added.

Earlier in the day, a team from the Badami Bagh Cantonment Board arrived at Zabarwan Colony, equipped with machinery, to demolish what they alleged to be an illegally constructed residential structure. However, the move was met with resistance from the locals and the legislator, resulting in the drive being temporarily stalled.

The Cantonment Board has been firm in its stance against unauthorized constructions within its jurisdiction, citing regulatory compliance as the primary motive behind such actions. However, residents argue that the structure in question has existed for generations and should not be deemed illegal. [KNT]

email: mdnulm@gmail.com Phone: 0194-2490757, Fax No:0194-2490714

**GOVT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**

**OFFICE OF THE MISSION DIRECTOR; DAY-NULM**

Habitat Centre, Bemina Srinagar

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Mission Director, National Urban Livelihood Mission J&K invites **Request for Proposal (RFP)** for Selection of Marketing Agency for Sales Promotion of Products and services Developed under National Urban Livelihood Mission in Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir:-

| S.No | Name of Work   | Cost of document (In Rs.)             | Class / category of Firm/ Agency  |
|------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1    | Selection of Marketing Agency for Sales Promotion of Products and services Developed under National Urban Livelihood Mission in Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir | Rs.5000/- (Rupees Five thousand only) | Only Reputed Indian Companies incorporated in India under the Companies Act 1956/2013/LLP Act 2008/Partnership Act 1932 for at least 5 years or Proprietary firm with registered offices in India adhering to criteria laid down in clause 19 of RFP. |

**Scheduled Critical Dates**

| S.No | Event Description  | Date                       |
|------|--|----------------------------|
| 1.   | Invitation of RFP  | 24-12-2024                 |
| 2.   | Document download start date & time  | 25/12/2024 at 5:30 pm      |
| 3.   | Last date of receipt of pre-bid queries  | 30/12/2024 upto 2:00 pm    |
| 4.   | Pre-bid meeting (Link: <a href="https://meet.google.com/igp-muyf-gyt">https://meet.google.com/igp-muyf-gyt</a> ) | 30/12/2024 at 3:30 pm      |
| 5.   | Bid submission start date & time   | 25/12/2024 at 5:30 pm      |
| 6.   | Bid submission end date & time   | 04/01/2025 upto 5:30 pm    |
| 7.   | Technical bid opening date & time  | 06/01/2025 at 12:00 pm     |
| 8.   | Financial bid opening date & time  | To be intimated separately |

In case any of the above-mentioned dates is declared as holiday then the next working day will be considered for the purpose mentioned above at the same time and venue.

- Tender fee of RFP should be pledged in favour of Mission Director, (DAY-NULM) National Urban Livelihood Mission JK and pay online Bank Account No: 0110040500000075 IFSC Code: JAKAOMOVING, J&K Bank Ltd., Branch Old Secretariat Srinagar.
- For any query related to RFP, bidders are requested to contact, Mr. Aaqib Farooq, Mission Manager on mobile No 7780858499 during office hours.
- Bidders are advised to read carefully each and every part/ section of RFP document before submission of online bids.
- Detailed information can be seen and downloaded from the web portal <https://jktenders.gov.in>.

No:-MD-DAY/NULM/2024-25/51-55  
Dated:- 24/12/2024

Mission Director  
DAY-NULM  
J&K

**J&K TOURISM**

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**

**DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM, KASHMIR**

e-mail: [ddtreg123@gmail.com](mailto:ddtreg123@gmail.com)

**Subject: - Change of location of the Excursion Agency running under the name & style "Ibadat Tour & Travel".**

**PUBLIC NOTICE.**

Whereas, **Mr. Irfan Ahmad Matta S/o Ghulam Nabi Matta** has applied this office for change of location of his Excursion Agent under the name and style "Ibadat Tour & Travel" from Wanganpora near Govt. Dispensary to Alkhudam Chowk near Astaan Shareef, Srinagar, under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, the unit is registered with this office vide Registration No. **JKEA00001593** dated **02.01.2023** and was renewed upto **31.12.2024**.

Whereas, the applicant along with his application has submitted the requisite documents as mentioned below:-

- Registration Certificate.
- NOC from concerned bank.
- Rent Deed with affidavit (City Judge Judicial Magistrate, 1st Class, Srinagar).
- Affidavit for change of Location

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 39 of Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before the request of the applicant is considered for **change of location** of the unit, the matter is hereby notified for information of General Public/Financial Institutions/Bank/Organization, etc. for objection if any. The same should reach this office within a period of **7 days** from the publication of this notice in the local newspaper. No objections beyond period of **7 days** will be entertained and request of the applicant will be considered as per rules.

No:- Reg/ON/132/DTK/593  
Dated: 26 /12/2024

-Sd-  
Asstt. Director Tourism,  
Registration

**DIPK-10064-24**  
DT: 26/12/2024



## CS For Choosing Best Implementation Strategy To Support MSMEs Under RAMP



Observer News Service

**JAMMU-** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Thursday held a meeting of Industries & Commerce (I&C) Department to have the first hand appraisal of the plan devised for implementation of Gol sponsored Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme here in J&K.

The meeting besides the Commissioner Secretary, I&C Department was attended by MD, JK-PO; Director Industries, Kashmir/Jammu; Representatives from IIM Jammu; NABARD; SIDBI and other concerned officers.

During this meeting the Chief Secretary took note of the approved Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for J&K and the road-map devised by the Department to successfully implement here.

Dulloo took this occasion to impress upon the concerned to make a best choice among the options available for implementation of different components of this scheme here in the UT.

He observed that this scheme has a great potential to boost the MSME sector. He maintained that its better im-

plementation is going to usher a progressive era for uplifting this significant industrial segment like never before.

He advised for roping in better implementing partners who have greater repute, more expertise and wider presence here in the UT so that each component of this scheme is continuously monitored and efficiently implemented on ground.

He made out that choosing better strategy is going to have direct bearing on the outcomes of this scheme. He called for taking steps to get the scheme going on right earnest for the MSME sector is the backbone of industrial sector of J&K and comprises its largest base here.

The Commissioner Secretary, I&C, Vikramjit Singh presented the meeting about the status of the implementation of this scheme here in the UT. He made out that the scheme aims at strengthening institutions and governance of MSME programme besides providing support for market access, enhancing firm capabilities, and their access to finance in a 5 year period till 2027.

## Progress On Establishment Of Kisan Khidmat Ghars Across J&K Reviewed



Observer News Service

**JAMMU-** Mission Director Holistic Agricultural Development Programme (HADP) Rahul Yadav Thursday chaired a meeting here in the Conference Hall, Directorate of Agriculture Krishi Bhawan, to review the progress on the establishment of Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) across Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting focused on the operational status of the Phase 1 KKGs, the progress of Krishi Udyamis (KUs), the status of Phase 2 KKG establishments, and the skilling of farmers and Kisan Sathi applicants through the Daksh Kisan Portal.

The meeting was attended by key stakeholders, including the Directors of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, and Fisheries from Jammu and Kashmir, Deputy Commissioners (DCs) from all districts, Chief Agriculture Officers, officials from SKUAST-K and SKUAST-J, Technical Offi-

cers, APD, and other concerned officers. Several outstation officers and stakeholders from Kashmir joined the meeting via video conference.

Rahul Yadav reviewed the progress of KKG establishments in the districts, urging the concerned authorities to expedite the installation of IT infrastructure at designated sites to ensure the timely commissioning of these centres. He emphasized the need for broadband connectivity, the issuance of seed and fertilizer licenses, installation of P.O.S. machines, and the implementation of the KKG software cum portal across the region.

The Mission Director also stressed the importance of completing the tender process for Phase 2 of the KKGs and directed the Deputy Commissioners to promptly notify the list of Krishi Udyamis to facilitate the functional setup of the centres within the designated timelines.

## Banking Frauds Rise In H1FY25, Amount Involved Jumps 8-Time: RBI Report

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI-** The number of bank frauds witnessed a significant on-year increase in the first half of the current fiscal to 18,461 cases and the amount involved jumped more than eight-fold to Rs 21,367 crore, according to RBI data released on Thursday.

The Reserve Bank of India has released the Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2023-24 which presents the performance of the banking sector, including commercial banks, co-operative banks and non-banking financial institutions, during 2023-24 and 2024-25 so far.

The report said the number of frauds during April-September stood at 18,461 involving Rs 21,367 crore compared to 14,480 cases involving Rs 2,623 crore in the comparative period of the last financial year, based on the date of fraud reporting.

It further said frauds present multiple challenges for the financial system in the form of reputational risk, operational risk, business risk and erosion of customer confidence with financial stability implications.

Regarding 2023-24 fiscal as a whole, the RBI said that



based on date of reporting by banks, the amount involved in frauds was the lowest in a decade, while the average value was the lowest in 16 years.

Based on the date of occurrence of frauds, in 2023-24, the share of internet and card frauds in the total stood at 44.7 per cent in terms of amount and 85.3 per cent in terms of number of cases.

In 2023-24, the number of fraud cases reported by private sector banks (PVBs) accounted for 67.1 per cent of the total. In terms of amount involved, however, public sector banks (PSBs) had the highest share of card and internet frauds was highest for all bank groups in 2023-24.

Instances of penalty imposed on regulated entities (REs) increased during 2023-24 across all bank groups, except foreign banks and small finance banks.

The total penalty amount more than doubled in 2023-24 to Rs 86.1 crore, led by public and private sector banks. The amount of penalty imposed on co-operative banks declined during the year, while there was an increase in instances of penalty imposition. The report also said that several reports indicate the continued presence of unscrupulous players in the digital lending space, who falsely claim association with REs.

## EV Sales In China To Overtake Traditional Cars Ahead Of The West: FT

Agencies

**BEIJING-** Electric vehicles (EVs) are expected to surpass cars with internal combustion engines in China for the first time next year, marking a significant turning point that places the world's largest car market years ahead of Western competitors, the Financial Times reported.

According to the latest estimates from four investment banks and research groups shared with the Financial Times, Chinese EV sales—including pure battery and plug-in hybrids—are projected to grow by around 20% year on year, reaching over 12 million cars in 2025. This would more than double the 5.9 million sold in 2022.

In contrast, sales of traditional gasoline-powered cars are expected to drop by more than 10% next year, falling below 11 million, a nearly 30% decline from 14.8 million in 2022. Meanwhile, EV sales growth in Europe and the US has slowed due to the legacy car industry's slow adaptation to new technology, uncertainty over government subsidies, and rising protectionism against Chinese imports.

DIVE DEEPER

Robert Liew, director of Asia-Pacific renewables research at Wood Mackenzie, told the Financial Times that China's EV milestone reflects



its success in developing domestic technology and securing global supply chains for critical resources needed for EVs and their batteries.

The industry's scale has also led to significant manufacturing cost reductions and lower prices for consumers. "They want to electrify everything," said Liew. "No other country comes close to China."

While the growth rate of Chinese EV sales has moderated from the post-pandemic boom, forecasts suggest that Beijing's 2020 target for EVs to make up 50% of car sales by 2035 will be reached 10 years ahead of schedule.

The industry forecasts, provided by investment banks UBS and HSBC, and research groups Morningstar and Wood Mackenzie, suggest that over the next decade, factories established in China to produce millions of traditional-engine cars will find

the domestic market nearly nonexistent. They also highlight how the rapid rise of China's EV sector is now posing a threat to national manufacturing giants in Germany, Japan, and the US.

As China's EV market heads toward nearly 40% year-on-year growth in 2024, the market share of foreign-branded cars has dropped to a record low of 37%, down from 64% in 2020, according to data from Shanghai-based consultancy Automobility.

In response to this shifting landscape, this month alone, General Motors wrote off more than \$5 billion of its business value in China; the holding company behind Porsche warned of a write-down in its Volkswagen stake of up to €20 billion; and rivals Nissan and Honda announced they were merging to address the "drastically changing business environment."

## Banks Can Charge Over 30% Interest On Credit Card Dues: Supreme Court

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** Banks can charge over 30 per cent on credit card dues from customers after the Supreme Court set aside a sixteen-year-old National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission verdict, which held charging excessive interest rates amounted to an unfair trade practice.

A bench of Justices Bela M Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma said NCDRC's observations that the rate of interest in excess of 30 per cent per annum was an unfair trade practice was "illegal" and an interference with the clear, unambiguous delegation of Reserve Bank of India's powers.

The court said the ruling was contrary to the legislative intent of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

In the opinion of the Supreme Court, banks had in no manner made any misrepresentation to deceive the credit card holders and the pre-conditions of "deceptive practice" and unfair method were manifestly absent.

The court said NCDRC had no jurisdiction to rewrite the terms of the contract entered between the banks and the credit card holders, which the parties had mutually agreed upon.

"We agree with the submissions made by the Reserve Bank of India, that the ques-



tion of directing the RBI to act against any bank does not arise, in the facts and circumstances of the present case and that there is no question of the RBI being directed to impose any cap on the rate of interest, either on the banking sector as a whole, or in respect of any one particular bank, contrary to the provisions contained in the Banking Regulation Act, and the circulars/directions issued thereunder," the bench said in its December 20 judgement.

The top court said while the national consumer commission was duly empowered to set aside unfair contracts that were unilaterally dominant or incorporated unfair and unconscionable terms, the rate of interest charged by the banks, determined by the financial wisdom and RBI directives that were duly communicated to the credit card holders from time to time, couldn't be unconscionable or unilateral.

"The credit card holders are duly educated and made aware of their privileges and obligations, including timely payment and levying of penalty on delay," the bench said.

## Gold Rises ₹250 To ₹78,850/10g; Silver Climbs ₹300

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** Gold prices increased Rs 250 to Rs 78,850 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid a firm global trend, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The yellow metal had settled at Rs 78,600 per 10 grams on Tuesday.

Silver extended its rally for the third straight session by climbing Rs 300 to Rs 90,800 per kg on Thursday. The metal had ended at Rs 90,500 per kg in the previous close.

The commodities market was closed on Wednesday on the occasion of Christmas.

The price of 99.5 per cent purity advanced Rs 250 to Rs 78,450 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 78,200 per 10 grams.

Traders attributed the climb in gold prices to firm trends in the overseas markets which aided in bullion prices.

In futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for February delivery advanced Rs 442 or 0.58 per cent to Rs 76,712 per 10 grams. "Gold prices edged higher on Thursday, supported by a slightly weaker dollar as markets resumed trading post-Christmas."

"However, gains were capped as investors remained cautious following the US Federal Reserve's hawkish stance, signalling a less aggressive rate-cutting outlook," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst



of Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

Silver contracts for March delivery bounced Rs 343 or 0.38 per cent to Rs 89,669 per 10 grams on the exchange.

With the holiday-shortened week, thin trade volumes reflected traders' hesitation to make significant moves, Trivedi said. Globally, Comex gold futures rose USD 9.10 per ounce or 0.35 per cent to USD 2,644.60 per ounce.

"Gold moved higher on Thursday as traders showed an interest in safe-haven buying following escalating tensions due to Russia-Ukraine war."

"Market participants will await the US macroeconomic data -- weekly unemployment claims data -- due to release later on Thursday which will provide more insights on the course of direction for bullion prices," Gandhi said.

Comex silver futures traded 0.19 per cent higher in the Asian trading session at USD 30.34 per ounce. "Additionally, markets remain cautious due to uncertainties surrounding potential policies of a second Trump administration."

## Stock Markets Close Flat Amid Lack Of Global Triggers

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI-** Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended flat in listless trading on Thursday amid a lack of near-term triggers and unabated foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex dipped 0.39 points to settle at 78,472.48 in a muted trade. During the morning trade, it had jumped 425.5 points or 0.54 per cent to 78,898.37.

The NSE Nifty eked out gains of 22.55 points or 0.1 per cent to 23,750.20 on the monthly expiry day. From the 30 blue-chip stocks, Titan, Asian Paints, Nestle, Tech Mahindra, Reliance Industries, Zomato, Larsen & Toubro and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggards.

Adani Ports, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti, Sun Pharma, Bharti Airtel and Tata Motors were among the gainers.

"On the last expiry day of the year, the domestic market remained flat throughout the day amidst holidays in peer markets and a lack of major domestic or global triggers. Auto shares saw gains from recent corrections."

"However, concerns over FII outflows and the depreciating rupee persist, given the strengthening US dollar index and worries about potential adverse tariffs and concerns over rate cuts in 2025, held the muted market trend," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

The BSE smallcap gauge dipped 0.24 per cent while midcap index went up marginally by 0.11 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, the BSE services jumped 1.80 per cent, auto climbed 0.81 per cent, power (0.45 per cent), healthcare (0.45 per cent), realty (0.39 per cent) and consumer discretionary (0.23 per cent).

BSE commodities dipped 0.30 per cent, industrials (0.12 per cent), telecommunication (0.16 per cent), metal (0.14 per cent), BSE Focused IT (0.04 per cent) and bankex (0.04 per cent).

In Asian markets, Tokyo and Shanghai settled in the positive territory while Seoul ended lower. US markets were closed on Wednesday for Christmas.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,454.21 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

The Indian stock markets were closed on Wednesday because of Christmas.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.53 per cent to USD 73.97 a barrel. After gyrating between highs and lows, the 30-share BSE index declined 67.30 points to 78,472.87 on Tuesday. Nifty dipped 25.80 points or 0.11 per cent to 23,727.65.

## RBI Sets Up 8-Member Panel On Ethical Use Of AI

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI-** The Reserve Bank on Thursday announced the setting up of an eight-member committee to develop a framework for responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the financial sector.

Headed by IIT Bombay professor Pushpak Bhat-tacharyya (Department of Computer Science and Engineering), the panel will assess the current level of adoption of AI in financial services, globally as well as in India. It will also review regulatory and supervisory approaches on AI with focus on the financial sector globally.

The panel will also identify potential risks associated with AI, if any, and recommend an evaluation, mitigation and monitoring framework and consequent compliance requirements for financial institutions, including banks, NBFCs, FinTechs, PSOs, etc.

The committee will recommend a framework including governance aspects for responsible, ethical adoption of AI models / applications in the Indian financial sector, the RBI said.

The other members of the panel are: Debjani Ghosh (Independent Director, Reserve Bank Innovation Hub); Balaram Ravindran (Professor and Head, Wadhvani School of Data Science and AI, IIT Madras); Abhishek Singh (Additional Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology); Rahul Matthan (Partner, Trilegal); Anjali Rathor (Group Head and Chief Digital Experience Officer, HDFC Bank); Sree Hari Nagaralu (Head of Security AI Research, Microsoft India); and Suvendu Pati (CGM, FinTech Department, RBI).

## Rupee Plunges 12 Paise To Close At New All-Time Low Of 85.27 Against US Dollar

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI-** The rupee stayed weak for the third straight session and fell 12 paise to settle at a fresh all-time low of 85.27 against the US dollar on Thursday, amid a strong greenback and rising crude oil prices.

Forex traders said, increased month-end as well as year-end dollar demand from importers and fear of an aggressive import tariff by the Donald Trump administration lifted the American currency.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened weak at 85.23 and touched the lowest-ever level of 85.28 against the greenback during intraday trade.

The unit finally ended the session at its lifetime low closing level of 85.27 against the dollar, registering a loss of 12 paise from its previous close.

The rupee fell 4 paise to settle at 85.15 against the US dollar on Tuesday, a day after losing 9 paise on Monday.

The forex market was closed on Wednesday for Christmas.

According to Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, the rupee weakened as the dollar index remained elevated and foreign institutional investors continued to stay cautious, refraining from taking long positions in Indian markets, which kept the rupee subdued.

"The currency faces challenges in regaining stability, sliding over hurdles while attempting to recover lost ground. In the near term, the rupee is expected to trade within a range of 85.00-85.45," Trivedi added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading marginally lower by 0.03 per cent but remained elevated at 108.22, amid soaring US Treasury yields and the fear of delayed interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.75 per cent to USD 74.13 per barrel in futures trade.

According to Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, the rupee fell to a fresh all-time low on strong dollar and rising US treasury yields that are at the highest levels in seven months.

Also, he said the surge in crude oil prices, month-end/year-end dollar demand and FII outflows may also weigh on the rupee.

"However, any intervention by the RBI may support the rupee at lower levels. Traders may take cues from weekly unemployment claims data from the US. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 85.10 to 85.45," Choudhary added.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex closed almost flat at 78,472.48 points, while Nifty inched up 22.55 points, or 0.10 per cent to close at 23,750.20 points.



## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

**Three Million**

J&K's economic prosperity," he added.

A key initiative includes simplifying the registration and renewal processes for tourism units through a Single Window Clearance mechanism, designed to improve the Ease of Doing Business.

The government has also encouraged private sector participation, particularly through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), in developing tourism infrastructure, according to the official.

He said the tourism strategy in J&K focuses on harnessing the potential of emerging sectors such as Adventure Tourism, Caravan Tourism, Helicopter Tourism, Eco-Tourism, Pilgrimage Tourism, Rural Tourism, Wellness Tourism, Agro Tourism, MICE Tourism, Heritage Tourism and Golf Tourism. "Promoting sustainable tourism has been a priority, with a strong emphasis on preserving J&K's unique natural and cultural heritage," he said. "To further complement these efforts, the development of highways and way-side amenities is ongoing to improve accessibility to tourist destinations, including the promotion of off-beat locations."

The official said that a comprehensive roadmap for J&K's tourism sector development in 2024 includes initiatives for developing lakes and wetlands, new tourist circuits, seasonal tourism, and off-the-beaten-path destinations. There is also a focus on improving accessibility to tourist spots, with continued investments in advanced marketing and promotional strategies, he informed.

"Capacity building and human resource development remain central to these efforts, ensuring sustainable tourism that aligns with the region's carrying capacity," he added.

Several major infrastructure projects were completed in 2024, which have enhanced J&K's appeal as a prime tourist destination. Among the highlights is the completion of the Wellness Centre at Mantalai, built under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme at a cost of Rs 80 crore, which offers amenities such as huts, a spa, a yoga and meditation centre and a helipad.

Similarly, the Hazratbal Shrine development in Srinagar, under the PRASAD Scheme, costing Rs 40.46 crore, has not only enhanced facilities for pilgrims but also created job opportunities for locals, the official said.

Looking ahead, the Tourism Department plans to further enhance J&K's offerings through high-quality tented accommodations, five-star hotels, skiing facilities, adventure activities, eco-tourism parks, and wellness centres. There are also plans for the development of international institutes in collaboration with the private sector. "Leisure sports and health and wellness centres at popular tourist spots are part of our strategy to enhance J&K's tourism profile," the official said.

He said the notable projects underway include the development of the Jammu Water Park, a vertical lift from Peerkho to the Mubarak Mandi Complex, and the prioritisation of 20 off-beat tourist destinations for development under the State Capex Budget for 2024. The Tourism Department is also working on optimising the utilisation of newly created assets by outsourcing their operations and maintenance to private players, generating employment opportunities for the local population.

The department is also identifying new trekking routes and pilgrimage/Sufi circuits to connect famous shrines with lesser-known pilgrimage sites to further enhance the tourism potential of J&K, the official said.

**Uninterrupted Power**

so that we supply 24 hours electricity. God willing, we will achieve that very soon," he added.

He said the government is making attempts to maintain a contact with the people and address their demands and difficulties, even as some issues will persist until statehood is restored.

"There are several issues which cannot be resolved rapidly, there are issues which cannot be dealt with under the UT and for those we have to get our state back. But, attempts are being made to at least listen to their problems and assure them that it is their own elected government and there is no issue which we will not listen to," he said.

To a question on tourism, Abdullah said the government is making attempts to project J&K as a year-round tourist destination.

"We are hopeful that people will come and for that we need snowfall in places like Sonamarg, Gulmarg, Pahalgam. When there is snowfall, more tourists will come," he added.

On his surprise visit to two hospitals here a day earlier, the chief minister said while the facilities at the hospitals were better, there were some complaints of absence of staff during the night.

"The situation in the hospitals is

better, but there are complaints from the patients that everything is fine during the day but no one is to be seen during the night. I made a surprise visit during the day, some day, I will make a surprise visit during the night," he said.

**Srinagar MLAs**

adding that back-to-back meetings of party MLAs are expected to be convened by the Chief Minister district-wise.

"We have raised the issues like power paucity, roads and other things affecting the common masses in our constituencies," one of the MLAs said, adding that the meeting was aimed to discuss the public issues only.

However, he said that a meeting of Srinagar-based party MLAs is expected to be convened again in the next couple of days.

Notably, it was the first meeting of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah with the party MLAs after the elected government took over in Jammu and Kashmir in October this year.

**Meets Delegations,**

attention. Among the delegations, the J&K College Teachers Association urged the Chief Minister to consider the demand for enhancing the retirement age of college teachers in Jammu and Kashmir.

Kashmiri Shawl Makers Welfare Foundation, comprising artisans from different areas, highlighted the challenges faced by the traditional shawl-making trade and sought the government's support in safeguarding their livelihood.

Similarly, a five-member delegation of Hot Mix Plant owners apprised the Chief Minister of the issues confronting their industry, requesting timely interventions.

J&K Casual Labourers United Front, led by its State President, raised concerns regarding the welfare of casual labourers, while the Physiotherapists' deputation briefed the CM about sector-specific challenges that require redressal.

Representatives from the Health Workers Welfare Association, led by their president, presented issues impacting healthcare professionals, and the Employees Joint Action Committee (EJAC) emphasized the need to address employees' welfare comprehensively.

A delegation of Saubhagya Contractors from Ganderbal and South Kashmir sought government support to address operational hurdles in the execution of projects under the Saubhagya scheme.

The public outreach programme also saw numerous individuals meeting the Chief Minister, presenting grievances and suggestions for improvement on a number of issues affecting them.

The Chief Minister assured all deputations and individuals of a patient and responsive approach, emphasizing that their genuine concerns would be addressed on a priority basis.

Also, a joint delegation of traders of different Bazar Committees of City Centre Lal Chowk and other areas called on the Chief Minister during the programme.

The delegation apprised the Chief Minister about various issues of the trader's community of Lal Chowk, Hari Singh High Street, Poloview, Regal Chowk, Maisuma, Court Road and other areas of the City.

They also submitted a memorandum of demands to the Chief Minister demanding development and revival of business and increased customer footfall in City Central Lal Chowk and other markets of Srinagar City.

The Chief Minister assured the delegation of redressal of the genuine concerns and issues on priority

**Ex-PM Manmohan**

at 9.51 pm," said the bulletin.

Singh, who was prime minister for two terms in the Congress-led UPA government from 2004 to 2014, had been in poor health for the last few months.

He is survived by wife Gurcharan Singh and three daughters. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and her mother Sonia Gandhi reached the hospital as soon as the news of his hospitalisation became known.

Singh, who was finance minister under the then prime minister P V Narasimha Rao, was the architect and the brainchild of economic reforms in 1991 that pulled India from the brink of bankruptcy and ushered in an era of economic liberalisation that is widely believed to have changed the course of India's economic trajectory.

Singh died as the Congress party concluded its Congress Working Committee meeting at Belagavi in Karnataka, where all top party leaders were present.

It is believed that party chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi are on their way to Delhi from Belagavi.

**Land Transfer**

report to the office of the Assistant Commissioner (Revenue), Pulwama, to begin their work.

The Deputy Commissioner's office has also circulated the directive to the Tehsildars of Pulwama, Pampore,

Kakapora, and Rajpora for their information and further action.

**Seizing 5000**

PDP leaders Waheed Para and Iltija Mufti termed acquiring thousands of kanals of land for the institution as "unacceptable."

MLA Pulwama Waheed-ur-Rehman Para took to X and wrote : "Pulwama welcomes the establishment of an NIT, but seizing 5000 kanals of land is unacceptable. Without fair compensation and guaranteed jobs for locals, this project will face strong resistance."

Party chief Mehbooba Mufti's daughter, Iltija Mufti, voiced strong objections to the acquisition of 5000 kanals of land for the establishment of a new NIT campus in Pulwama.

In a post on X, she wrote, "Grabbing land in Kashmir under the ruse of 'development' in J&K continues unabated. Pray tell what's the need to seize 5000 kanals of prime agricultural land in Pulwama to establish a NIT? If education was such a priority why have a lopsided reservation in the first place?"

**Snowfall Likely**

Celsius, the meteorological department said.

Gulmarg, a tourist resort town known for skiing activities in north Kashmir, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 6 degrees Celsius, up from minus 6.6 degrees Celsius the previous night.

Pahalgam registered a minimum temperature of minus 8.6 degrees Celsius, slightly down from the previous night's minus 8.4 degrees Celsius, it said.

Qazigund logged a minimum temperature of minus 7 degrees Celsius, while Konibal, a hamlet in the Pampore area, was the coldest recorded place in the valley at minus 9 degrees Celsius, it said.

Kupwara, in north Kashmir, registered a low of minus 6.7 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag, in south Kashmir, was minus 5.5 degrees Celsius.

The meteorological department has said an active Western Disturbance is set to impact Jammu and Kashmir from Friday afternoon to Saturday afternoon.

Under the influence of the system, there is a possibility of light snowfall over the higher reaches towards late afternoon of Friday till the forenoon the next day, the Met Office said.

While the weather would stay mainly dry on December 29, 30, and 31, light snowfall is possible at isolated places in Kashmir from January 1-4.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan' - considered the harshest period of winter - which started on December 21.

During the 40 days of Chillai-Kalan, the chances of snowfall are most frequent and maximum and the temperature drops considerably.

**Promote Harmony**

served the society and made immense contributions in the field of education and healthcare. I hope that their commitment to service inspires others," he added.

On the occasion, the LG urged every section of society to imbibe the teachings of Lord Jesus Christ and promote the spirit of peace, forgiveness and compassion. "Our prime objective is to light the lamp of love, kindness and brotherhood in the heart of every citizen," he said.

"Lord Jesus Christ had emphasised on the purity of a person's thoughts, moral actions and doing good deeds without expecting anything in return. There is a need to follow Lord Christ's ideals and make selfless service our motto," the LG said.

Sinha said the festivity of the Christmas season is also an occasion to embrace the core values of harmony and brotherhood.

"Our unity is the key for building a just, equitable and vibrant society. Unity provides us the strength to

discharge our duties and responsibilities with commitment and sincerity towards the nation," he observed.

He said, Lord Jesus Christ's emphasis on the brotherhood of mankind, harmony, selfless action and his fight against discrimination of any kind are of particular significance in today's world.

"Lord Jesus Christ's life is a testimony of love, non-violence, peace and forgiveness and his teachings are a source of inspiration for the entire human society. I hope his teachings will guide us for the betterment of society."

Speaking on the occasion, Most Rev. Ivan Albert Pereira, Bishop Jammu-Srinagar Diocese, extended the support and cooperation of the Christian community to the government in its endeavours towards inclusive development of J&K.

We are proud that our government has been engaged in fostering an environment where people of all faiths and communities can live in peace and harmony, he said.

Ashu Peter Mattoo, President All J&K Christian Sabha, members of CNI Church, Jammu-Srinagar Diocese, heads of various institutions and organizations, youth, community members and prominent citizens from all walks of life were present.

**Only One NC**

Monday outside the residence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to support the demand for "rationalisation" of reservations in Jammu and Kashmir.

A day after the protest, NC's youth president and Hazratbal MLA Salman Sagar said Mehdi has hurt the party's interests by providing a platform to its "enemies".

"What he (Aga Ruhullah) did was wrong. In my opinion, it should not have happened. He provided a platform to the enemies of National Conference by these protests," Sagar had said.

Sagar was one of the six NC MLAs who did not attend the Thursday's meeting.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Mehdi said the meeting was called to review the centrally sponsored schemes, and MLAs of the district are the members, but "some came and those who were in Jammu could not come".

Asked whether the MLAs were invited, Mehdi said Srinagar deputy commissioner can answer how many people he had invited.

"I had approved the meeting yesterday itself," he said.

On the remarks by his party colleague Sagar, the Srinagar MP said the issue of reservation and the future of students was important, "not me or anyone else".

"What is your intention and motive? That day, the biggest issue was reservation, the future of the students. Are you talking about that? I, or anyone else is not important, do your work honestly. Talk about facts, rather than sensationalism," he added.

To a question about Apni Party chief Altaf Bukhari's statement that the Monday's protest seemed to be planted, the MP said "not everyone in this world is planted like Altaf Bukhari".

"Altaf Bukhari himself is planted, that is why he thinks that everyone is planted," he said.

However, NC's chief spokesperson and MLA Zaidal told PTI "there is nothing to read between the lines" on the absence of NC legislators.

"The invitations came late last night. Some MLAs were in Jammu while some others had prior engagements. There is nothing to read between the lines," Sadiq said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah convened a meeting with the Srinagar's legislators at his Gupkar residence here.

The meeting was attended by all NC MLAs, except MLA Eidgah Mubarak Gul.

During the meeting, the MLAs highlighted pressing issues concerning Srinagar, including water scarcity,

the power crisis, and other challenges faced by the residents, a party spokesperson said.

The Chief Minister assured the legislators that Srinagar would be given the highest priority and that all issues would be addressed promptly. (PTI)

**Kashmiri Teen**

sensation, who went to Delhi to receive the award with his parents, said the recognition "feels like a very big responsibility".

"My family is really happy and obviously feel very proud," he added.

Sajad, resident of Anantnag, gained fame for his soulful rendition of the Kashmiri song 'Be Dard Dadi Chane'. The song has originally been written by Kashmiri poet Shamas Fakeer.

Having started singing quite early in life with small performances and stage shows, Sajad began his professional journey with the song which gained popularity and gave him instant fame.

"It was almost four years ago that I started singing professionally with 'Be dard' song," the class 10 student said.

He said along his journey, he was inspired by the independent artists in Kashmir.

"When I actually started singing professionally, there were a few inspirations like the artists in Kashmir who were working independently. When I met them, they inspired me, their music inspired me," the young singer said.

Sajad describes singing as his passion and said no matter what profession he chooses, "it will stay with me". However, he has not yet made up his mind on what profession he will choose.

Apart from music, the young singer is keenly interested in sports and likes to perform martial arts and play basketball.

President Murmu on Thursday presented the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to 17 children, recognising their exceptional courage and outstanding achievements across diverse fields, including art, culture, sports and innovation.

The president underlined the importance of nurturing and celebrating young talents.

"Providing opportunities and recognising children's talents has always been a part of our tradition. This tradition should be further strengthened to ensure that every child realises their full potential," she said.

The award celebrates extraordinary accomplishments in seven categories -- art and culture, bravery, innovation, science and technology, social service, sports and environment.

The honourees -- seven boys and ten girls selected from 14 states and Union Territories -- were presented with a medal, certificate and citation booklet.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha congratulated Sajad for the award.

"Congratulations to Master Ayaan Sajad on receiving Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar from Hon'ble President Smt Droupadi Murmu ji. He is a singer par excellence.

"I wish Ayaan all the best for future endeavours. May you inspire many more youngsters across J&K UT," Sinha said in a post on X.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah also extended their heartfelt congratulations to Sajad.

"Recognizing his remarkable contributions to the field of art and culture, Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah lauded Ayan's achievement as a source of immense pride for Jammu and Kashmir. They expressed their hope that his dedication and talent will continue to inspire young minds across the region and beyond," the NC said on X.

The party said the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to supporting and encouraging the youth of JK in their pursuit of excellence in various fields.

"Warm greeting to 12-year-old Ayaan Sajad, from south Kashmir's Anantnag, who was conferred the

prestigious Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar today by President Droupadi Murmu for his outstanding contribution in the Art and Culture category.

"I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Ayaan's parents as well for supporting their child's passion for singing and helping him achieve this remarkable milestone. The young boy's melodious voice is truly captivating. Wishing him great success ahead!" Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari said on X.

Notably, Risheek Kumar Sharma from Jammu was also honored with the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2025 by the President of India.

Risheek, hailing from Smailpur, the native village of the prominent nationalist leader Pandit Prem Nath Dogra in Jammu and Kashmir, brought pride to his home state by receiving this prestigious award.

This distinguished national award celebrates Risheek Kumar Sharma's exceptional accomplishments in the field of Science and Technology, alongside his unwavering dedication, perseverance, and contributions to innovation. At such a young age, Risheek has demonstrated remarkable talent and leadership, inspiring his peers and earning widespread admiration for his pioneering work in the field of cybersecurity and cyber education.

**Worrying Pattern**

the "trend" of converting sacred sites into tourist destinations must be stopped as it not only threatens the livelihood of thousands but also disrespects the spiritual purpose and cultural importance of these sites.

"Urge the authorities to reconsider the project and release the persons arrested," she added.

Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari also expressed his deep concern over reports suggesting that Kashmiri shawl vendors are continuously facing harassment and threats from local miscreants in some parts of Himachal. He urged the J&K authorities to take up this issue with the authorities in Himachal Pradesh to ensure the safety of Kashmiri vendors and their businesses there.

Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari wrote on his X handle: "I have been informed that Kashmiri shawl vendors and street hawkers in Himachal Pradesh are continuously facing harassment and threats from some local miscreants. They are being asked to leave the place and return home. Even their landlords are being pressured to evict their Kashmiri tenants."

He further said, "It is the responsibility of the authorities in Jammu and Kashmir to take up this issue with their counterparts in Himachal to ensure the safety of Kashmiri vendors there."

"These are poor people earning their livelihood. Some of them have been going there for the past two to three decades and have established a customer network. Their livelihood must be protected," Bukhari added.

Notably, the issue has sparked widespread condemnation, with many on social media calling for stringent action against those responsible. However, there has been no immediate response from the Himachal Pradesh government regarding the allegations.

It is pertinent to mention a video had surfaced last month on social media, showing a lady warning two Kashmiri shawl sellers against trading their wares in the state. However, she later apologized, but the incident led to widespread outrage.

Meanwhile, following the fresh incident of alleged harassment and threats to Kashmiri Shawl sellers, many on social media have termed the plight of the Kashmiri shawl sellers as yet another example of the challenges faced by Kashmiris operating outside their home region.



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

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# Kohli, Konstas Face Off; Indian Star Fined, Handed Demerit Point

Press Trust of India

**MELBOURNE:** Virat Kohli and Australian youngster Sam Konstas were on Thursday involved in a physical altercation because of which the Indian superstar was fined 20 per cent of his match fee and handed a demerit point even though it was played down as an accidental bump by the 19-year-old debutant.

The brief showdown took place after the 10th over of the Australian innings on the opening day of the fourth Test here when the players were crossing over. Kohli and Konstas bumped shoulders while moving across the pitch in the face off that was initiated by the travelling star.

Kohli was eventually charged with breaching Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct by on-field umpires Joel Wilson and Michael Gough, third umpire Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid and fourth umpire Shawn Craig.

He accepted the sanctions proposed by match referee Andy Pycroft at the end of day's



play.

After the physical contact, both players quickly turned around to glance at each other and engage in a heated exchange of words before Kon-

stas' teammate Usman Khawaja stepped in to separate them. The on-field umpires also had a word with the two and things cooled down rather quickly.

Speaking to reporters af-

ter stumps, Konstas said Kohli bumped into him but it wasn't deliberate.

"I was just doing my gloves and I think he accidentally bumped me. I think that's just

cricket and can happen with tension," said the teenager.

"I think the emotions got to both of us," Konstas had told 'Channel 7' during the second session.

The ICC's Code of Conduct states that "any form of inappropriate physical contact is prohibited in cricket. Without limitation, players will breach this regulation if they deliberately, recklessly and/or negligently walk or run into or shoulder another player or umpire".

Kohli's match fee for the game was to be Rs 15 lakh but that amount would be reduced to Rs 12 lakh owing to the fine. This is the first demerit point that Kohli has logged since 2019. Four demerit points over a period of two years lead to a suspension of one Test.

Konstas, who was batting on 27 at the time, went on to hit Jasprit Bumrah for two boundaries and a six in the next over.

The teenager scored a stunning fifty on debut before Ravindra Jadeja trapped him leg before wicket.

## Short TAKES

### Bumrah Takes Three As Australia End Day 1 At 311/6

India reduced Australia to 311 for 6 at stumps on the opening day of the Boxing Day Test here on Thursday.

Debutant Sam Konstas (60) sparked the home team's charge with a scintillating half-century, marking a dream debut with some stunning strokes.

Usman Khawaja (57), Marnus Labuschagne (72), and Steve Smith (68 not out) all contributed with fifties on a good batting surface.

The peerless Jasprit Bumrah (3/75) was expectedly the pick of the bowlers for India.

After an uncharacteristically quiet first session -- during which Konstas took the attack to the Indian pacer with a barrage of boundaries and sixes, Bumrah returned to his best, picking up three crucial wickets, including the scalps of Travis Head (0) and Mitchell Marsh (4) in quick succession.

**BRIEF SCORES:**

Australia 311 for 6 in 86 overs (Marnus Labuschagne 72; Sam Konstas 60, Usman Khawaja 57; Jasprit Bumrah 3/75).

### Record-Setting 87,242 Fans Flock MCG On Opening Day Of Boxing Day Test

A record 87,242 spectators filled the stands at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground on the opening day of the Boxing Day Test between India and Australia, setting a new mark for the highest single-day attendance in a five-day match between the two teams.

The tickets for the opening day of the fourth Test had been sold out over two weeks ahead of the clash.

The audience witnessed a thrilling day of cricket as debutant Sam Konstas took on Jasprit Bumrah in the first session before the Indian pacer swung the momentum in his team's favour in the final session.

Australia ended the opening day at a solid 311 for six.

The five-match series is locked at 1-1.

## J&K Play Kerala In Santosh Trophy Quarter-Final Today



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** J&K senior men's football team has a Herculean task ahead of it as it takes on seven-time champions Kerala in the 78th Santosh Trophy quarter-final on Friday at Deccan Arena in

Hyderabad, Telangana. The game will kick off at 2:30 PM.

J&K finished fourth in Group A and will lock horns with Kerala, who won Group B while scoring 29 goals in eight matches. The two teams' head-to-head record in the final round matches

also doesn't look good for J&K, as Kerala has won all six encounters between them.

J&K is playing in the final rounds of the Senior Football Championship for Santosh Trophy for the first time since 2015-16. After suffering heavy losses against West Bengal and Services in the first two final round group stage games, J&K bounced back with wins over hosts Telangana and Rajasthan, securing a place in the quarter-final on final day.

J&K, who has been solid defensively by only conceding once in their previous three games, will hope to go further in the tournament by overcoming a tough challenge against a free-flowing Kerala side.

## Pulwama's Owais Yaqoob Wins MMA Fight In Kazakhstan



Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Owais Yaqoob, a Mixed Martial Arts fighter from Murrana area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district, has brought laurels. Representing India, Owais defeated Kazakhstan's Amanzhol Khaissa in the lightweight category at the Naiza Fighting Championship held at the Abay Arena in Semey, Kazakhstan.

Owais said he was the only player from India to take part in the competition in Kazakhstan. He said he defeated his opponent in all three rounds within five minutes each by dominating all rounds.

He said win is always special and this was the first win outside India, so it is more special as it will boost the global ranking.

In March, he defeated Afghanistan's Mohammad Azam Mokhlis at Matrix Fight Night (MFN 14) in Noida.

Owais was representing India and by winning the game, he has brought happiness on the faces of all Indians especially Kashmiris and he was warmly welcomed at his native village.

Owais added that "such wins encourage you further to do more hard work and prove your mettle in your upcoming events as well."

Notably, Owais signed a three-year contract with MFN in January 2023 and made a professional debut on

March 31, 2023.

Owais said since 2015 he has taught over 200 youth the different forms of martial arts and among them many have represented J&K at the national level and even won gold medals.

He said that in order to stay away from drug and anti-social activities, there is a need to get youth involved in sports and martial arts and in order to teach the youth of Pulwama district and keep them away from drugs, he has come with academy named Lion's Den.

Owais said that he was very passionate about martial arts since childhood and since 2013 he started taking part in competitions.

"After playing at national level at various places, I joined mixed martial arts camping with different coaches in different states of India and won medals where I got an opportunity to represent the erstwhile state of J&K," he said.

"I have won 11 gold medals at national level, six silver medals and 17 gold medals at state level and officials at All India Mixed Martial Art Federation had declared me as the second best mixed martial art player of India," he added.

"Besides medals, based on my performance, I have received titles like 'Best Fighter Boy' in 28 states besides 'Champion of Champions' in 2018 in Jammu and Kashmir," he added. (KNO)

## Selection Trials For Carrom National On December 30

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The J&K Carrom Association on Thursday announced selection trials and screening process for the J&K Carrom Team that will participate in the 29th All India Federation Cup Carrom Tournament 2024-25.

The tournament is scheduled to take place from 5th January 2025 to 8th January 2025 at Nellore Club, Dargamitta, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh. It is organised by the All India Carrom Federation and hosted by the Andhra Pradesh State Car-



rom Association and District Nellore Carrom Association. All the interested players who wish to represent J&K

in this prestigious tournament are required to participate in the open selection trials and the subsequent screening process conducted by the J&K Sports Council.

The trials will be held on Monday, December 30, at SKISC, Srinagar, at 12:30 PM.

"The association encourages all eligible players to participate and showcase their skills for a chance to represent Jammu and Kashmir at the national level," the association said in a press release.

"For further information, please contact: 9070000093, 9906767529," it added.

# 2024 Sports Administration Recap: Mess In IOA, Contentious Draft Sports Bill

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** An ambitious bid to host Olympics was set in motion, a long-pending national sports bill entered the final phase of being shaped into a policy but there was no end to the internal bickering and turf wars that have become the hallmark of Indian sports administration.

Like most other things about Indian sports, even the administrators offered a mixed bag of performances in the year going by. But the country could take pride in some matters, the submission of a letter of intent to host the 2036 Olympic Games being one of them.

The development has kick-started an exciting but difficult journey to join a select few Asian countries to stage the ultimate sporting spectacle.

The October milestone itself was a roller-coaster ride thanks to the drama within the PT Usha-led Indian Olympic Association (IOA), a body that

failed to explain just why India could not touch the double digit mark in its medal count at the Paris Olympics.

Half a dozen fourth place finishes might sound commendable for a nation trying to find its foothold in the Olympics but for a seasoned campaigner like India, they should have been medals that could push the tally past 10 in Paris.

**IOA Lives Up To Poor Reputation**

The IOA has been a faction-ridden body for the longest time and the Usha-led current dispensation is no exception.

The sprint legend found herself pitted against 12 members of the 15-strong Executive Council, and an ugly spat over the appointment of a CEO marred the whole of 2024.

It all began early in the year with Raghuram Iyer, a former top official of IPL sides Rajasthan Royals and Pune Supergiants, being handed charge as the IOA CEO.



The 12 opposing EC members refused to ratify his appointment, instead accusing Usha of "exerting pressure" on them to accept him as the CEO. The track legend has termed the allegations as "shameful". There were allegations and counter-allegations with treasurer Sahdev Yadav threatening to file a defamation case against Usha for show-causing him to explain his eligibility to hold the post.

An EC meeting in September turned out to be a slanging match, that too in front of an International Olympic Com-

mittee (IOC) official who joined the proceedings virtually.

**IOC Issues Warning**

The IOC suspended the Olympic Solidarity grant to the IOA, amounting to Rs 8.50 crore annually and meant for athlete development programmes. It was meant to be a warning that India needed to put its house in order.

However, the move did not bring the warring IOA officials to their senses and both sides issued notices of a Special General Body Meeting (SGM) on different dates.

One of the agenda items of the SGM called by the revolting 12 EC members mentioned a 'no-confidence motion' against Usha.

But just before India formally submitted its 2036 Olympics bid to the IOC's Future Host Commission on October 1, both sides postponed the meetings, pulling themselves from the brink.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi first made the announcement of India's desire to host

the 2036 Olympics and 2030 Youth Olympics during the IOC session held in Mumbai in October 2023. In February this year, Usha said that the IOA was engaged in active dialogue with the Future Host Commission on India's bid to host the Games even though a city is yet to be finalised.

**Athlete-Centric Approach Of IOA & Government**

Usha and new sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya, who assumed office in June, pledged an athlete-centric approach in their initiatives. As a result, a slew of schemes were unveiled which found support from both the active and retired India campaigners.

Medal winners at Khelo India Games -- Youth (above 18), University, Para and Winter -- were made eligible for government jobs as per revised criteria of the sports ministry.

Usha pitched for the inclusion of yoga in the Asian Games programme and she got support from Mandaviya.

The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), led by an Indian president in Randhir Singh, made it a demonstration sport at the 2026 Asian Games to be held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

With new sponsors coming in for the IOA, Usha proposed a medical insurance and pension scheme for all ex-Olympians.

On the insistence of the IOA, the government made a departure from the usual 3:1 ratio of athletes to support staff in the country's Olympics contingent.

The sports ministry cleared 117 athletes and 140 support staff and officials for the Paris Olympics, which was an unprecedented relaxation allowing most athletes to have their personal coaches by their side.

Sports Ministry also launched RESET (Retired Sportsperson Empowerment Training) programme to make former athletes self-reliant after retirement by making them employable with "necessary skills and knowledge".

**Concerns Regarding Draft**

**Sports Bill**

A new Draft Sports Bill which provides for a regulatory body for the IOA and National Sports Federations to ensure transparency and accountability in their operations, besides relaxation in the age and tenure of the administrators, was circulated by the ministry.

Usha flagged the possible threat to the autonomy of the IOA and NSFs enshrined in the Olympic Charter. Mandaviya assured that the regulatory body would be autonomous and will not interfere in the day-to-day functioning of either the IOA or the NSFs.

The IOC has not reacted to the bill, which is likely to be introduced in the Parliament during the Budget Session in early 2025. But it will not be swayed by the assurances.

It will act whenever it feels there has been interference from third parties as had happened during the 14-month suspension of the IOA from December 2012 to February 2014.